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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. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 4, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. 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 7, 2014, 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

POLLUTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are used to a world with gloomy news regarding the jarring impact and threats of climate change.

We are experiencing wildfires in the Pacific Northwest this winter. The snowpack is a small percentage of normal, which is not just bad news for skiers now; it means lower river levels in the spring that will affect hydropower production, irrigation for farmers, and further damage to ever-troubled fish runs. California is experiencing its worst drought in 500 years—not really manmade, as some of my Republican California colleagues claim. Although it is interesting, as pointed out in the L.A. Times yesterday in an editorial: ''Funny, isn't it, that folks who question man's ability to affect the global climate are so quick to assign human causes to the drought?''

There are severe strains on the Colorado River Basin, and 40 million people are heavily dependent on that water throughout the Southwest. Last week, we heard about the massive penguin die-off due to changing weather patterns. Of course we have been experiencing the polar vortex and wild weather this winter.

With all these bad signs, it was interesting to see a positive message emerge yesterday on the front page of The Washington Post about air pollution in China. To be sure, Chinese pollution still threatens, producing the most carbon emissions on the planet, which portend far worse climate problems in the future for everyone. It causes 1 million premature deaths a year in China and, in fact, threatens the health of west coast Americans, as we regularly breathe Chinese pollution that blows across the ocean.

It is encouraging that China is taking steps to acknowledge the problem, to track and publicize the severe pollution levels when, 5 years ago, they asked the United States Embassy in Beijing to stop publishing that same embarrassing data.

Now the Chinese Government is publishing the information itself and is even ranking the worst offenders. The 10 most polluted Chinese cities have air quality levels 6 to 10 times the pollution of the 10 worst American cities. The Chinese are providing realtime disclosure of pollution that is more ambitious than anything the United States did in the EPA's highly successful toxic release inventory that dates back almost 30 years.

It is absolutely critical that China acknowledge the problem and hold people accountable for the pollution, but it is even better news that the Chinese are going beyond mere data collection, as they unveiled a $280 billion plan to improve air quality, including limiting coal use and banning high pollution vehicles.

Isn't it ironic that the Repulbican leadership in the House of Representatives is determined to prevent the United States EPA from taking the next steps to clean up our dirty coal plants and protect us from the carbon pollution that is causing such climate disruption, all the while denying the science.

One hopes that the United States will come to its senses while it appears the Chinese are starting to come around. The future of the planet for our children and grandchildren depends upon it.

ALEXANDER MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize Alexander Montessori School for 50 years of providing exceptional educational opportunities for generations of children in south Florida.

Fifty years ago, Beverly McGhee founded Alexander Day School in honor of her parents, Alice and Henry Alexander, in order to provide an early childhood facility for her two children. From the outset, her school has enjoyed a reputation as a place where kids wanted to learn and where the staff and teachers cared about what they did.

Within a few years of the school's founding, Beverly became aware of

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what is known as the Montessori Method. Named for Maria Montessori, her teaching philosophy was to foster in children a desire to think independently and be creative. Its environment maximizes independence and includes a strong focus on communication and self-molding for young students.

Beverly became certified as a preschool Montessori teacher and renamed her school Alexander Montessori School. She gathered teachers around her who shared her passion and dedication for providing a quality and caring Montessori environment for children, ones with only the highest standards of excellence.

From modest beginnings of that single kindergarten class, Alexander Montessori School has grown to be one of the largest and most renowned Montessori schools in the country. Today, in south Florida, Alexander Montessori School has two toddler environments, nine children's houses, and an elementary campus. These are centers where children lead the way, follow their natural talents, and fall in love with learning, an attitude summed up in its motto: ''To learn to Love to Learn.''

This independent school remains the only fully accredited American Montessori Society School in our community and one of only 10 throughout the State of Florida. I can relate to Beverly's story, her spirit, and her relentless dedication to provide children with high quality education.

I am a former Florida certified teacher and founded and was principal of a small private bilingual school in Hialeah. I know the challenges faced by our educators as well as the positive impact that an amazing teacher can have on a young mind.

I am a product of the south Florida school system. I graduated from West Miami Middle School and then Southwest Miami High School. I have an associate of arts degree from Miami/Dade College; bachelor's and master's degrees from Florida International University in education; and as an older adult, I completed a doctorate in education from the University of Miami. I am very grateful for the support that I received while I was in school, and I am certain that I would not be the same person without this support.

So ensuring that our children have the same access to a comprehensive education has become a top priority of mine. Our students deserve the best that we can offer them, and that is why I continue to work with strong partners like Alexander Montessori School to constantly improve our school system.

Education is the key to self-empowerment, and teachers like those at Alexander Montessori School are giving our students the tools they need to develop and to excel. Teachers have the power to inspire and to open whole new horizons to our youth, setting them up on a positive path with high hopes and expectations for the future.

For the professionalism and care that Beverly and everyone at Alexander Montessori School have shown in the pursuit of this most noble of professions, I thank each and every one of them. They have shaped the lives of so many students over the last 50 years, and we are truly privileged to have such wonderful individuals taking on this rewarding work in south Florida.

I thank the school again, and congratulate them on a half century of great work. Good luck in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I will now enter the names of the remarkable team members at Alexander Montessori School into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mrs. Beverley A. McGhee, Superintendent
Mr. James R. McGhee II, Headmaster
Dr. Joyce McGhee, Headmistress
Mr. Brette Rothfield, Business Manager
Ms. Anne Becton, Administrator
Mrs. Maria McGuire, teacher
Ms. Brenda Orihuela, teacher
Ms. Mirnely Borrero, teacher
Ms. Sharon Dalton, teacher
Mrs. Marta Demmer, teacher
Ms. Maria Luisa Ferro, teacher
Ms. Soraya Penate, teacher
Mrs. Grecia Perez, teacher
Mrs. Beatriz See, teacher
Mrs. Maria Teresa Vicens, teacher
Ms. Pamela Earl-Parler, teacher
Mrs. Linda Habich, teacher
Ms. Milagros Vargas, teacher
Ms. Cynthia Arboleda, teacher
Ms. Anne Becton, teacher
Mrs. Meghan Camilletti, teacher
Mrs. Melanie Carlson, teacher
Mr. Michael Depew, teacher
Mr. Stephen Falk, teacher
Ms. Lessie Fleischfresser, teacher
Mrs. Gretchen Goldstein, teacher
Ms. Ines Hanna, teacher
Mrs. Ismary Hassun, teacher
Mrs. Caroline Jacobellis, teacher
Mrs. Gail Jacobs, teacher
Mrs. Ellen Kahn, teacher
Mrs. Maria Claudia Kondrat-Libreros, teacher
Mrs. Mary Kucera, teacher
Mrs. Robbie Lukes, teacher
Mrs. Nina McClendon, teacher
Mrs. Debra Mistretta, teacher
Mrs. Colette Myers, teacher
Mrs. Patricia Pittaluga, teacher
Mrs. Cecilia Richter, teacher
Mrs. Sandra Salinas, teacher
Mrs. Janet Sanson, teacher
Mr. Samuel Steele, teacher
Mrs. Lauren Stern, teacher
Mrs. Gladys Tirse, teacher
Mrs. Virginia Vaca, teacher
Ms. Jodi Veillette, teacher
Ann Blau, Campus Secretary
Jennifer Dipolito, Accounts Payable
Gioconda Dynes, Accounts Receivable
Maria Franco, School Secretary
Odalys Fernandez, Campus Secretary
Jose Casares, Director of Maintenance
Marta Valdes, Campus Secretary
Carol Wolcott, Administrator
Cathy Rapport, Campus Director

A FAIR MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues to join in the effort to pass the Fair Minimum Wage Act and raise the Federal minimum wage to $10.10 an hour.

Fifty years ago, 200,000 Americans marched on Washington. Appealing to the soul of the Nation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his fellow speakers charted out the long journey for equality and justice ahead. In the pamphlet promoting the March on Washington, they listed 10 specific legislative demands. A number of these demands would go on to become some of the most significant achievements of the Federal Government in the postwar era: comprehensive civil rights legislation, desegregation of all school districts, an end to discrimination in Federal housing programs.

It is clear that we have made progress on many of these issues, but for many of us here, the fight for these goals remains unfinished. Let us not forget, though, that the March on Washington was actually called the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Let us remember number eight on that list of demands: ''A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. Government surveys show that anything less than $2 an hour fails to do this.''

On whole, the American economy has made tremendous strides in the last half century. Many in this Congress have been benefactors of that growth, but the American worker has been left behind. The $2 an hour that Dr. King and his colleagues called for would be nearly $15 per hour today when adjusted for inflation.

Despite this fact, many of my colleagues will call the demand for a $10.10 Federal minimum wage unreasonable. Many will even say this demand for a reasonable wage is rooted in partisan politics. Mr. Speaker, this reasonable demand is rooted in the belief that American workers deserve more.

President Truman said that minimum wage legislation was ''founded on the belief that full human dignity requires at least a minimum level of economic sufficiency and security.'' The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that while a single parent making minimum wage earns $15,080 annually, that is still more than $400 below the Federal poverty rate.

The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that working 40-hour weeks 52 weeks a year, a parent still struggles to feed their family. Think about that during your next paid vacation.

The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that a single parent is overwhelmingly likely to be a single mother. Because, while women make up 47 percent of our workforce, they represent nearly two-thirds of minimum wage earners.

Finally, the call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on good economics. I know full well that those opposed to a raise in the minimum wage say that any raise will reduce employment, and at a certain point, it could, but a modest raise to $10 an hour is nowhere near this theoretical tipping point, and more than six dozen economists agree.

□ 1015

In a recent letter to Congress, they explicitly said:

> Increases in the minimum wage have little to no impact on the employment of minimum wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market.

The economic recovery has been a very long, slow road for low-wage American workers, and a raise in the minimum wage is the jolt our economy needs. Higher wages quickly turn into increased spending. Increased spending quickly turns into growth.

But minimum wage legislation, like unemployment insurance, is merely the minimum we should be doing for the American worker. Let's remember that, during the March on Washington, the demand directly preceding the call for an increase in the minimum wage was demand number 7:

> A massive Federal program to train and place . . . workers . . . on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.

This body needs to turn its focus on advancing legislation that will create more American jobs and policies that matter to American workers. I urge my colleagues to support the American worker. Join me in calling for jobs legislation and a reasonable raise of the Federal minimum wage.

THE PRIMACY OF STRONG AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AROUND THE GLOBE

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

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, we deal with a lot of very important issues in this body. In fact, everybody that is going to speak this morning is going to speak about some very important issues. But I would argue that there is no issue more important that we deal with in this body than the issue of American global leadership and the issue of national defense.

I just got back from a security summit in Munich, and I want to share some of my thoughts in talking to our allies and talking to strategic partners around the globe.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a decline of American leadership around the globe. There is a perception that America is on the retreat from the rest of the world and is an America tired of a decade of war, which I fully understand, and is an America that decides the fight is just not worth it anymore. The decline of American leadership around the world is not just something that we can't do because it is not good, but it is dangerous—not just to us, but to the rest of the globe.

Think about how we got in this position in the first place. It was the failure of American leadership through the nineties to pursue a terrorist jihadist by the name of Osama bin Laden. Instead, this Nation and the President treated him as a common criminal and not as a declared opponent and a war opponent of the United States of America. What we saw was an attack on the World Trade Center, an attack to the USS Cole, an attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, and then, finally, it culminated in an attack that took 3,000 American lives and woke America up to the reality of global jihadism and terrorism, and the fact that we have people that live solely for the purpose of killing and destroying people that don't see eye to eye with their specific religious ideology.

Failure to confront those terrorists in the 1990s led to that big problem we have today. And what we have seen lately is the same kind of retrenchment by the United States of America—undoubtedly, still the most powerful country in the world. Our enemies no longer fear us, and our allies no longer trust us.

Let me label a few of these areas that have concerned me.

In Iraq—I am a veteran of Iraq—the U.S. Marines actually fought to take the city of Fallujah and took the most casualties that they have taken probably since Khe Sanh in Vietnam. Today, the black flag of al Qaeda flies over Fallujah. The sacrifice of thousands of Americans is now being confronted by the black flag of al Qaeda because this President, eager to achieve a campaign promise, pulled all the troops out at the end of 2011 and didn't leave a residual force. As unpopular as it may be, if we had left a counterterrorism force in Iraq, we would not be facing this problem today.

I look at a terrible deal that was just struck with Iran, a deal that basically says Iran is allowed to be a threshold nuclear state. Sure, the Secretary and the President will say that we are going from 20 percent enrichment to 5. He doesn't mention that bringing 5 percent enrichment to weapons-grade enrichment actually doesn't take that long. And, oh, by the way, all the surrounding states to Iran think that they are totally entitled to say that they have a right to enrich uranium up to 5 percent, in essence, creating a whole host of Middle East threshold nuclear states. And yet we call this a victory?

I look at Syria—11,000 opponents to Assad, tortured and murdered and labeled with numbers—11,000 people—which made Srebrenica, the thing that launched America to intervene in Bosnia, look small. Eleven thousand opponents to Assad tortured and killed. And you look at Assad, who is purposely targeting the Free Syrian Army and not al Qaeda opposition so that al Qaeda opposition grows to him and he can stand in front of the West and say, ''I am the protector.'' If we get to the point where we look to Assad, a brutal dictator in Syria, as the protector of freedom, God help us.

I look at instability in Lebanon, and I look at one of our greatest allies, Jordan, hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees. I look at Israel, surrounded by instability in the Middle East, and I look at a resurgent China that challenges America all over the globe now, and I look at a Russia that continues to occupy one-third of its neighbor to the south, Georgia. I look at Ukraine's people standing up for freedom. I haven't heard much from this administration.

I am burdened by this lack of American global leadership. I don't care about the politics of it. I don't care about any of this. I care about the future of this country. And what I see is the decline of American leadership in what is still the greatest country around the globe.

INCOME INEQUALITY

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Illinois is right. There is a decline in American leadership, but it is not overseas—not at all. It is here at home.

Since the 1970s, American workers have seen their wages fall or stagnate. The wealthiest American incomes, however, have increased fourfold. Even after 40 years of economic growth, today's generation takes home less than its grandparents did, and high school graduates make 40 percent less than their predecessors did four decades ago.

This problem ought to elicit bipartisan concern, yet many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have shown little or no interest in the consequences of our country becoming so sharply divided by wealth. For many of my Republican colleagues, even talking about it is uncomfortable. It is time to realize that all too many Americans—hardworking Americans—are falling behind.

From 1979 to 2007, wages for the top 1 percent grew 156 percent, while the bottom 90 percent of us saw our wages grow only 17 percent. Since 1983, 75 percent of the growth and wealth has been captured by the top 5 percent, while the bottom 60 percent actually suffered a net decline. By 2010, nearly all middle- and low-income families have made the same hourly wage they did in 2000, despite having raised productivity during that time period by 22 percent. That is not how it is supposed to work. Worse, median family income was 6 percent lower. But this lost decade only caps a trend that has been going on in this country for over 30 years.

In what might be the most telling portrait of how middle- and low-income Americans are being shut out of the

new economy, Bloomberg recently reported that 95 percent of wealth generated since the Great Recession went to the richest 1 percent—95 percent went to 1 percent. In real terms, 9 out of 10 people control less wealth than they did before the crash.

In 2012, the top 10 percent of earners took home more than half of the U.S. total income. This is the highest level ever recorded. Income and wealth haven't been this concentrated since before the Great Depression, and we are beginning to rival the gilded age of the late 19th century.

A recent Gallup poll shows that the concerns about inequality have moved beyond academia and into the public consciousness. According to Gallup, two out of three Americans are dissatisfied with income and wealth distribution in the United States, including 54 percent of all Republicans and 70 percent of Independents. The same poll found that many Americans now worry about their ability to find future opportunity, and only 54 percent believe that one can get ahead by working hard. What does that say about the American Dream?

Justice Louis Brandeis once said:

> We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both.

Letting a generation of Americans remain underemployed, underpaid, and despairing about their future creates a dangerous cycle of economic and social destruction, and it damages democracy. Nations whose citizens believe that the game is rigged against them are not beacons of democracy. Civic culture corrodes, and space opens for divisive and extreme politics. We have seen that here at home. The new Pope, Pope Francis, recently lamented that the world's inequality is quietly undermining social and political institutions. He gets it.

Last week, the President highlighted how our Nation's wealth and income gaps have become too large to continue to ignore. Congress cannot continue to stand idly by. I urge my colleagues to consider the many bipartisan proposals that would jump-start growth for all Americans. We need to be investing in this country's crumbling infrastructure. My own Put America Back to Work Act, which would reauthorize Build America Bonds programs, would give local government another tool to jump-start the economy and infrastructure projects.

Generations of Americans, starting with our Founders, made their way to America's shores, attracted by the promise of opportunity and the belief that, through hard work, they could get ahead. Unfortunately, that dream is at risk today.

I urge my colleagues to join all of us in preserving opportunity for all Americans, and prevent our Nation from becoming a nation of stark divide between the haves and the have-nots.

A GOVERNMENT THAT GOVERNS LEAST GOVERNS BEST

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union address last week, the President described an economy in which income inequality has deepened and upward mobility has stalled. Unfortunately, in many respects, he is right. The poor are worse off today than we were when President Obama took office. Nearly 7 million more Americans live in poverty today as compared to 2008.

A record 47 million Americans receive food stamps, 13 million more than when President Obama assumed office. Median household income has fallen over $2,000 in the last 4 years. Seventy-six percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, and the percentage of working-age people actually in the workforce has dropped to the lowest rates in 35 years. A full 92 million Americans are not part of the labor force. They are either unemployed or not even actively looking for work. They are so frustrated with the Obama economy, they have just given up. When taking into account marginally attached workers—workers who are unemployed but want a job and workers who have part-time jobs who want full-time jobs—the jobless rate today is over 13 percent.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years after this President took office, the state of the Union is not strong. But instead of admitting that his policies have failed, the President offered more Big Government and more class warfare. But, Mr. Speaker, a lack of government isn't the problem, and class warfare isn't a solution. The President says we need to raise the minimum wage and extend emergency unemployment insurance yet again, for the 13th time in his administration.

We should stop thinking small in this country. We are Americans. We should think big. We don't need minimum wages; we need maximum wages. We don't need more unemployment insurance and government dependency; we need jobs and self-sufficiency. The best way to combat income inequality, to restore upward mobility in the American Dream and create a healthy economy is for Washington to get out of the way, whether in the doctor's office, in the job market, or at the gas pump.

That means replacing ObamaCare with patient-centered reforms that will lower the cost of health care without growing government. It means cutting wasteful spending and making reforms to put the Nation on a path towards a balanced budget. It means comprehensive tax reform that rewards work, saving, and investment and allows individuals, families, and businesses to keep more of what they earn. It means rolling back provisions of Dodd-Frank that allow bureaucrats to take away choices, financial services, and products and limit access to credit and take those away from the American people. It means unleashing the energy potential of the United States by ending the war on coal and approving, immediately, the Keystone pipeline. And it means giving the poor a hand up rather than a handout, giving them a job instead of a government check, and giving them the skills they need to escape dependency so that they can achieve their God-given potential.

We can do all this. We can restore the American Dream, and we can restore opportunity and economic growth. And I stand ready to work to get America back on track.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: THE NATIVE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ALABAMA

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

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Black History Month and the countless contributions and sacrifices made by notable African Americans to this great Nation. I also stand before you to proclaim the month of February as a time of reflection for Alabama's Seventh Congressional District.

In honor of Black History Month, I thought it would be befitting that we pay honor and tribute to the native sons and daughters of Alabama that have made significant contributions not only to the great State of Alabama, but to this Nation. As representative of the Civil Rights District and a beneficiary of the sacrifices of so many, I have committed to sharing the stories of these extraordinary men and women throughout the month of February so that their contributions will forever be recorded and referenced in our Nation's history.

□ 1030

Today, I again begin with a tribute to Virgil Ware, 13, and Johnnie Robinson, 16. These American heroes and Birmingham natives lost their lives within hours of the historic bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on Sunday, September 15, 1963.

While many of us have heard the heart-wrenching stories of the four little girls that perished in that bomb, many aren't aware that on that same day, Virgil and Johnnie were also victims of unspeakable and senseless violence.

Virgil Ware was born on December 6, 1949, in Birmingham, Alabama to James and Lorine Ware. He was the third of six children. One of his surviving brothers, Melvin Ware, describes Virgil as a special child who was exceptional in his educational endeavors. While his brothers were preparing for social gatherings, Virgil could be found reading a good book or perusing the encyclopedia. A few months before his death, the eighth-grader expressed to his older siblings that he was looking forward to joining them at the local high school next year. Before Virgil's

dreams could be realized, he fell victim to a tragedy that would change the Ware family and this community forever.

Virgil, who sat on the handlebars of his brother's bike, was headed to join his brother on a paper route on the outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama, on Sunday, September 15, 1963. The brothers rode past a group of men who had just left a segregationist meeting in the city. One of the men was told to shoot at the Ware brothers to ''scare them.'' The man fired two shots in their direction. One bullet struck Virgil in his chest and another in his cheek. Tragically, the young boy who loved to read and help his family lost his life on that day. Virgil was the sixth young person to lose his life on that Sunday in Birmingham due to blatant violence.

Just one hour prior to Virgil's death, Johnnie Robinson joined a group of young boys at a local gas station. Johnnie was born on February 25, 1947, to Martha and Johnnie Robinson, Sr. His younger brother, Leon, describes him as a kid who loved playing baseball and basketball. Ironically, his favorite subject was history. Even at the tender age of 16, he understood that he and his siblings were living in a historic era. He came from a close-knit family and had lost his father in a racially-motivated killing just weeks before his own death.

The afternoon that Johnnie went to the gas station, tensions remained high as local citizens were still reeling from the news of the church bombing and the deaths of the ''four little girls.'' According to accounts that were published in the Birmingham News article, Johnnie and other young boys were being taunted by White teenagers with chants of opposing integration.

There was also reports of rocks being thrown in retaliation in the hours after the bombing. In the midst of all the chaos, Johnnie was killed by a police officer.

Some of our Nation's biggest heroes are those that fought on the front lines in pursuit of equality and justice. However, young Virgil and Johnnie serve as symbols of the heroes of the movement that we don't always recognize. Johnnie and Virgil should be remembered for their important sacrifices that were made, and this history of our Nation should not forget them.

As we celebrate Black History Month and the notable contributions of African Americans to this country, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering these brave young men during the month of February and beyond. Their short lives serve as one of many catalysts for the transformative change in our country. While we know that their destinies were cut short, far too short, we remember them for their impact on the civil rights movement. During their short time on this Earth, these young souls should be counted in the number of our Nation's biggest heroes.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the life and legacy of Virgil Ware and Johnnie Robinson, Jr., during this Black History Month period.

WORLD CANCER DAY

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today, February 4, is World Cancer Day. It is a day we remember those lost to this disease while recommitting ourselves and our efforts to eradicating it. This World Cancer Day, people across the globe will speak out in one unified voice in hopes of improving knowledge about cancer and its symptoms while shattering the stereotypes and misconceptions that stand as barriers to the treatment.

By debunking the myths and bringing the fight against cancer to the global stage, we can make meaningful strides to address an issue that touches individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

This year alone, 1.6 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer, and many of them will be children. As a member of the Childhood Cancer Caucus and a cancer survivor myself, I know how important it is to support each one of those cases with dedication and with care.

So today, let's recognize the thousands of oncologists, support staff, researchers, and families tackling this diagnosis from start to finish. If we work together, from government organizations like the National Institutes of Health, to hospitals and cancer treatment facilities in my home State of Pennsylvania, to passing bipartisan legislation like the Gabrielle Miller Kids First Research Act, we can make this World Cancer Day a success and put an end to cancer in the not-so-distant future.

WORLD CANCER DAY AWARENESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleague from Pennsylvania in recognizing that today, February 4, is World Cancer Day, a day in which we raise awareness about the impacts of cancer worldwide and join forces to work together to find a cure.

If America does not lead the world in cancer research, there is no leadership in cancer research in the world. A newly released report from the American Cancer Society says that the death rate from cancer has decreased by 20 percent over the past two decades. Thirty years ago, less than 50 percent of those who were diagnosed with cancer lived beyond 5 years of their diagnosis. Today, it is 65 percent for adults and 80 percent for children. Cancer research needs to be sustained if it is to be effective.

Ten years ago, 25 percent of all those grants that came into the National Cancer Institute were funded. Today it is less than 8 percent. We are not only losing important research but also losing talented researchers who leave the field because of a lack of public funding for cancer research.

Historically, there were three ways to deal with cancer. You could cut it out through surgery, you could burn it out through radiation, or you could destroy it through toxic chemicals or chemotherapy. Chemotherapy was developed in Buffalo in 1904 at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. After those traditional cancer treatments, with some debilitating side effects, a new generation about 15 years ago was developed to treat cancer called targeted therapies.

These are therapies that attack fast-growing cancer cells without destroying healthy cells. These targeted therapies led to promising new therapies in breast cancer, like Herceptin, which treated a very difficult cancer, late-stage cancer. Also Gleevec, which was highly effective in treating leukemia.

Today, the prestigious journal Science just declared that in 2013, the most important science discovery was something called immunotherapy. Immunotherapy uses several strategies, including vaccines, to treat the body's immune system to naturally fight cancers.

What the promise is in many clinical trials that are occurring throughout this Nation, including Buffalo's Roswell Park Cancer Institute, is longer remissions without the debilitating side effects.

We have a lot to learn about cancer. It is not one disease; it is hundreds of diseases. Lifestyle plays a very important part in the incidences of cancer, both here in the country and throughout the world. Eighty-nine percent of all lung cancers are due to smoking. Thirty percent of all cancers are a direct result of tobacco use. In our lifetime, one in every three women will develop invasive cancer in their lifetime. One in two men will develop invasive cancer because men smoke more.

We need to know that early detection is also important as well. Less than 10 percent of cancer deaths are attributed to the original tumor. It is when cancer moves, when it advances, when it metastasizes to a vital organ is when cancer becomes lethal. It is when cancer cells crowd out healthy cells and render that organ which we need to live useless.

So today on World Cancer Day, we are reminded about all of the work that has been done, all of the progress that has been made, and all of the progress still yet to be made. We also learned that while it is World Cancer Day, America has a unique role in the history, currently and prospectively, in developing the next generation of cancer treatments.

PROTECT ACADEMIC FREEDOM ACT

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the American Studies Association did a shameful thing. They decided to call an academic boycott of one nation, and that is the State of Israel. Think about that. They looked over every other country of the world and they said basically by omission: Oh, you're fine, and you're fine, and you're fine. It doesn't matter what is happening there or what is happening there, but we are going to go after one country, Israel, and we are going to call upon a boycott.

The former Israeli Ambassador, Michael Oren, after that happened, he asked this question:

Will Congress stand up for academic freedom?

And the answer is, yes.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to join with 134 colleagues, myself included, to send a letter to the American Studies Association to admonish them on what is clearly an anti-Semitic effort on their part. I know that is a very harsh thing for me to say, but there is no other way to describe it. It is anti-Semitic.

I intend to move forward in the coming weeks to offer legislation called the Protect Academic Freedom Act which will prevent these campaigns by prohibiting Federal funds to universities that boycott Israeli academic institutions. Said another way, these organizations are clearly free to do what they want to do under the First Amendment, but the American taxpayer doesn't have to subsidize it. The American taxpayer doesn't have to be complicit in it, and the American taxpayer doesn't have to play any part in it. In fact, what we are doing on a bipartisan basis is calling for Congress to defend academic freedom because we recognize that academic freedom is at the very root of our own freedom.

CONGRESS CAN'T TAKE WATER THAT DOESN'T EXIST

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

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition of H.R. 3964, the so-called Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.

Mr. Speaker, California is suffering its worst water crisis in modern history. This is a 1 in 500-year drought. For the third year in a row, dry weather conditions and drought-like conditions are hurting so many families in California—farmers, small businesses. If you need to see how bad things have gotten, look at Folsom Lake in my district. It is dry. Over 500,000 residents in my community rely on Folsom Lake as the source of its water. This is how bad it has gotten.

We are doing everything we can to conserve water, but you can't take water when it doesn't exist, and that is why H.R. 3964 is such a bad bill. It is a bill that is taking what doesn't exist. It doesn't create any new water; it just tries to move water from one community to another, but it doesn't exist. You can't take water that is not there. In fact, let me show you how bad things have gotten.

□ 1045

The snowpack in California in the Sierras is the source of water for over 500 million Californians. It is what we rely on. It is our biggest reservoir.

You can see what the snowpack looked like January 2013. Here it is. You got snow right here—that is our biggest reservoir—and this is in the middle of the drought. Here is what it looks like today, January 2014. It is not there. The snow is not there.

So H.R. 3964 suggests taking water that doesn't exist. It is a bad bill. You can't falsely promise water delivery that doesn't exist. The water is not there.

Here is what my suggestion is to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Water is not about Democrats or Republicans. This is a solution that we have to come together. It is about protecting our communities. California is going to go through a devastating summer if we don't come together immediately as Democrats and Republicans to look at how we can conserve water and look for creative solutions on recycling water. But we've got to do this together—not pitting one region against another, not pitting one community against another. We have to come up with creative solutions. We can't just look at today's challenge. We have got to do that. That is an immediate issue. But we have also got to start discussing the future of water in California, looking at issues like storage, looking at issues like water recycling, looking at creative solutions because it is dry.

With that, let's come together as Democrats and Republicans, folks from the north State and the south State, and let's not pit one community against another. Let's solve this issue today for our children.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House of Representatives passed the Agricultural Act of 2014, a 5-year farm bill reauthorization, with bipartisan support by a vote of 251–166. This farm bill is a big win for the Nation's economy and will support jobs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, while making necessary reforms that will save taxpayers billions.

Mr. Speaker, not only does this bill deliver for taxpayers, it is good public policy. We spent over 4 years crafting the measure through dozens of hearings, audits, and other forums for public and stakeholder input.

The bill was produced by the House-Senate conference committee, upon which I served, that was charged with resolving the differences between the House- and Senate-passed farm bills. Throughout this process, members of the Agriculture Committee have proved that positive movement on important pieces of legislation can be achieved.

This bill repeals direct payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses. Under the measure, limits on payment are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.

The measure provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. It supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

The agreement reauthorizes numerous research, extension, and education programs, including programs for land grant universities, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the Agricultural Research Service.

This farm bill makes the first reforms to the food stamp program since the welfare reforms of 1996, while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need. It closes the heat and eat loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when States provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.

The bill also includes the Forest Products Fairness Act, a bill I introduced, which would open new market opportunities for timber and forest products by allowing them to qualify for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's BioPreferred program. It contains language codifying the Forest Service's authority to categorically exclude noncontroversial day-to-day activities from the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, assessments. It provides certainty to the forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads and related silvicultural activities will not be treated as a point source of pollution under the Clean Water Act and will no longer be subject to frivolous lawsuits.

It improves the farm bill conservation title through the consolidation of 23 duplicative programs into 13. Overall, the package reduces deficits by $16.6 billion over 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, for family farms and agribusinesses in my home State that drive the economy with more than $68 billion in total economic activity annually, this bill is a big win. For individuals and families in my home State that are looking for that next job or a little more take-home pay, this bill is

a big win. For the families and individuals that rely on safe and affordable food every day, this bill is a big win.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to quickly pass this bill and get it to the President's desk for his signature. Americans deserve as much.

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 50 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:

Compassionate and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Give them strength, fortitude, and patience. Fill their hearts with charity, their minds with understanding, and their wills with courage to do the right thing for all of America.

In the work to be done now, may they rise together to accomplish what is best for our great Nation and indeed for all the world, for You have blessed us with many graces and given us the responsibility of being a light shining on a hill.

May all that is done this day 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

HONORING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY AGRIBUSINESS CONFERENCE

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

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the service of Arkansas State University Agricultural Economics Professor Dr. Bert Greenwalt.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Arkansas State University Agribusiness Conference, which Dr. Greenwalt has faithfully directed the past two decades. This premier agribusiness conference gathers attendees from across the country to focus on global agriculture, farm policy, commodity market outlooks, and biofuel research.

While maintaining a global focus, Dr. Greenwalt also manages to make the conference pertinent to Arkansas' agricultural producers, regularly bringing State ag leaders and university alumni to the event.

While attending Arkansas State University myself, I had the privilege of having Dr. Greenwalt as an ag policy professor, where I developed the skills necessary to serve on the Agriculture Committee in this body. Each day serving Arkansas' First District, I experience the same kinds of concepts and examples I learned in Dr. Greenwalt's classroom.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the entire Arkansas State University community in honoring the service of Dr. Bert Greenwalt.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, last month, the Social Security Administration announced proposed plans to close the Social Security field office in Amherst, New York, among other regional offices. This proposal is both unnecessary and ill-conceived and threatens the ability of seniors, international students, and individuals with disabilities to access critical services.

In response to this, I plan to introduce the Social Security Administration Accountability Act, which would require that the Social Security Administration provide Congress and local communities with adequate notice and justification for field office closings.

This bill would require that Congress receive a report which includes caseload data, service population, and staffing levels at field offices, as well as the process by which offices are selected for closing.

Mr. Speaker, the recent FY 2014 budget appropriated an additional $11.7 billion to the Social Security Administration for administrative expenses, which should provide the financial stability to alleviate the need to close field offices across the country.

I urge my colleagues to support this request.

REMEMBERING TOM TEW

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart in remembrance of a dear friend and one of Miami's legal giants, Tom Tew. Tom passed away last week at the age of 73 from pancreatic cancer, an unfortunately common and terrible disease. Tom was the cofounder of the Tew Cardenas law firm and worked closely with my husband, Dexter, for many years.

Tom specialized in securities litigation, having represented the Florida Department of Insurance and the Securities and Exchange Commission, as well as having testified before this body on five occasions about securities and insurance fraud. Tom led a full life, including forming an intercollegiate boxing league and supporting the athletics program of our hometown University of Miami Hurricanes.

Tom's lovely and energetic spirit will be greatly missed. He is survived by his loving daughter, Kristina; brother, Jeff; sister-in-law, Maureen; his long-time partner, Marta; and his long-time secretary, Jo Anne.

We will miss you, Tom. You were a good friend to all.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO VICTOR E. PORTUGUES GARCIA

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my friend, Victor Portugues Garcia, who passed away this weekend in Puerto Rico. Victor Portugues served as under secretary of Housing for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico from 1972 to 1976 and was an excellent engineer. His wife, Carmen Santa, has been a math teacher for many years, and they raised five children, all of whom graduated from prestigious universities.

I want to say to his family and to all of those who are going to miss him dearly that we are saddened by his passing and his death. To the Portugues family, we know that many people talk about infectious smiles. Victor's was truly an infectious smile. He always had something positive to say, always contributed to helping everyone else, and never asked for anything for himself. I don't know what more you can say about a human being. I know he is resting in peace, and I know that I look forward to being with him when I, too, leave this world.

Thank you, Victor, for all you have done.

THE REENLISTMENT OF STAFF SERGEANT MARY VALDEZ

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

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, on January 21, I attended a USARPAC Sisters in Arms forum in Hawaii, and I met a warrior and a hero. Her name is Staff Sergeant Mary Valdez. I watched in awe, inspired as she stood at attention with her right hand raised, tears streaming down her face as she swore to defend the Constitution, to obey the orders of the President, and to obey the orders of the officers over her.

Her strength and love for our Nation was palpable for everyone in the room, despite her having been savagely raped by a fellow soldier just weeks before her 2011 deployment to Afghanistan. She pressed charges, she took him to trial, and the man who raped her was acquitted and still serves in our United States Army today.

When she spoke after her reenlistment, tears streaming down her face, she said, ''I love being a soldier. I love this Army.'' Her courage, resilience, and commitment to fulfilling her duty is what makes our military the strongest in the world.

We owe it to Staff Sergeant Valdez and all servicemembers to bring about reforms so they are not faced with this kind of adversity. They are fulfilling their duty and their responsibility every day. We must fulfill ours.

CALLING FOR SANDY RELIEF OVERSIGHT

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remind every Member of this Chamber that just over a year ago this Congress voted to provide $50 billion in much-needed Hurricane Sandy relief, including to my home State of New Jersey. I fought very hard for that money, and now this Congress has the responsibility and obligation to ensure that the Federal Sandy recovery funds are being distributed properly to the people who need it most. Constituents from my district are still displaced from their homes and are awaiting much-needed help.

According to a report released by the Fair Share Housing Center of New Jersey, low-income individuals are being denied claims at a higher rate than wealthier individuals. There is a need for more transparency on the standards being used to distribute these funds.

Also, a report on where and whom the funds are going to is obviously needed. I urge my colleagues to make sure that proper oversight is conducted and that the funding gets to those communities who are in most dire need.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, this is the third month that my colleagues and I have asked that unemployment benefits be extended to help our communities. Those benefits expired on December 28, and more than 1.7 million Americans, including 263,000 in California alone, have already lost access to these benefits, and another quarter of a million will be hit by the end of the month if we don't act.

Madam Speaker, if we act now, we can still help our friends and our neighbors who are trying to support their families as they find a new job instead of taking away what may be the only way they can afford food. There are more than 1 million Americans trying to do just that, and we should do everything we can to help them return to the workforce.

Previous Congresses have extended unemployment benefits time and time again with bipartisan support. Why is it that a program that we know helps members of our community and strengthens our economy is suddenly disposable? Let me remind you that these are unemployed workers who deserve our help.

I hope that we are allowed to vote on this bill and extend this vital economic lifeline.

COVERED CALIFORNIA ENROLLMENT

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the success of California with the Affordable Care Act in bringing some of the highest enrollment numbers across this Nation. I am not surprised to see California leading the way; after all, we are the Golden State.

However, there is so much work still to be done by the 31st of March, which is the deadline for enrolling people this year. And I am going to work very hard, along with my California colleagues. I have reached out to our Covered California executive director, Peter Lee, and asked him to make sure that we enroll every single eligible Californian.

With only 8 weeks left for open enrollment, I am making it my top priority that every qualified resident of my 46th Congressional District is given the opportunity to enroll, and I strongly encourage all of my fellow colleagues to do the same. To make good on the promise of quality and affordable health care, it is not enough to educate. We must make sure everybody is enrolled.

THE FLOOD INSURANCE TRUST FUND

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

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to urge the Republican leadership here in the House to immediately take up the bill to provide flood insurance relief to millions of Americans across the country and develop a long-term solution for the flood insurance trust fund. Last week, the Senate passed, by a broad bipartisan vote, a bill to provide just such relief by a vote of 67 bipartisan Members in the affirmative.

I urge the House Republican leadership right away to take up the Senate-passed bill in the House for a vote. We already have over 182 bipartisan cosponsors that are ready to act.

Madam Speaker, there is great skepticism that this Republican-controlled House of Representatives will act to protect the middle class and to boost our economy across this country. Well, let's prove them wrong, and let's work together to pass a flood insurance relief bill as soon as possible. We can work together to solve this problem.

□ 1215

YEAR OF ACTION

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, happy Lunar New Year, or as we say in Hawaii, Kung Hee Fat Choy. This is the ''Year of the Horse,'' which has as one of its characteristics decisive action. It is said that it is not the year to procrastinate, and the lack of procrastination will bring success.

Remember President Obama said in his State of the Union, this year we are in the year of action. The people of this great Nation have been waiting for us to show action. Some have just given up hope on us, and you can't blame them. Let us show them that we are capable of doing the job that they sent us here to do by at least addressing critical legislation like creating jobs, restoring unemployment benefits, addressing the minimum wage, reforming the immigration system, and, of course, avoiding the default. Let's show them, Madam Speaker, that we are able to do this because we can.

SOLVING UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, solving our unemployment crisis is not only about restoring our economy, it is about restoring dignity to tens of millions of Americans. Unemployment means anxiety and insecurity that translates into worse mental and physical health. Unemployment

means lower lifelong earnings, not only for workers but also for their children. It means a loss of dignity that is impossible to quantify.

Madam Speaker, today with nearly 30 million Americans either unemployed or underemployed, we have a moral obligation to solve the crisis. Unemployment is rampant in both red States and blue States. Creating jobs means creating dignity.

We have bipartisan options to build a full-employment society, including proposals to spur public-private investments in infrastructure and close the skills gap, but we must act now.

The mantra of this Congress should be, could be, and must be jobs, jobs, jobs.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 470 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 470

Resolved, That at any time after 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. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, 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 those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments 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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, I want to apologize for being 2 minutes late to come here. I apologize to not only you but also the staff and my friends from the Rules Committee for being late.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 470 provides for a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 3590. This rule makes in order 11 amendments which provide for discussion and opportunities for Members of the minority and the majority to participate in this debate.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, we held what I consider to be an open discussion about this bill where amendments were fully discussed and debated, and I am pleased to say that there will be these 11 amendments as a result of the action by the Rules Committee.

Madam Speaker, the bill before us today represents a yearlong bipartisan, bicameral legislative process to protect our public lands and to preserve traditional hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting for American sportsmen and sportswomen.

Specifically, H.R. 3590 improves access to Federal lands for hunting and fishing. It protects Second Amendment rights enshrined by the Constitution of the United States and promotes sportsmen's views by giving them a seat at the table through an innovative advisory committee to collaborate with the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture on ways to better conserve wildlife, habitat, and traditional outdoor activities.

American sportsmen are some of the strongest stewards of our Nation's unparalleled natural resources. We have an abundance of natural resources, but they all must be in a protected and stewardship role, and that is what the American hunter does for this country. They direct conservation projects. They establish nonprofit organizations to protect wildlife and precious habitat. Sportsmen are leading advocates to ensure that we leave a stronger, more vibrant America for future generations, and, I might add, we teach our children and the next generation the same so that the legacy that we leave is prepared for our future.

Additionally, according to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, American sportsmen contribute roughly $90 billion in economic activity every year. These resources sustain thousands of American jobs and protect our Nation's rich outdoor heritage. They also provide many of our rural areas of this country with needed jobs, jobs for people who live in rural areas who care very much about conservation and of their local areas to keep them natural.

Unfortunately, all too often the Federal Government erects unnecessary barriers which prevent Americans from participating in the many activities that also should be available on Federal lands. That is why H.R. 3590 is important. It streamlines government regulations to allow for greater access to our Nation's public lands so that all Americans can enjoy everything that our great outdoors have to offer.

As a sportsman myself, I will tell you I have enjoyed our national parks. I have enjoyed State parks and the outdoors, and in particular, as a young Boy Scout growing up all of the way through being an Eagle Scout and an adult leader, I have utilized these resources, which has allowed me an opportunity to know more about America and to be able to pass it on to my sons and others. It is a great way to spend an afternoon or a weekend or a week with your family, the outdoors and learning more about America.

Today I want to thank the Natural Resources Committee Chairman DOC HASTINGS, who is from Washington. He understands the West, and he understands the outdoors. His leadership on this issue was essential, as well as that of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus cochairmen BOB LATTA from Ohio and BENNIE THOMPSON from Mississippi. Both of these men met with me and the committee early on to make sure that we would be prepared for their bills that would come to the floor as a package, with the understanding that on a bicameral, bipartisan basis, we would move this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a solution in search of a problem. It is an omnibus bill that has been cobbled together in a back room by the Republican leadership. While the Resources Committee has considered some of these bills, not every bill made it through the committee process. In fact, two of the measures in this bill were never reported out of committee, and no committee considered this omnibus bill. So much for regular order.

Madam Speaker, we have a number of major time-sensitive issues that we should be tackling here in this Congress. We should be extending unemployment benefits for the 1.6 million Americans whose benefits expired on December 28, and the 72,000 more who lose them each week we fail to act. We

should be raising the minimum wage to help the too many Americans who work two jobs and still struggle to make ends meet. We should be finding common ground on comprehensive immigration reform to finally fix our broken immigration system. We should be bringing to the floor a clean bill to raise the debt ceiling, which yesterday Treasury Secretary Lew said we will hit by the end of the month. Defaulting on our national debt risks another downgrade of our credit rating. But we are not considering any of those items today.

Instead, we have before us another cobbled-together lands bill that goes much further than just expanding hunting and fishing opportunities on public lands. It undermines a number of commonsense, longstanding environmental laws that protect the beautiful lands that outdoor enthusiasts love, and it is loaded up with an array of unrelated provisions, like making it easier to import polar bear trophies.

Madam Speaker, let me remind my colleagues that 75 percent of all Federal lands are open to recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. There are ample opportunities for hunters and fishermen to pursue these recreational activities, and H.R. 3590 effectively overrides several important, commonsense conservation laws, and elevates hunting and shooting ahead of all other legitimate uses of land. It does so without including several important bipartisan reauthorizations sought by outdoor sportsmen and -women and conservation groups.

Not only is the underlying bill bad policy, the process of bringing this bill is lousy. Despite the fact that this omnibus bill wasn't considered by any committee, the Rules Committee decided to close down the amendment process. The truth is that this rule makes in order every single Republican amendment, while only making in order one-third of the Democratic amendments. So much for openness and so much for fairness, Madam Speaker.

I am particularly disappointed that last night the Rules Committee failed to make in order an amendment that I was proud to offer with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and several other of my colleagues that would have reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program uses royalties from oil and gas drilling to protect and preserve access to Federal and State lands. The stateside program has been especially important to the creation of parks and recreational facilities in my home State of Massachusetts. The Holt amendment reauthorizing LWCF is critical. This program will expire soon, and it needs to be reauthorized. The Holt amendment is germane and does not require any waivers, yet the Republican leadership blocked it, along with two-thirds of the amendments offered by the Democrats.

□ 1230

Madam Speaker, H.R. 3590 is a bill in search of a problem. We saw a similar package last year that went nowhere in the Senate. I expect a similar fate for this year's version, because gutting environmental laws is a nonstarter for so many Members.

Madam Speaker, we should be focusing our time on the real challenges facing our economy. We should be extending unemployment insurance. It is unconscionable that we are just sitting here doing things like this, things that are going nowhere, while so many of our fellow Americans have lost their unemployment benefits. What are they to do? These are people looking for jobs and can't find them. We should be raising the minimum wage. We should be giving the American people a raise.

My friends on the other side of the aisle complain about all these government social programs. Well, the fact is that in the United States of America you can work full time and still earn so little that you will require things like food stamps and other government subsidies. We should stop subsidizing places like McDonald's or Walmart who don't pay their workers a livable wage.

We should raise the minimum wage. If you work in this country and you work full time, you ought not to have to live in poverty. We should fix our broken immigration system. We should also pass a clean extension of the debt ceiling so that we don't ruin this economy. These are the things we should be talking about. These are the things we should be debating. Those are the priorities facing our country and we are doing nothing. So, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this rule and on the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts in not only his arguments, many of which were made in the Rules Committee last night as we properly went through, I believe rather meticulously, in answers to what the gentleman brought up. It is important to note that three Democrat amendments were withdrawn. One Democrat amendment was not germane, and several other Democrat amendments I think we effectively said they will be tackled either in another piece of legislation or, because they are a larger bill that needs to be heard by the committee, updated. And, in fact, the land bill is set to be done next year, 2015, with its expiration. The chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Washington, DOC HASTINGS, very meticulously covered his thoughts and ideas about that. And he told the Rules Committee that, in fact, he did believe that it would need to be updated on a bipartisan basis.

DOC HASTINGS, as the chairman, also stated that the majority of his bills that he had brought to the committee, at least under his chairmanship, were done on a bipartisan basis, where there was an agreement within the committee to move the bills, and while there may be disagreements about all the parts of the legislation, that they garnered respect from each other out of their committee. It was not the Republican leadership. In fact, it was the Rules Committee that made the decision based upon testimony that they heard upstairs, listening to the committee chairman, understanding the committee's thoughts and ideas, and then moving appropriately.

The gentleman from Massachusetts does make other points about jobs bills. And I would point to a Congressional Budget Office, nonpartisan CBO report that came out today that talks about the effects of a new update about the Affordable Care Act, which is known, as President Obama alluded to here, as ObamaCare. The word ''ObamaCare,'' when used in that context, will push the equivalent of about 2 million American workers out of the labor market by 2017 as employees decide either to work fewer hours or to drop out altogether, according to the latest estimates from the Congressional Budget Office.

They said that there is a major jump in the nonpartisan agency's projection. It suggests that the health care law's initiatives and the incentives in it are driving business and people to choose government-sponsored benefits rather then work.

> CBO estimates that the ACA will reduce the total number of hours worked, on net, by about 1.5 to 2 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024, almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor—given the new taxes and other incentives they will face and the financial benefits some will receive.

CBO analysts wrote this in their new economic outlook.

They further stated that the rollout problems with the Affordable Care Act, known as the ACA, last year will mean that only some estimated 6 million people will sign up through the State-based exchanges, rather than the 7 million that the CBO had originally said would sign up.

What this means is that the laws that were passed as a result of President Obama, NANCY PELOSI being Speaker of the House, and HARRY REID being the Senate Majority Leader, they passed laws which are substantially reducing the number of people who actually work in America. There was a net some 230,000 people that lost their job this last month. The Affordable Care Act continues to be the number one reason why American businesses and small business employers do not hire more workers in this country.

The gentleman is correct that the Democrat leadership as well as ranking members from the Ways and Means Committee and the Budget Committee have approached the Rules Committee and asked for us to extend by 1.3 million people the number of people who would be extended long-term benefits.

I had a discussion with both SANDY LEVIN of the Ways and Means Committee and CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking member at the Budget Committee, and told them that the Republican Party in the House of Representatives has, since the President initiated this action and it was passed in the House, that we saw where there would be millions of people who would lose their jobs, that we would have unemployment at the numbers that we have, and that there is not one unintended consequence in this. These were well known, they were well understood. They were simply ignored by Democrats and the media as a possible probable outcome.

So I told both these gentlemen when they came to the Rules Committee that I would be very pleased to engage with them on a private basis, as a Member of Congress and them as a Member of Congress, on a way that we could add 1.3 million jobs if we were going to extend the unemployment compensation.

I believe it is immoral for this country to have as a policy extending long-term unemployment to people rather than us working on the creation of jobs. A job is the most important attribute, I believe, in a free enterprise system of a person, a family circumstance—for a husband, a wife, children when they are able at the appropriate age—to be able to have a job, to learn to take care of themselves, to be able to meet their needs, to be able to become engaged in their community and have self-respect enough to know that jobs are important.

I think too much time we have been hung up on—instead of the creation of jobs, we talk about the symptoms that are related to—unemployment and long-term unemployment. In this case, the President of the United States thoughtfully articulates the need for us to make sure we help people, but I believe he errs on the side of not pushing jobs bills, coming to the table as the President—as he said he would when he was a candidate, as he should as President—of working with Republicans and Democrats on well-understood ways that you create more jobs.

The President has chosen not to do this. It continues to be a 5-year pattern. I would note that when we had many of these same issues, or similar, when President Clinton was in office, he worked with Republicans. Granted, they were Republican ideas: balance the budget, welfare reform, cutting taxes, reducing rules and regulations. I do admit that is a complete Republican agenda. But we saw where one Democrat President joined with Republicans to work for a great opportunity for us to grow our economy, to face down other nations who were willing to not only grow their economies at our expense, but to add American workers and a brighter future for all Americans.

The Republican Party House leadership—Speaker JOHN BOEHNER and Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR—have repeatedly stood at this podium for 5 years, and we have a constant theme, and that is: let's work together, not on raising taxes, not on more rules and regulations, not on job-killing health care ideas, but, rather, initiatives that the private sector—CEOs, small business leaders—say will help them to understand better the things that they need to go employ Americans.

Instead, the Democrat majority chose to do a bill, the Affordable Care Act, that at that time more than 55 percent of Americans opposed. We were told wait until you learn about it, you are going to love this; not just read it to learn what is in it, but the longer that you have it out there, it is going to be a real attribute.

Well, let me tell you what. We are going to find out this October when, instead of 8 million Americans are going to lose their health care and have to make decisions, there are going to be 80 million people. It will be at that time, or perhaps slightly before, when the American people will understand it was one party, one group of people—they are called the Republicans—who tried to warn us, who tried to hold some 47 individual votes on individual pieces of the Affordable Care Act that ruin employment, that make taxes even higher and move jobs overseas.

This is why the Republican Party is here today moving this bill. We will be here with a water bill tomorrow on the floor, and we will continue down the pathway of showing the differences of what we are for. We are for the American worker. We are for growing jobs. We believe the GDP is an embarrassment, and we believe that unemployment is immoral and we should add jobs.

So I am going to join my colleague SANDY LEVIN and my colleague CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, and we are going to see if we can craft something that we would have on this floor. But it has got to net add over a million jobs, because that is what America needs, a real answer, not rhetoric.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, let me just say to my colleague from Texas, I think the Republican Party, and especially the Republican leadership of this House, should be ashamed of the obstructionism that has gone on to block every major initiative that this President has put forward to try to create jobs, and I think they should be ashamed of their indifference toward working families in this country.

My colleague talks about the Affordable Care Act. Millions and millions of people now have health insurance who before did not have it. That is just a fact. You may not like it, but it is a fact. Being a woman is no longer considered a preexisting condition with regard to health care. That is a fact. That is a good thing. That is a good thing. I would like to think my Republican colleagues would cheer that. Millions of young people can stay on their parents' insurance while they are looking for a job so they have the security of health care. That is a good thing.

CBO continues to say that the Affordable Care Act will reduce our deficit and repealing it, as my Republican friends want to do, would increase the deficit. That is nuts.

I repeat. What we should be talking about on this floor is extending unemployment insurance for those who have lost it; 1.6 million people lost it on December 28 and 73,000 people have lost it each additional week that has passed. The fact that we don't have a sense of urgency to do something about that is shameful. That is what we should be talking about.

My colleagues say we should have a pay-for, notwithstanding the fact that George Bush extended long-term unemployment benefits on a number of occasions and they never asked for a pay-for. But my colleague from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) came up to the Rules Committee with a pay-for saying we would pay for it with the savings from the farm bill. My friends say, well, that is not enough. I don't know what is enough.

□ 1245

How long does this indifference have to continue?

We need to do immigration reform. We need to raise the minimum wage so that when you work in this country you don't live in poverty. With regard to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we want to extend it for 5 years, not for a year at a time. We want to give communities an opportunity to plan—that is a good thing—and my friends have blocked that. It was germane, and my Republican friends said, no, you can't have a debate and a vote on it on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, I am going to urge that we defeat the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3370, the bipartisan House companion to the flood insurance premium increase relief bill, which the Senate has already passed. I also want to say to my colleagues that it is an issue we should be talking about now. That is more important than this bill that is before us and that is going nowhere.

To discuss the urgency of passing flood insurance relief, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I would like to thank my colleague from Massachusetts for yielding the time.

I also urge all of my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the rule and on the previous question so that we can take up and vote on the Senate-passed bill from last week, which would provide some relief to families and businesses across America from these unconscionable increases in flood insurance rates. It

would also give us time to work on a bipartisan solution.

Madam Speaker, for the past few months, I have offered on every single piece of legislation moving through the Rules Committee to this floor an amendment that would provide some relief to families and businesses across America on the flood insurance relief.

Here is why it is important.

We are dealing with the unintended consequences of a bill that Congress passed in 2012, which people were not aware of, that was going to really suck our neighbors with these high flood insurance increases, and FEMA did not follow through on their responsibilities. So the best course of action now is to pause. Kudos to the Senate. Last week, by a broad bipartisan vote, 67 members in the Senate passed a flood bill with the input of Realtors, families, businesses, and chambers of commerce from all across the country. It is vital that the House take up this bill right away.

Let me give you a few examples from back home in the Tampa Bay Area.

Paul Page lives in Ruskin, Florida. He says:

> My name is Paul Page. I am a retired, 30-percent disabled veteran living in Ruskin, Florida. I need your help now. I purchased my home in December of 2012. My flood insurance was $1,400 per year, but thanks to the Biggert-Waters Act of 2012, my flood insurance is rising to $5,400 a year. Please help me now.

James Smith in south Tampa owns property. His premium will go from $2,000 per year to $9,000 per year.

Frank and Shirley Davis in Shore Acres in St. Petersburg just listed their home for $175,000, but they are going to have a new annual premium of $4,000 that has now negated any chance they have of selling their home.

This is happening all across the country.

Madam Speaker, with this Republican majority, people have called it the ''do-nothing Congress.'' They are very skeptical that the Republican-controlled Congress can respond to middle class families and provide economic relief where it is needed. Here is a chance for the Republican majority to step up and address a very severe economic issue for families and businesses all across this country. The longer the Republican leadership puts this off, the greater economic harm it will cause to families and businesses across America.

Vote ''no'' on the previous question and the rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have great respect for the gentlewoman from Florida. I would like to affirm that she has come to the Rules Committee and that it is the Rules Committee that has been pondering these questions and will continue to.

The Rules Committee, as of several weeks ago, attempted to work with—on a bipartisan basis—the Financial Services Committee, and there were not agreements that were done there on a bipartisan basis, so I think the committee of jurisdiction needs an opportunity to be able to faithfully look at it and to come up with an answer. I think a backstop would be as the Senate has done, which is simply to delay things for 4 years because of this government's inability to effectively do what they were tasked with doing.

Notwithstanding, I very much appreciate the gentlewoman and her constant comments, not just to me but also to members of the Rules Committee, in order for us to understand that we do have to come up with an answer on this. I wish today were that answer. We will continue to work at it, and I appreciate the gentlewoman very much for her continued insistence with me. I have also told one of my and her colleagues—the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—as well as members of the Rules Committee that, on the Republican side, we will continue to work on this, and I expect us to be successful.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I think the Rules Committee ought to stop pondering and maybe start acting.

With that, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING).

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I heard the gentleman from Texas say—and I appreciate his intensity—that he believes it is a flawed insurance policy that is government-sponsored. If that is the case, then it should be delayed, and he is willing to shut down the government to do it. I want to talk about something that is a flawed government insurance plan that is scientifically proven to be wrong—no debate about it—and that should be delayed, too.

I have a family in my hometown of Bourne, Massachusetts, who just bought a house. They bought that house for $240,000. They had a $400 bill—the predecessors did—for flood insurance. They were shocked, and I was shocked: that bill has now increased to $44,000 a year. If you take away the value of their home, in about 2 or 3 years, with the payments for flood insurance at that rate, it will be the whole value of their home.

I want to also tell you that it is a government taking, in effect, I think, to have this policy in effect because, if they go to sell that home and if someone has to get a mortgage to buy it, as most people have to do, the value of that home is going to be diminished. Someone is probably going to have to pay cash—maybe pay $100,000 for a $240,000 home. That is government reaching in, taking the value of their nest egg—of all of their life savings of the place they live—away from them.

Now, I said it is scientifically proven. I want to show you. I went to the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Their coastal study experts there—scientists, engineers—said that what FEMA did in establishing the maps upon which these rates are based is flawed. In fact, they used the Pacific Ocean methodology on the Atlantic Ocean. That is how fundamental the flaws are.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KEATING. There is my county in Plymouth, which I represent. By taking this through the appeals process and bringing in the study that I was able to obtain from UMass, they took the whole county of Plymouth in Massachusetts, and it now has this insurance plan delayed.

It shouldn't just be my county in Plymouth that is delayed. FEMA can't do this throughout the whole country, as there is not enough time, but it should not just be my county. It should be all of Massachusetts. It should be the Northeast. It should be all the coastal areas and all the river areas in this country. They should be treated with fairness.

All we need on this is a vote. There are now 182 cosponsors, about a third of them Republicans. Let's get it to the floor. Let's be fair. When we have scientific evidence about a flawed insurance plan, let's make sure we get a vote on it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker and Members of Congress, we should not have to even debate this any further. It is outrageous that we have learned what we have learned about the failed implementation of FEMA with the Biggert-Waters plan and that we will not do something about it.

Let me just say this: I joined with Mrs. Biggert, and we tried to reform the National Flood Insurance Program. We went about it in a way that we thought would make it possible for people to be able to afford—to pay for—the National Flood Insurance Program and not in a way that would cause them to lose their homes. It passed through this House. It passed through the other body. It went out to FEMA. What did FEMA do? It did not do what we instructed it to do. First of all, we said: Have a study on affordability. The second thing we said was: Look at the way you do mapping and remap it. We encouraged them to get good data to be able to do this work.

They have failed us, and they have failed the citizens of this country. Not only have they failed the citizens of this country, but middle class people in this country—homeowners—are now about to lose their homes. A California family is facing a flood insurance premium increase from $1,700 per year up to $22,000 per year—an increase of over

1,100 percent. I have traveled around the country. I was down in Louisiana. We have Members across the country who are representing Florida and New York and California, on and on and on. They are begging this Congress to do something about these unintended consequences.

I was coauthor on the Biggert-Waters bill. I know what we attempted to do. These unintended consequences are just that. It should not be happening this way. This is not a partisan bill. This is a bill that has got support from Democrats and Republicans. You heard the previous speaker talk about 183 Members on this bill. The Senate passed it out with flying colors, and now it is on us. What are we going to do? Are we going to allow middle class families to lose their homes because FEMA has not done its job and has not done it correctly? Are we going to allow these families to be put out of homes that they have lived in for years because now, with these increased premiums, they can't sell them? This is unconscionable. We can do better than this. I can go on and on and tell you about the families and the letters we have received.

It is time for the House of Representatives to consider this legislation. We must address this problem now before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to buy or sell their homes. Bring it to the floor. I have talked with the chairman of our committee. I would like everybody to address concerns to the chairman and get this bill to the floor so that we can help our homeowners and our constituents.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in fact, once again, the gentlewoman from Los Angeles, I believe, represents a truth. We need to get this done.

I think the committee last year, as I recall, began a process of re-looking at it, of trying to work through this issue. It is my belief and hope—and I have told members of the committee—that I intend to stay after this, but the Financial Services Committee does have the jurisdiction, and we are looking for an answer rather quickly.

I will continue to work with the gentlewoman from Los Angeles. I will continue to work with the gentleman from Florida, Judge HASTINGS, and I will continue to work with Ms. CASTOR from Tampa on this issue. I know that my dear friend from New York, Congressman MEEKS, has spoken with me a number of times about this.

So it is my hope that the Financial Services Committee will come with a recommendation—with a piece of legislation—on a bipartisan basis so that we can address this, and we will wait until that is accomplished. That is what I have told members of the committee. That is my hope, and I will continue to be engaged in this.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, let me just say that we don't have to wait for the Financial Services Committee to act. The Rules Committee shares jurisdiction on this bill. We should bring this to the floor now.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, last week, I received hundreds of calls and emails from my constituents across the Rockaway Peninsula, Broad Channel, and Jamaica Bay in New York's Fifth Congressional District. Most had been struck hard by the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, and were eagerly hopeful that relief was finally underway with the Senate's passage of the flood insurance relief bill.

My constituents then asked: How long will it take, and when will the House pass the Senate bill? Why is the House not taking up the Senate bill, or why is it being delayed? Let's put politics aside because, if there is ever an issue that should not involve politics, it is this issue, because this storm struck Democrats and Republicans. It struck everybody—rich and poor. Everybody was affected by it. So when will we put those differences aside so that we can get something done?

□ 1300

''Why?'' they ask, Madam Speaker.

It is time for us to respond to these Americans who have suffered too long and who need relief now. It is time we hear the voices of hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens who have been devastated by the unintended consequences and the botched implementation of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act that led to dramatic increases in the cost of flood insurance. It is time that we on this side of the Capitol take up this legislation and address the problem before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to sell their home.

I hope that, unlike what took place when we initially asked for relief, it is not the most extreme wing of the Republican Party that is blocking or stopping real relief for our Nation's homeowners and that we pass this important reform legislation today.

Madam Speaker, it is time that we pass the Homeowners Flood Insurance Act. It is time that we get it done. We need it done today. We need it done right now for relief for American citizens.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, last week, the Senate passed a bipartisan bill to fix the National Flood Insurance Program to protect homeowners from unaffordable rate hikes. It is beyond time for the House to follow suit by passing this bipartisan bill, which will help millions of Americans facing steep flood insurance rate increases, including thousands of residents across the Palm Beaches and Treasure Coast.

The bill includes additional funding for FEMA to redraw flood maps accurately so homeowners do not face erroneous rate hikes in my district and around the country. Any proposed rate hikes must be delayed until the affordability study gives Congress a better understanding of how unaffordable rate hikes would negatively impact the Flood Insurance Program.

I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can pass this bipartisan, commonsense solution that will provide much-needed relief for homeowners across America.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Chairman, I appeal to you to make this an urgent issue. Urgency, I think, is very critical here. So I rise in opposition to the previous question so that we can consider the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, over 74,000 National Flood Insurance Program claims were submitted in New Jersey from policyholders. To date, the NFIP has paid over $3.5 billion in Sandy claims. It has served as a lifeline to thousands of New Jersey residents whose lives were turned upside down by the storm. The funds paid out through those claims have helped our neighbors rebuild their homes and businesses.

Regardless of what political affiliation or persuasion, we are all affected by this. Estimates indicate that the total cost of Sandy will be between $12 and $15 billion, making Sandy the second-costliest flood event after Hurricane Katrina.

So, it is true that we need to make changes to ensure that NFIP remains solvent. However, the rollout of the 2012 reforms to NFIP have been fraught with issues.

I am hearing from constituents in towns such as Little Ferry and Moonachie, particularly, which were devastated by Sandy. This is destroying property values and disrupting the real estate markets in the communities of New Jersey and across the country. That is why it is so crucial that we revisit flood insurance reform by passing H.R. 3370.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the gentleman.

This legislation will prevent premium rate hikes until FEMA completes the affordability study called for in the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reform legislation, giving FEMA a chance to implement an affordability framework before implementing new rates. The bill establishes

an appeal process for remapping and creates an advocate position within FEMA.

Just last week, a bipartisan majority in the Senate did approve this bill, as you already heard. It is time to bring this vital legislation to the floor.

Again, I appeal to the chairman. This is urgent, not simply because we had two major storms in the last few years, but because Americans all over this country are affected one way or another, if not by a storm off the ocean, a snowstorm or even worse. So I ask you specifically to do what you can to put this in front of us as soon as possible.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey, my dear friend, who joins with others of his colleagues who, in fact, most politely and appropriately have brought this issue to the Rules Committee.

I will tell you that there was an assertion made a minute ago that I was unaware of, and that was a jurisdictional issue that evidently the Rules Committee does have. I have tried to be forthright with this the whole time, and I believe it is the right thing for the men and women of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party who have approached me. I have consistently tried to invoke myself into the process with an answer, through the committee, which I thought was solely the committee of jurisdiction.

I will look at the gentleman from Massachusetts and the gentleman from New Jersey, both very dear friends, who see me every day. I am not trying to evade. I am not trying to obfuscate. I am not trying to pass the buck on this. I have indicated I will be willing to be a part of this compromise. I will look back at the gentleman, my friend, Mr. PASCRELL, and tell him I am personally involved in this. I will continue to be involved.

I am delighted that the Senate came up with their answer, which was a short-term answer, not a fix. I believe that there is a fix that is trying to be looked at right now—one which I think is more amenable to the circumstance. If that effort fails, I will continue to stay in touch with not only the ranking member of the committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER, who has pressed me also, but also with my friends who have approached me today.

I will very respectfully acknowledge that what they are doing here today in coming to the floor to do this is appreciated. What I would say to them is I don't know that voting against the rule, believing they are going to take this down, would get this process done. It is not included in the rule. But I will tell each of my friends that are here today that I am going to continue to work on this, and I intend to have an answer quickly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank my friend for yielding.

Madam Speaker, last week, the President called on Congress to embark on a year of action—one in which we all work together to put opportunity and financial security within the grasp of America's families.

Just a few days later, the Senate took bipartisan action to protect thousands of homeowners in my home State of Florida and across the country from massive premium hikes on their flood insurance. These hikes are breaking the backs of America's families. They are bringing down home values at a time when our housing market is just starting to pick up again.

There is no question that the financial health of the thousands of families who could lose their homes as a result of these premium rate increases has to be an urgent priority of this House. Rather than gutting environmental protections, let's focus on the concerns of real homeowners. Let's pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act so that FEMA can reform the flood insurance program and protect America's families at the same time.

It is urgent that we move forward. I thank the gentleman for making this an urgent priority. The way to do this is to proceed with this today.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act overwhelmingly passed the Senate with bipartisan support. It needs to pass the House of Representatives. We need to stabilize flood insurance rates before families are further impacted by FEMA's poor implementation, inaccurate mapping, and incomplete data, which has led to unimaginable increases in premiums.

We came together on a bipartisan basis in 2012 to reform the National Flood Insurance Program and put it on a path to stability, but Congress never intended to allow the punitive flood insurance premiums FEMA is now imposing on homeowners.

A constituent of mine from Milford, Connecticut, anticipates paying a rate as much as 5,000 percent higher than he was paying. And yes, I have heard from many constituents. The Senate legislation would delay these increases until FEMA completes the study ensuring that new rates are affordable for families, as was called for in the 2012 law.

182 Members of this body, Republicans and Democrats, support a similar bill. We can get this done. We need to get this done. And we can do it today. I call on the Speaker to stop fiddling while Rome burns.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART).

Mr. ENYART. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

It is crucial that we fix the critical problems created by the rushed implementation of the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. We cannot ensure the National Flood Insurance Program's long-term viability at the expense of homeowners and potential buyers.

Opponents of the Senate-passed flood insurance bill say that it overwhelmingly benefits wealthy Americans who buy beachfront property. I urge those opponents to come to my southern Illinois district. My district borders more than 150 miles on the mighty Mississippi. The folks who live there are not owners of second homes or vacation rentals, but are middle class families in Jackson, Union, and Alexander Counties, and in the American Bottom in the Metro-East St. Louis area.

Without reform, people in my district and across the U.S. will see their property values plummet. Many of these properties have been family homes for generations and have never once endured flooding.

I urge that we pass this act now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), a cosponsor of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I will take Mr. SESSIONS at his word, and I believe him to be sincere and genuine in his desire to see this problem fixed.

I would just remind Mr. SESSIONS and Congress that we don't have time to wait on this issue. Every day, there is a sale that is delayed or a sale that doesn't go through because the flood insurance is so high and the new purchaser doesn't want to pay for it. And every day, there is an owner short-selling a house because they have to get out of it, and they can't afford to wait.

So, when we talk about home ownership, we are talking about responsible Americans. We are talking about 1.7 million people in this country that saved up to participate in the bedrock of the American Dream. And now, government and FEMA and Congress are turning a piece of the American Dream into a government-made nightmare, and we have the ability here today to fix this.

Right now, we are not asking for politics. We are not trying to be overdramatic. We are just asking for a solution. We want to fix it. In fact, we are here today talking about a Republican bill that solves the problem. That is because, for me, this is not about politics. It is about people. It is about purpose. It is not about making sure that rich people who own riverfront, lakefront, or oceanfront property are taken

care of. It is about our seniors who want a home on Main Street or smack dab in our communities. They saved. They sacrificed. They did everything right. They played by all the rules. And now FEMA has come and decided they are going to create new flood maps.

The sad part about it is, if you are a community and you built levees and increased flood protection and you did it with your own money, FEMA does not even count it, because they didn't pay for it. So communities have saved money to help themselves, like we do in America. If we have a problem, we fix it. My community, which put up millions of dollars to build levees, doesn't even get that recognized because the government didn't pay for it.

Madam Speaker, I would just ask all my colleagues, let's do what is right. Let's help people, and let's put people over politics.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman from Louisiana is most accurate when he describes the problems which are associated with the way FEMA has initiated this process.

□ 1315

I will not sit here and beat anyone up over what they did or did not do. I recognize that I have disagreements myself. I have disagreements with myself, as a Member of Congress from Dallas, Texas.

What I would say to the gentleman—and he is sitting right next to the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee—these are issues that have to be resolved, and they are larger, I believe.

What you have heard me say today, I think they are trying to look at solving more than just the extension problem. They are trying to solve some problems. I could be wrong about that. I am not in the negotiation; I am around the negotiation.

But the gentleman, most assuredly, has come to the floor today for the right reason, I believe, with a pretty good message. Everybody is impacted that lives in these areas. We don't need to say one group of people or another or people that live in high-rises or low-rises.

What we do need to say is—and acknowledge, and I do—that each of my colleagues—I have been approached by colleagues on the Republican side and the Democrat side. I intend to stay after this issue, and I respect the gentleman for the way he approached it today, and I owe him. I am looking at him right in the eye. I owe him an answer on this too. I am part of the problem, just as he is, and we have got to find a solution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, we have a crisis, a crisis in Florida and across this Nation where our constituents are facing skyrocketing jumps in flood insurance premiums, making homeownership unaffordable.

Madam Speaker, floods are not partisan, and homeownership makes communities safer, more secure, and more economically vibrant.

Madam Speaker, let's fix this crisis now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my colleague.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today to urge a ''no'' vote on the previous question so this House can bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

This bipartisan legislation will provide critical relief for families who have been devastated by outrageous flood insurance increases required by recent changes to the Flood Insurance Program.

FEMA's insistence on moving forward with these extreme rate hikes, without first completing an affordability study and certifying that their mapping techniques are accurate, as required by Congress in the Biggert-Waters Act, has created a crisis for working families who can't afford to pay 5 or 10 times more for flood insurance.

Before we ask the American taxpayer to pay 1 cent more in premiums, we need to ensure that FEMA is implementing the Flood Insurance Program in a fair and lawful way.

Now, we are not asking to repeal that law. We are just asking for a timeout while we figure this out, and we are asking that we do an affordability study so that we don't force people out of their homes. There is no sense doing it after the people are gone. We need this done in the right way.

We can help middle class homeowners across the country by voting ''no'' on the previous question and bringing up the Homeowner Protection Act.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am here with the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee. She and I represent a city built in the desert suffering from a drought. We interrupted our rain prayer meeting to come here and to talk about how flood insurance is critical to the national interest.

We should not burden our economy with a situation in which people can't buy their home, sell a home, live in their home. It is time for us to defeat the previous question motion and take up on the floor of this House a bill that had overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate, that has 182 cosponsors here in the House.

It is time to stop partisan wrangling and deal with bipartisan legislation critical to homeowners from one coast to the other, and yes, a few in Los Angeles as well.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, with great respect to the gentleman, I would, once again, offer an explanation, and that is that what they are talking about with this motion to recommit is not germane to the bill and would not go back to the committee of jurisdiction and so, by voting against what would be the rule or for a motion to recommit, would not accomplish what the gentleman is trying to do.

That is why I have tried to take, Madam Speaker, as I have tried meticulously, with speaker after speaker, my friends, my colleagues that have a strong opinion about this, I have tried to say to them that I do recognize that, while I don't believe I have the jurisdictional elements within the Rules Committee, that I will continue to work on this, and believe that there can be an answer.

So I would respond back to the gentleman from Los Angeles and tell him, thank you for coming to the floor, but an answer for this really needs to come from the committee, that we need to then work through the Rules Committee and get it on the floor. I am committed to that entire process and will continue to do that.

I thank the gentleman from Los Angeles, my friend, for him taking time to come down, but I don't want him to believe that, by winning a vote on the motion to recommit, that it will have any impact on that endeavor.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I will ask the gentleman if he has any other speakers.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman. I have no further requests for speakers either.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Again, I urge all my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the chairman of the Rules Committee expressing his willingness to ponder and reflect and consider and contemplate and speculate on this legislation. But, look, time is of the essence here.

If the House votes to defeat the previous question, you know, we can bring this up. There is no reason why we can't bring this up. The Rules Committee has jurisdiction over this issue too, and if there are any glitches here, quite frankly, the Rules Committee can meet immediately and waive all the rules, because that is what my friends do on so many other bills.

One of the frustrations that we have on our side of the aisle is that my friends in the majority keep on bringing bills to the floor that mean nothing, that are going nowhere.

This issue of flood insurance is a big deal. You have heard from Members from all across the country. They want action now, not sometime in the future. They want it now. By voting to defeat the previous question, we can bring this up, we can deal with this, we can actually help some people in this country for a change and do the right thing.

So I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question, and if they don't defeat the previous question, defeat the rule.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I will, once again, do the very best that I can and, with great respect and appreciation to my very dear friend from Massachusetts—who has been a part of, since I recall at least early December, the discussion in the Rules Committee with the gentleman, his colleague, my colleague, from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—Judge HASTINGS pushed this issue appropriately. The members of the committee from Florida have graciously pushed that issue forward.

The bottom line is that I believe the gentleman and I need to meet to speak about the jurisdiction that he refers to. The jurisdiction that I believe that the Rules Committee has is not related to the policy. The policy, which is what the provisions that are contained within the problems that we are talking about today, the policy issues are within the jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee.

Today, we are on the floor of the House of Representatives with a rule with the jurisdiction to the Natural Resources Committee. The motion to recommit is not germane to the Natural Resources Committee.

So voting, or believing that you could, through a motion to recommit, winning that, and getting this bill on the floor through the previous question is simply not something that I believe is realistic, or something that we should even suggest to people that would happen.

What we are talking about today is a bill with the jurisdiction through the Natural Resources Committee, and I would like to confine my remarks now on the bill that is before the House.

Madam Speaker, I have had the pleasure of growing up as a lifelong Texan but had the opportunity to visit and live in other States in our great United States.

I have had an opportunity to visit national parks, national lands, land that is owned by all the American people. As an active Eagle Scout, and the father of two Eagle Scouts—and my father is an Eagle Scout—we have been in national parks all over this country.

That is what this legislation is about today. It is about national parks and the use therein. Some number of bills that have been cobbled together, yes, they were cobbled together so that we could come up with a policy, a policy that is trying to be worked on through a group of men and women here in the United States House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis, as well as a bicameral basis.

We had an understanding that we would try and do this about this week early last year. So I want you to know that what we are doing is bringing forth a bill which is important to people in how they deal with their families' recreation, as well as the importance of vital economic help to various areas of the United States.

I have witnessed the educational and recreational opportunities that we are talking about today, and they possess near limitless opportunities for not only my generation but the next generation of Americans who want to enjoy America.

I think that we, today, by this bill, have given us a refreshed new opportunity, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, to address that issue. That is why I support increasing access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, so others may have this same opportunity.

So I am a ''yes'' and would encourage my colleagues to be ''yes'' on what the legislation is about today, not something that is not germane and another issue, which I have tried to appropriately address here today. It is urgent, but that is not what we are doing right here right now.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule, ''yes'' on the underlying legislation, and to be a part of moving this bill to the Senate, then on to the President's desk.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 470 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

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. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, 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 Financial Services. 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. 3370.

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. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, 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.

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam 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 of this resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 193, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 34]

YEAS—225

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
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
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
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 (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
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 (IN)

NAYS—193

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
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
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
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
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
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
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei
Andrews
Bishop (GA)
Cassidy
Gosar
Johnson (GA)
Lujan Grisham (NM)
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Rush
Schwartz
Smith (WA)
Stockman

□ 1354

Mr. POLIS and Mses. HANABUSA and BASS changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 234, noes 185, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 35]

AYES—234

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Enyart
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
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 (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions

Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOES—185

Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
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
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
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)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—12

Amodei
Andrews
Brownley (CA)
Cassidy
Gosar
Lujan Grisham (NM)
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Rush
Schwartz
Smith (WA)
Stockman

□ 1404

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, last night, on rollcall Nos. 32 and 33 for H.R. 1791 and H.R. 357, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both.

Today, on rollcall Nos. 34 and 35 for the Rule on H.R. 3590 and H. Res. 470, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on both.

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. 3590.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 470 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. 3590.

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

□ 1406

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. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Mr. NUGENT in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) 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.

Mr. Chairman, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act, H.R. 3590, is a package of eight bills that protect the right of American sportsmen to fish and hunt from arbitrary and unjustified bureaucratic restrictions and limitations. It will remove government roadblocks to those activities on certain public lands and guard against new regulations that threaten hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, this is a bipartisan bill. It is cosponsored by the Republican and Democrat chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Mr. LATTA of Ohio and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and the caucus vice chairs, Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. In addition, Mr. BENISHEK of Michigan, Mr. HUNTER of California, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska all deserve credit for leadership on these important issues.

This legislation ensures that Americans' ability to fish and hunt will not be arbitrarily limited by the whim of Federal bureaucrats.

Title I of this bill directly responds to bureaucratic threats posed by the EPA. In 1976, Congress barred the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, from regulating firearms and ammunition. However, this has not stopped attempts to circumvent the law by claiming that, while EPA may not be able to regulate ammunition, it can regulate components of ammunition and fishing tackle. This would be a massive power grab by the EPA despite a clear lack of legal authority.

Banning lead bullets and tackle would increase costs for hunters, sports shooters, and fishermen, and cause economic harm to outdoor sportsmen and the recreation industry. This legislation ensures that the EPA does not—does not, Mr. Chairman—have the authority to regulate ammunition and fishing tackle.

Title II of this bill makes more funding available to States for a longer period of time to create and maintain shooting ranges, which preserves American tradition.

Title III would direct the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to allow, with a permit, commercial filming on Federal lands for crews of five or fewer. This permit would ensure a fair return to the taxpayer in exchange for use of their lands.

Title IV of this bill would allow for the importation of legally taken polar bear hunting trophies from Canada that, through no fault of the sportsmen, have become trapped in a bureaucratic limbo. This is focused squarely on resolving existing permits snarled in red tape and does not open the door to any future imports.

The next two titles of the bill would allow sportsmen across the country to more easily obtain a Federal duck stamp by making them available for purchase online and would protect law-abiding individuals' constitutional right to bear arms on lands owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Title VII establishes a Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee in order to protect the rights of sportsmen while finding a balance with commonsense conservation.

The last title of the bill requires Federal land managers to support and facilitate use and access for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on Forest Service and BLM land. It protects sportsmen from arbitrary efforts by the Federal Government to block public lands from hunting and fishing activities by implementing an "open until closed" management policy. However, it does not prioritize hunting and fishing over other multiple uses of public lands.

Hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are longstanding American traditions that deserve our protection. This important legislation is not a solution in search of a problem. Regrettably, bureaucratic threats to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are very real. That is why this bill has

broad bipartisan support and the endorsement of over 36 sportsmen's organizations. So I again commend the bipartisan sponsors of this package of bills, and I encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In the past, I have voted for a number of the sportsmen promotion and protection packages. Unfortunately, it seems this one, with a number of extraneous and detrimental provisions to wilderness, wildlife refuges, and other areas, seems designed to turn what in the past has been a bipartisan consensus in favor of sportsmen's issues into a partisan issue, which is what we do with most everything around here these days, and that is unfortunate because we would be happy to address real problems as they are identified.

□ 1415

In this bill, we are going to essentially amend or override the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Refuge System Administration Act. These are all bedrock environmental provisions which protect public lands and wildlife and have not caused conflicts for sportsmen, hunters, fishers, and others.

Also, we have the throwaway little political thing. The EPA has already said: We don't have the authority to regulate land, and that is the end of it. But we are going to pass a law to say they don't have the authority that they don't have to regulate the land. Okay. Whatever. That is fine.

So then we also have a very broad agreement that hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent activities can and should and have and will, ongoing, take place in wildlife refuges and wilderness areas. In fact, there is so much agreement on this point that existing law clearly supports such activities. As a result, hunting and fishing are popular and commonplace, pursued on public lands, the vast majority of which, outside of national parks in the lower 48, are open to hunting and fishing.

Now, reasonable legislation seeking simply to emphasize the importance of these activities would have been noncontroversial, whatever minor adjustments we might need to make. But to have a blanket exemption for operations in the National Wildlife Refuge System from all environmental planning under NEPA, the purpose of such a broad waiver is unclear, the motivation is unclear. It is definitely and potentially, or at least probably, very—I can't say ''definitely.'' But it could well undermine management in refuges in ways that will actually degrade habitat, which will mean less hunting and fishing opportunities, and degrade water, which means less hunting and fishing opportunities. That seems contradictory to the meritorious title of the bill, which doesn't seem to be reflected in the various parts, some of which have been through hearings, some of which haven't.

Now, the filming on public lands, I haven't heard of the controversy. There are some who purport that there might be some kind of problem for people who want to do hunting and fishing videos, films—I have seen quite a few of them—on public lands. There is no example of a problem that has occurred, but the new authority with a fixed rate of a maximum of $200 for a permit, no matter how much the impact might be of the film crew, and further, to open the door for the use of motorized equipment in wilderness areas for these filming activities is very, very problematic, objectionable, and unnecessary at this point. Again, there has been nothing brought up in a hearing about a credible complaint from a film company that couldn't do its wildlife film or its hunting film because of restrictions that were placed upon them.

It also would allow the construction of temporary roads. Now, I appreciate the fact the manager's amendment is going to prohibit permanent roads within wilderness areas that are designated necessary for access to hunting and fishing, but even temporary roads in wilderness areas for hunting and fishing are a clear and unnecessary degradation, a violation, of the existing Wilderness Act. And many horseback hunters or hunters who access on foot in my State, I have never been petitioned by them to open up roads into wilderness areas so they can better hunt. They are concerned about the ongoing review and closure of roads by the Forest Service, and I have been actively involved in that.

But in this case, we are saying no. Now we can have temporary roads into wilderness areas, something that no one has ever asked me nor made a case that is necessary for hunting. So it is slightly improved from the early versions, but we are still concerned about temporary roads and that is not something we want in our wilderness areas. I don't think that weakening or changing the definition of ''wilderness'' helps expand access for hunting and fishing nor the opportunities in those areas.

Also, the bill has some pretty glaring omissions that actually would tremendously benefit the sportsmen's communities. That would be programs that support wetlands conservation, the preservation of outdoor recreation facilities, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which are key in expanding opportunities or protecting continued opportunities to hunt and fish as we see more and more urban encroachment onto traditional hunting and fishing areas. We could use those tools. We need those tools—they are both expired—and they are not allowed to be part of this package.

There were various other amendments offered that we will get to later in the discussion that were not allowed that could have improved this package. We will go through the amendment process and try to deal with some of the concerns, but at this point, as written and introduced, I would urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), my colleague.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chair, I am interested in title IV in this legislation, which is a good piece of legislation. The provision in title IV of H.R. 3590 has the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the President of the United States. This provision is the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act. It is a bipartisan measure that would make a very limited fix to an issue that affects a number of hunters nationwide.

Prior to the threatened listing of the worldwide polar bear population on May 15, 2008, there were a number of hunters that took hunting trips to Canada under Canadian law and United States law. These hunters followed all the rules at the time and were prevented from bringing in their polar bear trophy due to the threatened listing triggering an importation ban under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

My legislation, H.R. 3590, will allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue permits to only those qualified hunters with legally taken polar bear trophies prior to the May listing date. This legislation will allow up to 41 hunters to import their trophies from Canada.

As a result, roughly $41,000 would be available to the United States-Russia Polar Bear Conservation Fund to support conservation activities for the shared polar bear population. This is a provision that would bring in revenue for conservation activities that otherwise would not be funded.

As a result, I urge Members to support this legislation and keep in fact these are dead polar bears in storage hunted legally under the premise of Canadian law and United States law. This is a good part of this bill.

By the way, speaking of this bill, it is a good bill. From the State of Alaska are more parks and more refuges than any other State. The Refuge Department doesn't allow us to hunt on refuges in many areas. The Park Service definitely doesn't allow us to hunt. I am arguing that the park and refuge areas are set aside for the refuge managers themselves and not for the people of America, let alone the people of Alaska.

This legislation is the right way to go. Let's think about public lands, not the king's lands, not the administration's lands, but the lands of the people. This bill is a good bill. I urge the passage of this legislation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DAINES) assumed the chair.

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.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The gentleman from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), cochair of the Sportsmen's Caucus.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the ranking member of the committee, the gentleman from Oregon, for allowing me to speak in support of this legislation even though he has reserved time in opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Today's bill is the product of the work of members of the bipartisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, which I serve as cochair. The Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus is the largest caucus in Congress, boasting nearly 300 members. The caucus seeks to advance hunting, angling, shooting, and trapping legislative priorities. Today's bill is comprised of eight individual bills that seek to promote these interests.

Mr. Chairman, not only is hunting and fishing a great passion for millions of individuals like myself, it is also a major contributor to the U.S. economy. Mississippi, home to some of the world's finest duck, whitetail, and sport fishing, contributed $2.2 billion to the economy in 2011 alone.

My congressional district receives scores of visitors each year, including some Members of this body, who come to enjoy the vast natural resources that the Mississippi Delta has to offer. When these individuals visit Mississippi, they hire local outfitters, stay in our hotels, eat at our restaurants, pay State hunting fees, and purchase hunting gear like Primos brand hunting calls, which are produced in my district in Flora, Mississippi. In fact, it has been estimated that hunting and fishing supports 33,000 jobs in Mississippi.

Mr. Chairman, the bill before us today makes improvements to a wide range of issues, including the ability to purchase duck stamps online; statutorily establish the Wildlife Hunting and Heritage Conservation Council, which was administratively formed by Secretaries Salazar and Vilsack in 2012. It also reduces a financial burden on States and local governments for target range construction and maintenance. It also excludes commercial ammo and fishing tackle from being classified as toxic substances, which the EPA has agreed. It also directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to issue a permit and assess an annual fee for commercial filming crews of five people or fewer for activities on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. It also allows law-abiding citizens to transport firearms across Army Corps of Engineers projects like the hundreds of miles of levee that I have in my district. And it also opens up more Federal land to hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, while this bill makes tremendous strides to meet the needs of sportsmen, there are several other provisions that were not included in this bill that we must continue to push for, including an overhaul of the Red Snapper Management in the Gulf of Mexico, the ability to convert decommissioned oil rigs to fish habitat, and the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these issues.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3590.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer my support for H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, better known as the SHARE Act.

I commend my friend and cochair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Representative BOB LATTA of Ohio, for his leadership in guiding this bill to the floor.

I am also proud to join with the Sportsmen's Caucus cochairs, both Representative LATTA and Representative BENNIE THOMPSON of Mississippi, and vice chair Representative TIM WALZ of Minnesota in support of this important bill.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I would also like to thank Chairman DOC HASTINGS for his work and cooperation on behalf of America's sportsmen to support this legislation through the committee process.

As a sportsman, I am humbled to advocate for this community and help introduce this legislation to advance priorities for American anglers, hunters, and conservationists.

This commonsense package will expand opportunities for recreation, support fair treatment, and modernize programs for sportsmen, and includes a proposal I authored to allow migratory waterfowl hunters to purchase their annual Federal duck stamp online.

As vice chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I can proudly say that this provision is important to waterfowl hunters across the country. Title V, the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act, is supported by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and Ducks Unlimited.

I would also like to acknowledge Representative RON KIND as an original cosponsor of the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act. The gentleman from Wisconsin is a dedicated conservationist and longtime supporter and friend to sportsmen.

There is no cost to taxpayers. There is broad bipartisan support for this innovative idea, and this convenient 21st century delivery system will be utilized by thousands of American sportsmen in the future.

□ 1430

Again, I would encourage my colleagues to support this important package, H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I just inquire as to how much time remains on either side?

The ACTING CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) has 21½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this legislation, and I would hope that my colleagues will read it and look before they leap. It is called the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Unfortunately, this is mired in a muck of text in the legislation that I think does just the opposite of enhancement. It ought to read, ''Kill the Habitat and Wildlife and Enjoy a Dead Forest Act.''

This bill diminishes the conservation measures designed to protect the habitat for wildlife by creating loopholes in the Wilderness Act and weakens the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, process.

Title I, for example, amends the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the EPA from regulating toxic substances contained in bullets, angling lures, and other hunting equipment with respect to toxic substances.

It is not just people that are affected by toxic substances; so are animals. Here they prohibit barring lead in bullets. Now, California is a big hunter's State. Guess what? California State law prohibits the use of lead. Why? Because the Federal Government has spent millions, millions, and millions of dollars trying to restore the California condor. Does that count? Ask the Ventana and Post Ranch Inn. Post Ranch is $1,000 a night—nobody can afford that—but it is filled all the time. Why? Because you can see condors and mountain lions and sea otters and other things that we have protected by protecting their environment.

What does a condor die from? It eats dead things. It eats things that have been killed by bullets. It eats that lead, and guess what? It kills the condor. It is done over and over again. There is no question about this. This is the number

one cause of death in condors in California after we spent all this money trying to get them restored. This act wipes all that out.

It is going to hurt the economy, and you know what? People call themselves sportsmen. The sportsmen I know don't want to kill the wildlife by poison or destroying the habitat. That is why the bill passed in California banning lead bullets. This one prohibits States like California from doing that.

Even the military is moving toward pursuing a lead-free environment for their small arms. So it is a serious problem. This bill bans that. This is nuts.

Lead poisoning from ammunition is the way you kill off wildlife, not by a good shot. You kill it off by the poison that is left behind. That is why Governor Brown signed into law a ban on lead bullets, and they phased it in to 2019. This follows what at least 30 other States have already done in regulating lead ammunition in some manner.

So, if we really want to protect and enhance the environment, then we ought to do what the original conservationists did who were the hunters by switching to non-toxic ammunition, and allow them to continue on good conservation efforts, which is the heritage of hunters in this country.

This legislation is a step backwards for sportsmen. I am a fisherman. I certainly don't want to put stuff in the ocean or in lakes that is toxic, and conservation practices protect our public lands, our open spaces, and our wilderness areas.

So, I urge my colleagues to look before you leap. Don't jump in just because there are a bunch of people endorsing this bill. Look at the type. Look what it does. Look at the small print. I urge you to oppose this legislation until it can really be legislation that will be a Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act. As of now, it deserves your opposition.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield myself 2 minutes of the time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, or the SHARE Act.

I would like to talk a little bit about title VIII of the bill, which is the text of a bill that I introduced, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act. Like many of my colleagues here in Congress, hunting and fishing are an important part of the lives of the constituents in my district. I grew up in north Michigan, and like many of my constituents, I spent my summers fishing, my Octobers hunting grouse in the U.P. woods.

These traditions of spending quality time outdoors with our kids and grandkids are the kind of things that we must make sure are preserved for generations to come.

Mr. Chairman, this portion of the SHARE Act seeks to create an ''open until closed'' policy for sportsmen's use of Federal lands. As you know, nearly a quarter of the United States land mass, or over 500 million acres, are managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service. These lands are all owned by all Americans. It is important that the right to fully utilize these lands is ensured for future generations.

Over the years, legislative ambiguity in the Wilderness Act has opened the door for numerous lawsuits over the country. Rather than embracing sportsmen and -women for the conservationists that they are, anti-hunting and environmental groups have pursued an agenda of eliminating heritage activities on Federal lands for years. These groups look for loopholes in the law to deprive our constituents the right to use their own Federal lands.

Recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations, many of whom have endorsed this bill, are supporters of the conservation movement and continue to provide direct support to the wildlife managers and enforcement officers at the State, local, and Federal levels. These dedicated sportsmen and -women from the shorelines of Lake Superior to the beaches of the Pacific Ocean deserve to know that the lands that they cherish will not be closed off to future generations.

This is a bipartisan issue. In fact, Presidents Clinton and Bush both issued executive orders recognizing the value of these heritage activities. It is time we finally closed these loopholes, firmed up the language and made sure that future generations will always be able to enjoy the outdoors—hunting, fishing, and shooting or just taking a walk in the woods.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield myself an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. Chairman, I would encourage all of my colleagues to join me today in supporting this important piece of commonsense legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how many more speakers does the gentleman have?

Mr. BENISHEK. I have six more speakers, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I have no more speakers except myself, so I would suggest the gentleman go ahead.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the SHARE Act.

As a fifth-generation Montanan and as a lifelong sportsman, I know that hunting, fishing, motorized recreation, and hiking are simply a way of life for us in Montana. The outdoors is a critical aspect of our culture, and as 30 percent of our State is owned by the Federal Government, we depend on responsible stewardship and public access to these lands. Unfortunately, our Federal Government too often imposes rules and regulations that prevent responsible land use and our freedom to use the land that we pay for.

Roughly 2 million acres in Montana are inaccessible to the public. That is the most of any State in the Nation. Many of our hunting and fishing opportunities are locked away. The SHARE Act is an important bill that will protect Montanans' access to public lands for outdoor recreation. Too often, the Federal Government forgets that hunters, anglers, outdoorsmen—those whose livelihoods and passions rely on the land—respect our outdoor landscape the most and are the best stewards of our public lands.

Here we have the Federal Government trying to expand its authority over lead bullets, keeping millions of dollars spent on ammo and fishing tackle by hunters and anglers from being used for conservation and wildlife management. Like its Senate counterpart, the SPORT Act, this bill would protect our sportsmen and industries that manufacture these goods from these unnecessary regulations.

The SHARE Act would also protect our Second Amendment rights where the administration has tried to constrain them. It ensures that State and local governments are consulted in decisions managing shooting ranges, and it ensures that real outdoorsmen, instead of a bunch of Washington bureaucrats, are advising the administration on conservation and sportsmen issues.

Simply stated, the SHARE Act is an important bill to protect America's outdoor heritage and to ensure the responsible use of our public lands. I urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act, or SHARE Act.

I have introduced this legislation on behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, of which I am the co-chairman with Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON, whom I thank for his work. I also would like to thank Chairman HASTINGS for his support of the various bills contained in this sportsmen's package, as well as to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Chairman UPTON. I would also like to thank all of my colleagues who have introduced the individual bills that make up this package legislation.

As a lifelong hunter and outdoorsman, issues relating to hunting and conservation are extremely important to me. This legislation includes various pro-sportsmen's and pro-sportswomen's items that will help ensure our outdoor traditions are protected and advanced. H.R. 3590 also addresses some of the most current concerns of America's hunters, recreational anglers, shooters, and trappers.

Title III of the bill is legislation I introduced related to public lands filming. This provision directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, for any film crew of five persons or fewer, to require a permit and assess an annual fee of $200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. This prohibits the Secretary, for persons holding such a permit, from assessing any additional fee for commercial filming activities and similar projects that occur in those areas during public hours.

I have also introduced the language contained in title VII, which permanently establishes the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee. This council advises the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, recreational hunting, and shooting. Authorization of the council is vital to ensuring that hunters maintain an advisory capacity role across future administrations. The passage of H.R. 3590 will not only elevate the stature of the council, it will also provide the levels of certainty and stability necessary to ensure the council's ability to engage in assisting the government in devising and implementing the innovative, long-term solutions that are often necessary to address policy issues important to sportsmen and sportswomen.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LATTA. The passage of H.R. 3590 is important to our sportsmen and -women to allow open access to Federal lands, as well as to provide the needed certainty for the rules surrounding these activities. These hunters and anglers provide a tremendous economic benefit to our country. In 2011, they spent over $90 billion. In my home State of Ohio, sportsmen and sportswomen spent $2.85 billion on hunting and fishing. That is more than the revenues for corn, the State's top-grossing agriculture commodity that year.

H.R. 3590 is good for the sporting and conservation communities, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) would remain on the floor for a moment, I would like to direct to the gentleman a question about the filming provision. I am curious as to what problems specifically have been identified regarding filming permits. The second question would be: Is it the gentleman's intent that they should be able to use mechanized filming on tracks and otherwise motorized filming in wilderness areas?

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, first, there are a lot of smaller companies out there that don't have the large film crews and that don't have the large backups when it comes to funding in order to be able to do these types of activities. So I want to make sure that those individuals have that ability to be out there with a smaller fee so they can go ahead and make the films they want to make.

□ 1445

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, as I understand the current process, there is not one large fee. The fees vary in terms of the agency. If it is a one-person crew or a four-person crew, whatever, the fees would be smaller. If it is a mega film coming from Hollywood, they would charge a larger fee, is my understanding.

I am just wondering if there has been a specific case where someone has come to the gentleman and said, Gee, we are a two-person crew, and they want to charge us $10,000. Do we have any specific examples?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Again, what we have had has come to us from the discussions we had with the sporting community. Again, this is a product of multiple groups coming together. When we looked at the cost of the fee, et cetera, they thought it would be appropriate at this level of $200 for the annual fee, again, for these very small groups out there that want to go out and film.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Further, the issue of mechanized filming equipment, motorized equipment being used in wilderness areas. And I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. That is one of the sections in the title that would permit that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Does the gentleman feel that we should waive the Wilderness Act for film crews, but not other activities?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Again, when you look at mechanized vehicles, it can be anything from a very small ATV. You might not be talking about a truck, or something like that, but something very small.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I think this is a solution in search of a problem. We have had no testimony before the committee and no specifics were provided here. I believe it is an overly broad provision. If we had cases where extortionate fees were being charged for small groups or unreasonable fees that weren't following this scale basis that the agency tells me they follow, then I would share the gentleman's concerns.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman HASTINGS for his support in including H.R. 322, the Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act, as title I of the sportsmen's package.

I also want to thank the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus colleagues and the leadership of Chairman BOB LATTA and BENNIE THOMPSON for their efforts to protect sportsmen's rights and preserve our Nation's heritage.

Title I of this measure simply clarifies the existing intent of law regarding EPA's authority under the Toxic Substances Control Act with respect to traditional ammunition and fishing tackle that contain lead components. This legislation would prevent the EPA from expanding its regulatory authority under TSCA into an area where fish and wildlife agencies are better positioned to manage.

What the several antihunting and antifishing groups who insist on the expansion fail to recognize is that the ammunition, firearms, and tackle industries, along with sportsmen and -women, are the ones that are footing the bill to manage, protect, and create the same species' habitat that they claim they are trying to save. There is no sound evidence of traditional ammo and fishing tackle with lead components causing harm to wildlife populations or human health that would warrant a complete ban.

I would also say that one of my colleagues came to the floor earlier and said that this particular piece of legislation would in fact prevent States like California from banning lead ammunition. That is not true. Doing so in disregard of the intent of the law, the EPA would devastate countless domestic manufacturing facilities, drive up the cost for law enforcement and for our military, destroying thousands of jobs and hurting wildlife conservation funding—all at the expense of the taxpayer, and that is a cost that should not be borne.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman had remained on the floor for a moment, I was going to direct a question to him, which is: Since the EPA has found it does not have legal authority to regulate these substances, why do we need to pass a law to prevent a law from being passed? Which I guess is what we are trying to do here. In case we wanted to ever consider a law to do this, we would say, Well, we already passed a law to prohibit that.

Because the EPA says they don't have the authority to do this, it is not going to happen. There was a petition filed. It was rejected. End of story.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER).

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

The bill protects the Second Amendment rights of visitors to Army Corps

recreation lands. The Army Corps of Engineers has more outdoor recreation visitors than the National Park Service or the Forest Service lands. My district is home to many of these recreational lands, such as Lake Raystown or the Youghiogheny River.

While we currently have protections for American's Second Amendment rights in National Park lands and forest lands, the same rights are not protected on Corps properties. This bill corrects that. It removes unnecessary firearm restrictions while maintaining the safety and security of Corps buildings and property.

I urge all Members to support the Second Amendment and vote in favor of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to ask the chairman a question regarding that, since this is under the jurisdiction of our committee and I am not aware that we held a hearing on this issue.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SHUSTER. I don't believe we did this year, but I think in the past we did.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I have many Corps areas in my district, and I am not aware of restrictions, except there are restricted areas because a number of these projects have sensitive equipment that operate spillways and dams and other things, and those are high security areas post-9/11.

I am wondering if the gentleman's interpretation of this is that it would allow people to carry sidearms into these high security areas.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SHUSTER. It protects people's rights, just like in the State forests and other properties of the Federal Government, to carry firearms; law-abiding citizens. I think it is something reasonable, and something I support. I thank the gentleman for the inquiry.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I am a strong supporter of the Second Amendment, a gun owner myself. I haven't had a single complaint about Corps restrictions in my State, and that would include areas where we have had tampering with machinery that relates to spillways and dams—potential terrorism. I wouldn't want to facilitate terrorism.

If we are talking about general Corps areas and lands being managed, fine, but if we are talking about sensitive, secure areas that have to be protected and guarded, I don't see why we would allow civilian firearm carry within those sensitive protected areas, which would make us vulnerable to terrorism.

Terrorists without a weapon, I suppose they could bring in a weapon anyway. They could violate the law, but if someone were noted bringing a weapon into one of those areas now, they would be asked to leave or apprehended.

So I am concerned about those aspects, and I think that my committee and Homeland Security should have looked at this issue before it was brought to the floor without a hearing.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013.

I would like to speak specifically to title VI of the bill.

The fundamental constitutional right to bear arms must be protected for all law-abiding citizens. Americans deserve the right to exercise their rights to not only enjoy recreational activities, but also provide self-defense for themselves and their loved ones.

In the 111th Congress, this body passed legislation that ultimately became law which allows for guns to be legally possessed and carried on lands within our National Parks. Following enactment of that legislation, the Army Corps of Engineers immediately issued the following release:

> Public Law 111–024 does not apply to Corps projects or facilities. The passage of this new law does not affect application of title 36 regulations.

The Corps administers over 11.7 million acres of land, including 400 lakes and river projects, 90,000 campsites, and 4,000 miles of trails. Much of this land is remote and without quick access to emergency services or law enforcement, so the ability to carry a firearm in the case of emergency is imperative.

This Army Corps policy preempts State regulatory frameworks for transporting and carrying firearms, thus invalidating concealed weapons permits and other State laws that allow law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

Title VI of the bill is aimed at protecting these rights by ensuring the right to carry at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Resource Development Projects. Specifically, this legislation prohibits the Secretary of the Army from enforcing any regulation that prevents an individual from possessing firearms on these properties, thereby restoring the continuity to Federal law.

Gun owners need to able to exercise their Second Amendment rights when they are legally camping, hunting, and fishing on Army Corps projects.

I would like to thank my colleague from Ohio, Representative LATTA, for including my bill into this piece of legislation.

I urge Members to support title VI and this legislation as a whole.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I would inquire how many more speakers the gentleman has.

Mr. BENISHEK. We just have one more speaker, and I will close after that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER).

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman, the ranking member, and the committee as well, for putting in H.R. 2463, the Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act, that Congressman WALZ from Minnesota and myself wrote.

Basically, what this does is allow Americans to use Federal lands that they pay for in order to go out and shoot for sport at target ranges. With fewer ranges today, providing greater flexibility to States for the purpose of maintaining public shooting venues will go a long way to restoring recreational opportunities and promoting gun safety.

In San Diego, there are no public ranges that we can use. We have to go to an indoor range or to someone's private ranch. There are no more public facilities.

The Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act uses existing resources to allow Americans greater access to lands on which to safely practice recreational and competitive shooting. Shooting sports participants already provide significant support to conservation efforts through excise taxes on firearms and ammunition. Public shooting ranges will continue to serve the interests of families and communities, providing a safe place for target practice and instruction while also sustaining jobs and supporting local businesses.

This is a great bill. I would urge my colleagues to support it because shooting—and shooting well—is an American tradition. You shouldn't have to join the Marine Corps to learn that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would agree with the gentleman. That came out of committee unanimously. It is a true bipartisan proposal. I learned to shoot through the Y in a basement range with a .22. That is where I started. We have got to learn somewhere.

The public lands is another place for families to go and learn to shoot. So that is one of the noncontroversial parts of the bill. In fact, four of the components of this bill could have been brought up yesterday under suspension or even, I believe, unanimous consent. Definitely under suspension. They definitely would have passed them. They have been previously considered by committee, subject to hearings, and the language was agreed upon. Unfortunately, the majority has insisted, although I also believe that the title would get unanimous consent in this body—it is a great title—but sometimes we attach provisions to great titles that aren't necessary or belie that title.

Some of the components of this, which I have talked about—the potential for degradation of wetlands management, wildlife refuge management, intrusions into wilderness areas—are

inappropriate and unnecessary. We can do a little political ''gotcha''—you voted against this bill that has this great title, so that means you are against sportsmen and fishing and hunters and families enjoying those activities.

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I am not, and very few, if any, Members of this body are. But, be that as it may, we have pointed out a number of the problems in this legislation.

Legislating is really a pretty difficult exercise, to do real things, to do things that actually would benefit our wildlife resources and hunting and fishing activities. One would be Congressman DAINES' proposal to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Every day development proposals move forward that take more and more wildlife areas, more and more wetlands, more and more forests out of access to hunting and fishing and recreation in many cases. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been a key in protecting those lands, when jeopardized, and purchasing from willing sellers to prevent that kind of development.

Though we are still collecting the tax that funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund—yes, we are collecting the tax. Even the Republicans haven't proposed that we do away with that tax because they are spending Land and Water Conservation Funds on other things; God only knows what. Some of the earmarks in a bill we will take up later this week. I don't know.

But they are spending hundreds of millions of dollars that are supposed to go to benefit sportsmen and -women, hunters, fishers, wildlife, and protect those areas and manage them reasonably with that full access. They are spending that money somewhere else, so they don't want to take away the tax, but they don't want to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. That is a shame, and that would be a much bigger benefit than anything else that we are doing here today.

We have a number of bipartisan wilderness proposals pending: Mr. REICHERT, from Washington State, Alpine Lakes; Mr. BENISHEK, Sleeping Bear Dunes; and others that are pending. Those things would benefit since wilderness does allow hunting and fishing and does provide a degree of protection for those lands that is unparalleled. That would be an experience for horseback hunters, people who walk in on their own two feet. But there are plenty of places to go in a motorized way. It is a little more rare to have an opportunity to do that from horseback or hiking.

But we are not considering those today because those are controversial. So instead, we have this kind of hash that we are calling one thing and doing a number of other things with.

We have the proposal that we have a problem with unidentified film crews who have never come forward, who might be charged too much or need to use motorized equipment in wilderness areas and so, therefore, we are just going to open them up. That is kind of a heck of a way to legislate, really.

We are worried that maybe some units, and definitely the dam areas of the Corps of Engineers, prohibit individuals carrying weapons. That is not exactly an intrusion. They can't carry a weapon into an airport. You can't carry a weapon into the Capitol. You can't carry a weapon into a Federal courthouse, and you can't carry a weapon to a dam site where tampering with equipment could cause a massive flood or dam failure. It makes a little bit of sense to me, but the bill says, no, that is an infringement on the Second Amendment. I think it is a reasonable step by the government. So we are going to open that up, again, without any hearings identifying any problems with access.

I have a lot of Corps projects in my State. I have never had a constituent call and say, gee, I want to go on to this Corps property and bring my gun. I have got a concealed weapons permit, and I have carried a gun on many Federal lands where there is no restriction, and I supported the park provision last year. But we are creating another imaginary problem so we can add yet another title to this hash of a bill. So I am sorry that we are having to go forward in this way.

I did support a less controversial measure for sportsmen heritage in the last Congress, and even that didn't go anywhere in the Senate. This one already has an affirmed veto threat from the White House, and the Senate isn't going to take it up.

But we can pretend we did something here today, and some people get excited about the fact that we did something here today that will never happen. We could, and it is much harder, agree on a bipartisan measure for reasonable measures to protect people's right to hunt and fish and bear arms, but we are not going to do that. So let's get on with the political show.

Mr. Chairman, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Chairman, let me just make a couple of points. I want to make a very, very broad point on what the intent of this legislation is, because it is aimed at uses of public lands.

Now, I have always been of the mind that public lands, particularly Federal lands, unless Congress designates otherwise, then the uses of those lands should be for multiple purposes. Now, obviously recreation, i.e., hunting and fishing, would be part of that.

So what this bill seeks to do, then, is to provide certainty into Federal laws that, indeed, multiple uses—in this case, hunting and fishing and recreational use—will be on public lands. There is nothing really more complicated than that.

What has caused this legislation to be brought forward is because of actions of certain bureaucracies within certain parts of the Federal Government that have a different decision, if you will, or a different idea of that, and they slow down this recreational activity. So this seeks to put certainty in that.

Lastly, let me just respond to the arguments that we heard about the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Mr. Chairman, that is a program. There are people that think it is a very, very good program. There are those, including me, that feel that sometimes it is not as good as it is simply because you acquire private land for the Federal Government. We can't maintain what we have. That should be a reason for, I guess, pause anyway.

But the reason I think that the Rules Committee did not make that particular amendment in order is for a very, very good reason. We talk about regular order around here. The Land and Water Conservation Fund statute does not expire until 2015. So I know, as chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, that the subcommittee in charge of that particular legislation is going to have hearings and we are going to go through the legislative process in order to reauthorize that.

So to rail against the idea that that amendment was not made in order somehow continues to break the program is simply not the case. The program is in place until it expires in 2015, and I have no doubt that our committee will come up with legislation to do the proper reauthorization.

So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I think it is a very, very good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. LATHAM). All time for general debate has expired.

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

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3590

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 ''Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013'' or the ''SHARE Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.
Sec. 2. Table of contents.
TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT
Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. Modification of definition.
TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT
Sec. 201. Short title.
Sec. 202. Findings; purpose.
Sec. 203. Definition of public target range.

Sec. 204. Amendments to Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act.
Sec. 205. Limits on liability.
Sec. 206. Sense of Congress regarding cooperation.

TITLE III—PUBLIC LANDS FILMING

Sec. 301. Purpose.
Sec. 302. Annual permit and fee for film crews of 5 persons or fewer.

TITLE IV—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Permits for importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada.

TITLE V—PERMANENT ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT

Sec. 501. Short title.
Sec. 502. Definitions.
Sec. 503. Authority to issue electronic duck stamps.
Sec. 504. State application.
Sec. 505. State obligations and authorities.
Sec. 506. Electronic stamp requirements; recognition of electronic stamp.
Sec. 507. Termination of State participation.

TITLE VI—ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ACT

Sec. 601. Short title.
Sec. 602. Protecting Americans from violent crime.

TITLE VII—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sec. 701. Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee.

TITLE VIII—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE AND OPPORTUNITIES ACT

Sec. 801. Short title.
Sec. 802. Findings.
Sec. 803. Definitions.
Sec. 804. Recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting.

TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act''.

SEC. 102. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION.

Section 3(2)(B) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2602(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (v), by striking '', and'' and inserting '', or any component of any such article including, without limitation, shot, bullets and other projectiles, propellants, and primers,'';

(2) in clause (vi) by striking the period at the end and inserting '', and''; and

(3) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

''(vii) any sport fishing equipment (as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 4162 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) the sale of which is subject to the tax imposed by section 4161(a) of such Code (determined without regard to any exemptions from such tax as provided by section 4162 or 4221 or any other provision of such Code), and sport fishing equipment components.''.

TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act''.

SEC. 202. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the use of firearms and archery equipment for target practice and marksmanship training activities on Federal land is allowed, except to the extent specific portions of that land have been closed to those activities;

(2) in recent years preceding the date of enactment of this Act, portions of Federal land have been closed to target practice and marksmanship training for many reasons;

(3) the availability of public target ranges on non-Federal land has been declining for a variety of reasons, including continued population growth and development near former ranges;

(4) providing opportunities for target practice and marksmanship training at public target ranges on Federal and non-Federal land can help—

(A) to promote enjoyment of shooting, recreational, and hunting activities; and

(B) to ensure safe and convenient locations for those activities;

(5) Federal law in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, including the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), provides Federal support for construction and expansion of public target ranges by making available to States amounts that may be used for construction, operation, and maintenance of public target ranges; and

(6) it is in the public interest to provide increased Federal support to facilitate the construction or expansion of public target ranges.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this title is to facilitate the construction and expansion of public target ranges, including ranges on Federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

SEC. 203. DEFINITION OF PUBLIC TARGET RANGE.

In this title, the term ''public target range'' means a specific location that—

(1) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

(2) is open to the public;

(3) may be supervised; and

(4) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.

SEC. 204. AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (9), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) the term 'public target range' means a specific location that—

''(A) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;

''(B) is open to the public;

''(C) may be supervised; and

''(D) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting;''.

(b) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—Section 8(b) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669g(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(b) Each State'' and inserting the following:

''(b) EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each State'';

(2) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking ''construction, operation,'' and inserting ''operation'';

(3) in the second sentence, by striking ''The non-Federal share'' and inserting the following:

''(3) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share'';

(4) in the third sentence, by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting the following:

''(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary''; and

(5) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as designated by paragraph (1) of this subsection) the following:

''(2) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding the limitation described in paragraph (1), a State may pay up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.''.

(c) FIREARM AND BOW HUNTER EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAM GRANTS.—Section 10 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669h–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

''(3) ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.—Of the amount apportioned to a State for any fiscal year under section 4(b), the State may elect to allocate not more than 10 percent, to be combined with the amount apportioned to the State under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year, for acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.'';

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) COST SHARING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant under this section shall not exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the activity.

''(2) PUBLIC TARGET RANGE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION.—The Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range in a State on Federal or non-Federal land pursuant to this section or section 8(b) shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of the activity.''; and

(3) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by striking ''Amounts made'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Amounts provided for acquiring land for, constructing, or expanding a public target range shall remain available for expenditure and obligation during the 5-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year for which the amounts are made available.''.

SEC. 205. LIMITS ON LIABILITY.

(a) DISCRETIONARY FUNCTION.—For purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Federal Tort Claims Act''), any action by an agent or employee of the United States to manage or allow the use of Federal land for purposes of target practice or marksmanship training by a member of the public shall be considered to be the exercise or performance of a discretionary function.

(b) CIVIL ACTION OR CLAIMS.—Except to the extent provided in chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, the United States shall not be subject to any civil action or claim for money damages for any injury to or loss of property, personal injury, or death caused by an activity occurring at a public target range that is—

(1) funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government pursuant to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.); or

(2) located on Federal land.

SEC. 206. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING COOPERATION.

It is the sense of Congress that, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out waste removal and other activities on any Federal

land used as a public target range to encourage continued use of that land for target practice or marksmanship training.

TITLE III—PUBLIC LANDS FILMING

SEC. 301. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to provide commercial film crews of 5 persons or fewer access to film in areas designated for public use during public hours on Federal lands and waterways.

SEC. 302. ANNUAL PERMIT AND FEE FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section (1)(a) of Public Law 106–206 (16 U.S.C. 460l–6d) is amended by—

(1) redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively;

(2) striking ''The Secretary of the Interior'' and inserting ''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by paragraph (3), the Secretary of the Interior'';

(3) inserting ''(2) OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.—'' before ''The Secretary may include other factors''; and

(4) adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) SPECIAL RULES FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.—

''(A) For any film crew of 5 persons or fewer, the Secretary shall require a permit and assess an annual fee of $200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. The permit shall be valid for commercial filming activities or similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on all Federal lands waterways administered by the Secretary for a 12-month period beginning on the date of issuance of the permit.

''(B) For persons holding a permit described in this paragraph, the Secretary shall not assess, during the effective period of the permit, any additional fee for commercial filming activities and similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary.

''(C) In this paragraph, the term 'film crew' includes all persons present on Federal land under the Secretary's jurisdiction who are associated with the production of a certain film.

''(D) The Secretary shall not prohibit, as a motorized vehicle or under any other purposes, use of cameras or related equipment used for the purpose of commercial filming activities or similar projects in accordance with this paragraph on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary.''.

(b) RECOVERY OF COSTS.—Section (1)(b) of Public Law 106–206 (16 U.S.C. 460l–6d) is amended by—

(1) striking ''collect any costs'' and inserting ''recover any costs''; and

(2) striking ''similar project'' and inserting ''similar projects''.

TITLE IV—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2013''.

SEC. 402. PERMITS FOR IMPORTATION OF POLAR BEAR TROPHIES TAKEN IN SPORT HUNTS IN CANADA.

Section 104(c)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1374(c)(5)(D)) is amended to read as follows:

''(D)(i) The Secretary of the Interior shall, expeditiously after the expiration of the applicable 30-day period under subsection (d)(2), issue a permit for the importation of any polar bear part (other than an internal organ) from a polar bear taken in a sport hunt in Canada to any person—

''(I) who submits, with the permit application, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before February 18, 1997; or

''(II) who has submitted, in support of a permit application submitted before May 15, 2008, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before May 15, 2008, from a polar bear population from which a sport-hunted trophy could be imported before that date in accordance with section 18.30(i) of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations.

''(ii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(I) without regard to subparagraphs (A) and (C)(ii) of this paragraph, subsection (d)(3), and sections 101 and 102. Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(I). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before June 12, 1997.

''(iii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(II) without regard to subparagraph (C)(ii) of this paragraph or subsection (d)(3). Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(II). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before the date of enactment of the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2013.''.

TITLE V—PERMANENT ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013''.

SEC. 502. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) ACTUAL STAMP.—The term ''actual stamp'' means a Federal migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp required under the Act of March 16, 1934 (16 U.S.C. 718a et seq.) (popularly known as the ''Duck Stamp Act''), that is printed on paper and sold through the means established by the authority of the Secretary immediately before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) AUTOMATED LICENSING SYSTEM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''automated licensing system'' means an electronic, computerized licensing system used by a State fish and wildlife agency to issue hunting, fishing, and other associated licenses and products.

(B) INCLUSION.—The term ''automated licensing system'' includes a point-of-sale, Internet, telephonic system, or other electronic applications used for a purpose described in subparagraph (A).

(3) ELECTRONIC STAMP.—The term ''electronic stamp'' means an electronic version of an actual stamp that—

(A) is a unique identifier for the individual to whom it is issued;

(B) can be printed on paper or produced through an electronic application with the same indicators as the State endorsement provides;

(C) is issued through a State automated licensing system that is authorized, under State law and by the Secretary under this title, to issue electronic stamps;

(D) is compatible with the hunting licensing system of the State that issues the electronic stamp; and

(E) is described in the State application approved by the Secretary under section 504(b).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 503. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may authorize any State to issue electronic stamps in accordance with this title.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall implement this section in consultation with State management agencies.

SEC. 504. STATE APPLICATION.

(a) APPROVAL OF APPLICATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary may not authorize a State to issue electronic stamps under this title unless the Secretary has received and approved an application submitted by the State in accordance with this section. The Secretary may determine the number of new States per year to participate in the electronic stamp program.

(b) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—The Secretary may not approve a State application unless the application contains—

(1) a description of the format of the electronic stamp that the State will issue under this title, including identifying features of the licensee that will be specified on the stamp;

(2) a description of any fee the State will charge for issuance of an electronic stamp;

(3) a description of the process the State will use to account for and transfer to the Secretary the amounts collected by the State that are required to be transferred to the Secretary under the program;

(4) the manner by which the State will transmit electronic stamp customer data to the Secretary;

(5) the manner by which actual stamps will be delivered;

(6) the policies and procedures under which the State will issue duplicate electronic stamps; and

(7) such other policies, procedures, and information as may be reasonably required by the Secretary.

(c) PUBLICATION OF DEADLINES, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, AND SELECTION CRITERIA.—Not later than 30 days before the date on which the Secretary begins accepting applications under this section, the Secretary shall publish—

(1) deadlines for submission of applications;

(2) eligibility requirements for submitting applications; and

(3) criteria for approving applications.

SEC. 505. STATE OBLIGATIONS AND AUTHORITIES.

(a) DELIVERY OF ACTUAL STAMP.—The Secretary shall require that each individual to whom a State sells an electronic stamp under this title shall receive an actual stamp—

(1) by not later than the date on which the electronic stamp expires under section 506(c); and

(2) in a manner agreed upon by the State and Secretary.

(b) COLLECTION AND TRANSFER OF ELECTRONIC STAMP REVENUE AND CUSTOMER INFORMATION.—

(1) REQUIREMENT TO TRANSMIT.—The Secretary shall require each State authorized to issue electronic stamps to collect and submit to the Secretary in accordance with this section—

(A) the first name, last name, and complete mailing address of each individual that purchases an electronic stamp from the State;

(B) the face value amount of each electronic stamp sold by the State; and

(C) the amount of the Federal portion of any fee required by the agreement for each stamp sold.

(2) TIME OF TRANSMITTAL.—The Secretary shall require the submission under paragraph (1) to be made with respect to sales of electronic stamps by a State according to the

written agreement between the Secretary and the State agency.

(3) ADDITIONAL FEES NOT AFFECTED.—This section shall not apply to the State portion of any fee collected by a State under subsection (c).

(c) ELECTRONIC STAMP ISSUANCE FEE.—A State authorized to issue electronic stamps may charge a reasonable fee to cover costs incurred by the State and the Department of the Interior in issuing electronic stamps under this title, including costs of delivery of actual stamps.

(d) DUPLICATE ELECTRONIC STAMPS.—A State authorized to issue electronic stamps may issue a duplicate electronic stamp to replace an electronic stamp issued by the State that is lost or damaged.

(e) LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE PURCHASE OF STATE LICENSE.—A State may not require that an individual purchase a State hunting license as a condition of issuing an electronic stamp under this title.

SEC. 506. ELECTRONIC STAMP REQUIREMENTS; RECOGNITION OF ELECTRONIC STAMP.

(a) STAMP REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall require an electronic stamp issued by a State under this title—

(1) to have the same format as any other license, validation, or privilege the State issues under the automated licensing system of the State; and

(2) to specify identifying features of the licensee that are adequate to enable Federal, State, and other law enforcement officers to identify the holder.

(b) RECOGNITION OF ELECTRONIC STAMP.—Any electronic stamp issued by a State under this title shall, during the effective period of the electronic stamp—

(1) bestow upon the licensee the same privileges as are bestowed by an actual stamp;

(2) be recognized nationally as a valid Federal migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp; and

(3) authorize the licensee to hunt migratory waterfowl in any other State, in accordance with the laws of the other State governing that hunting.

(c) DURATION.—An electronic stamp issued by a State shall be valid for a period agreed to by the State and the Secretary, which shall not exceed 45 days.

SEC. 507. TERMINATION OF STATE PARTICIPATION.

The authority of a State to issue electronic stamps under this title may be terminated—

(1) by the Secretary, if the Secretary—

(A) finds that the State has violated any of the terms of the application of the State approved by the Secretary under section 504; and

(B) provides to the State written notice of the termination by not later than the date that is 30 days before the date of termination; or

(2) by the State, by providing written notice to the Secretary by not later than the date that is 30 days before the termination date.

TITLE VI—ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ACT

SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act of 2013''.

SEC. 602. PROTECTING AMERICANS FROM VIOLENT CRIME.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Second Amendment to the Constitution provides that ''the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed''.

(2) Section 327.13 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, provides that, except in special circumstances, ''possession of loaded firearms, ammunition, loaded projectile firing devices, bows and arrows, crossbows, or other weapons is prohibited'' at water resources development projects administered by the Secretary of the Army.

(3) The regulations described in paragraph (2) prevent individuals complying with Federal and State laws from exercising the second amendment rights of the individuals while at such water resources development projects.

(4) The Federal laws should make it clear that the second amendment rights of an individual at a water resources development project should not be infringed.

(b) PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS TO BEAR ARMS AT WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.—The Secretary of the Army shall not promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from possessing a firearm including an assembled or functional firearm at a water resources development project covered under section 327.0 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), if—

(1) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the firearm; and

(2) the possession of the firearm is in compliance with the law of the State in which the water resources development project is located.

TITLE VII—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEC. 701. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 10. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the 'Advisory Committee') to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, and recreational shooting.

''(b) DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretaries with regard to—

''(1) implementation of Executive Order No. 13443: Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation, which directs Federal agencies 'to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitat';

''(2) policies or programs to conserve and restore wetlands, agricultural lands, grasslands, forest, and rangeland habitats;

''(3) policies or programs to promote opportunities and access to hunting and shooting sports on Federal lands;

''(4) policies or programs to recruit and retain new hunters and shooters;

''(5) policies or programs that increase public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation and the social and economic benefits of recreational hunting and shooting; and

''(6) policies or programs that encourage coordination among the public, the hunting and shooting sports community, wildlife conservation groups, and States, tribes, and the Federal Government.

''(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) APPOINTMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than 16 discretionary members and 7 ex officio members.

''(B) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The ex officio members are—

''(i) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or a designated representative of the Director;

''(ii) the Director of the Bureau of Land Management or a designated representative of the Director;

''(iii) the Director of the National Park Service or a designated representative of the Director;

''(iv) the Chief of the Forest Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

''(v) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

''(vi) the Administrator of the Farm Service Agency or a designated representative of the Administrator; and

''(vii) the Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

''(C) DISCRETIONARY MEMBERS.—The discretionary members shall be appointed jointly by the Secretaries from at least one of each of the following:

''(i) State fish and wildlife agencies.

''(ii) Game bird hunting organizations.

''(iii) Wildlife conservation organizations.

''(iv) Big game hunting organizations.

''(v) Waterfowl hunting organizations.

''(vi) The tourism, outfitter, or guiding industry.

''(vii) The firearms or ammunition manufacturing industry.

''(viii) The hunting or shooting equipment retail industry.

''(ix) Hunting and shooting sports outreach and education organizations.

''(x) Tribal resource management organizations.

''(xi) The agriculture industry.

''(xii) The ranching industry.

''(D) ELIGIBILITY.—Prior to the appointment of the discretionary members, the Secretaries shall determine that all individuals nominated for appointment to the Advisory Committee, and the organization each individual represents, actively support and promote sustainable-use hunting, wildlife conservation, and recreational shooting.

''(2) TERMS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), members of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of 4 years. Members shall not be appointed for more than 3 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

''(B) TERMS OF INITIAL APPOINTEES.—As designated by the Secretary at the time of appointment, of the members first appointed—

''(i) 6 members shall be appointed for a term of 4 years;

''(ii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years; and

''(iii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

''(3) PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ADVISORY STATUS.—No individual may be appointed as a discretionary member of the Advisory Committee while serving as an officer or employee of the Federal Government.

''(4) VACANCY AND REMOVAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Any vacancy on the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

''(B) REMOVAL.—Advisory Committee members shall serve at the discretion of the Secretaries and may be removed at any time for good cause.

''(5) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—Each appointed member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which such member was appointed until a successor has been appointed.

''(6) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a

3-year term by the Secretaries, jointly, from among the members of the Advisory Committee. An individual may not be appointed as Chairperson for more than 2 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

''(7) PAY AND EXPENSES.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without pay for such service, but each member of the Advisory Committee shall be reimbursed for travel and lodging incurred through attending meetings of the Advisory Committee approved subgroup meetings in the same amounts and under the same conditions as Federal employees (in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code).

''(8) MEETINGS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretaries, the chairperson, or a majority of the members, but not less frequently than twice annually.

''(B) OPEN MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be open to the public.

''(C) PRIOR NOTICE OF MEETINGS.—Timely notice of each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be published in the Federal Register and be submitted to trade publications and publications of general circulation.

''(D) SUBGROUPS.—The Advisory Committee may establish such workgroups or subgroups as it deems necessary for the purpose of compiling information or conducting research. However, such workgroups may not conduct business without the direction of the Advisory Committee and must report in full to the Advisory Committee.

''(9) QUORUM.—Nine members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum.

''(d) EXPENSES.—The expenses of the Advisory Committee that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate shall be paid by the Secretaries.

''(e) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND ADVICE.—A designated Federal Officer shall be jointly appointed by the Secretaries to provide to the Advisory Committee the administrative support, technical services, and advice that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate.

''(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

''(1) REQUIRED.—Not later than September 30 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit a report to the Secretaries, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate. If circumstances arise in which the Advisory Committee cannot meet the September 30 deadline in any year, the Secretaries shall advise the Chairpersons of each such Committee of the reasons for such delay and the date on which the submission of the report is anticipated.

''(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall describe—

''(A) the activities of the Advisory Committee during the preceding year;

''(B) the reports and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee to the Secretaries during the preceding year; and

''(C) an accounting of actions taken by the Secretaries as a result of the recommendations.

''(g) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Advisory Committee shall be exempt from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

''(h) ABOLISHMENT OF THE EXISTING WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Effective on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council formed in furtherance of section 441 of the Revised Statutes (43 U.S.C. 1457), the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), and other Acts applicable to specific bureaus of the Department of the Interior is hereby abolished.''.

TITLE VIII—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE AND OPPORTUNITIES ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act''.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) recreational fishing and hunting are important and traditional activities in which millions of Americans participate;

(2) recreational anglers and hunters have been and continue to be among the foremost supporters of sound fish and wildlife management and conservation in the United States;

(3) recreational fishing and hunting are environmentally acceptable and beneficial activities that occur and can be provided on Federal public lands and waters without adverse effects on other uses or users;

(4) recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations provide direct assistance to fish and wildlife managers and enforcement officers of the Federal Government as well as State and local governments by investing volunteer time and effort to fish and wildlife conservation;

(5) recreational anglers, hunters, and the associated industries have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management by providing revenues from purchases of fishing and hunting licenses, permits, and stamps, as well as excise taxes on fishing, hunting, and shooting equipment that have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management;

(6) recreational shooting is also an important and traditional activity in which millions of Americans participate, safe recreational shooting is a valid use of Federal public lands, including the establishment of safe and convenient shooting ranges on such lands, and participation in recreational shooting helps recruit and retain hunters and contributes to wildlife conservation;

(7) opportunities to recreationally fish, hunt, and shoot are declining, which depresses participation in these traditional activities, and depressed participation adversely impacts fish and wildlife conservation and funding for important conservation efforts; and

(8) the public interest would be served, and our citizens' fish and wildlife resources benefitted, by action to ensure that opportunities are facilitated to engage in fishing and hunting on Federal public land as recognized by Executive Order No. 12962, relating to recreational fisheries, and Executive Order No. 13443, relating to facilitation of hunting heritage and wildlife conservation.

SEC. 803. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND.—The term ''Federal public land'' means any land or water that is owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service.

(2) FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS.—The term ''Federal public land management officials'' means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior and Director of Bureau of Land Management regarding Bureau of Land Management lands and waters; and

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture and Chief of the Forest Service regarding the National Forest System.

(3) HUNTING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term ''hunting'' means use of a firearm, bow, or other authorized means in the lawful—

(i) pursuit, shooting, capture, collection, trapping, or killing of wildlife;

(ii) attempt to pursue, shoot, capture, collect, trap, or kill wildlife; or

(iii) the training of hunting dogs, including field trials.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''hunting'' does not include the use of skilled volunteers to cull excess animals (as defined by other Federal law).

(4) RECREATIONAL FISHING.—The term ''recreational fishing'' means the lawful—

(A) pursuit, capture, collection, or killing of fish; or

(B) attempt to capture, collect, or kill fish.

(5) RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.—The term ''recreational shooting'' means any form of sport, training, competition, or pastime, whether formal or informal, that involves the discharge of a rifle, handgun, or shotgun, or the use of a bow and arrow.

SEC. 804. RECREATIONAL FISHING, HUNTING, AND SHOOTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights and subsection (g), and cooperation with the respective State fish and wildlife agency, Federal public land management officials shall exercise authority under existing law, including provisions regarding land use planning, to facilitate use of and access to Federal public lands, including National Monuments, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and lands administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas, for fishing, sport hunting, and recreational shooting, except as limited by—

(1) statutory authority that authorizes action or withholding action for reasons of national security, public safety, or resource conservation;

(2) any other Federal statute that specifically precludes recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting on specific Federal public lands, waters, or units thereof; and

(3) discretionary limitations on recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting determined to be necessary and reasonable as supported by the best scientific evidence and advanced through a transparent public process.

(b) MANAGEMENT.—Consistent with subsection (a), the head of each Federal public land management agency shall exercise its land management discretion—

(1) in a manner that supports and facilitates recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting opportunities;

(2) to the extent authorized under applicable State law; and

(3) in accordance with applicable Federal law.

(c) PLANNING.—

(1) EVALUATION OF EFFECTS ON OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN RECREATIONAL FISHING, HUNTING, OR SHOOTING.—Federal public land planning documents, including land resources management plans, resource management plans, and comprehensive conservation plans, shall include a specific evaluation of the effects of such plans on opportunities to engage in recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting.

(2) NO MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.—No action taken under this title, or under section 4 of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd), either individually or cumulatively with other actions involving Federal public lands or lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall be considered to be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and no additional identification, analysis, or

consideration of environmental effects, including cumulative effects, is necessary or required.

(3) OTHER ACTIVITY NOT CONSIDERED.—Federal public land management officials are not required to consider the existence or availability of recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting opportunities on adjacent or nearby public or private lands in the planning for or determination of which Federal public lands are open for these activities or in the setting of levels of use for these activities on Federal public lands, unless the combination or coordination of such opportunities would enhance the recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting opportunities available to the public.

(d) FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS.—

(1) LANDS OPEN.—Lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, including Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, lands designated as wilderness or administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas and National Monuments, but excluding lands on the Outer Continental Shelf, shall be open to recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting unless the managing Federal agency acts to close lands to such activity. Lands may be subject to closures or restrictions if determined by the head of the agency to be necessary and reasonable and supported by facts and evidence, for purposes including resource conservation, public safety, energy or mineral production, energy generation or transmission infrastructure, water supply facilities, protection of other permittees, protection of private property rights or interest, national security, or compliance with other law.

(2) SHOOTING RANGES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of each Federal agency shall use his or her authorities in a manner consistent with this title and other applicable law, to—

(i) lease or permit use of lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for shooting ranges; and

(ii) designate specific lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for recreational shooting activities.

(B) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—Any designation under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall not subject the United States to any civil action or claim for monetary damages for injury or loss of property or personal injury or death caused by any activity occurring at or on such designated lands.

(e) NECESSITY IN WILDERNESS AREAS AND ''WITHIN AND SUPPLEMENTAL TO'' WILDERNESS PURPOSES.—

(1) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATION.—The provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing and recreational shooting, and the conservation of fish and wildlife to provide sustainable use recreational opportunities on designated Federal wilderness areas shall constitute measures necessary to meet the minimum requirements for the administration of the wilderness area, provided that this determination shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use, or extraction, motorized recreational access or use that is not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), or permanent road construction or maintenance within designated wilderness areas.

(2) APPLICATION OF WILDERNESS ACT.—Provisions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), stipulating that wilderness purposes are ''within and supplemental to'' the purposes of the underlying Federal land unit are reaffirmed. When seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities on designated wilderness areas, the head of each Federal agency shall implement these supplemental purposes so as to facilitate, enhance, or both, but not to impede the underlying Federal land purposes when seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities in designated wilderness areas, provided that such implementation shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use or extraction, or permanent road construction or use within designated wilderness areas.

(f) REPORT.—Beginning on the second October 1 after the date of the enactment of this Act and biennially on October 1 thereafter, the head of each Federal agency who has authority to manage Federal public land on which fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting occurs shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) any Federal public land administered by the agency head that was closed to recreational fishing, sport hunting, or shooting at any time during the preceding year; and

(2) the reason for the closure.

(g) CLOSURES OR SIGNIFICANT RESTRICTIONS OF 640 OR MORE ACRES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Other than closures established or prescribed by land planning actions referred to in subsection (d) or emergency closures described in paragraph (3) of this subsection, a permanent or temporary withdrawal, change of classification, or change of management status of Federal public land that effectively closes or significantly restricts 640 or more contiguous acres of Federal public land to access or use for fishing or hunting or activities related to fishing, hunting, or both, shall take effect only if, before the date of withdrawal or change, the head of the Federal agency that has jurisdiction over the Federal public land—

(A) publishes appropriate notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively;

(B) demonstrates that coordination has occurred with a State fish and wildlife agency; and

(C) submits to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate written notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively.

(2) AGGREGATE OR CUMULATIVE EFFECTS.—If the aggregate or cumulative effect of separate withdrawals or changes effectively closes or significantly restricts 1,280 or more acres of land or water, such withdrawals and changes shall be treated as a single withdrawal or change for purposes of paragraph (1).

(3) EMERGENCY CLOSURES.—Nothing in this title prohibits a Federal land management agency from establishing or implementing emergency closures or restrictions of the smallest practicable area to provide for public safety, resource conservation, national security, or other purposes authorized by law. Such an emergency closure shall terminate after a reasonable period of time unless converted to a permanent closure consistent with this title.

(h) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UNITS NOT AFFECTED.—Nothing in this title shall affect or modify management or use of units of the National Park System.

(i) NO PRIORITY.—Nothing in this title requires a Federal land management agency to give preference to recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting over other uses of Federal public land or over land or water management priorities established by Federal law.

(j) CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILS.—In fulfilling the duties set forth in this title, the heads of Federal agencies shall consult with respective advisory councils as established in Executive Order Nos. 12962 and 13443.

(k) AUTHORITY OF THE STATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this title shall be construed as interfering with, diminishing, or conflicting with the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of any State to exercise primary management, control, or regulation of fish and wildlife under State law (including regulations) on land or water within the State, including on Federal public land.

(2) FEDERAL LICENSES.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to authorize the head of a Federal agency head to require a license, fee, or permit to fish, hunt, or trap on land or water in a State, including on Federal public land in the States, except that this paragraph shall not affect the Migratory Bird Stamp requirement set forth in the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (16 U.S.C. 718 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill is in order except those printed in House Report 113–339. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, lines 5 and 6, strike ''of 2013''.

Page 13, line 10, strike ''of 2013''.

Page 15, line 2, strike ''of 2013''.

Page 15, line 7, strike ''of 2013''.

Page 22, line 12, strike ''of 2013''.

Page 27, strike lines 13 and 14 and redesignate the remaining clauses accordingly.

Page 29, line 20, strike ''shall'' and insert ''may''.

Page 32, line 13, strike ''Effective'' and all that follows through line 19, and insert the following: ''Upon publication of the first notice required under section 8(c) of the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council formed in furtherance of section 441 of the Revised Statutes (43 U.S.C. 1457), the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), and other Acts applicable to specific bureaus of the Department of the Interior is hereby abolished.''.

Page 41, lines 17 and 18, strike ''this determination'' and insert ''the provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting under the authority of this title''.

Page 41, line 20, insert '', road construction or maintenance,'' after ''access''.

Page 41, lines 22 and 23, strike '', or permanent road construction or maintenance''.

Page 42, line 14, strike ''such implementation'' and insert ''the provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting under the authority of this title''.

Page 42, line 16, strike ''or permanent road construction or use'' and insert ''motorized recreational access, road construction or maintenance, or use that is not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.)''.

Page 45, line 18, strike ''head''.

At the end of the bill, add the following new title (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE IX—RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS

SEC. 901. RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to affect or modify any treaty or other right of any federally recognized Indian tribe.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

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

Mr. Chairman, this amendment makes several technical and clarifying changes to the bill, and conforms the bill text to that which was favorably reported from the Committee on Natural Resources.

Let me cite just some of the small changes in the amendment:

It includes a savings position regarding the effect of the act on Indian tribes' treaty or other recognized rights. It clarifies that.

It also provides clearer language that the provision of opportunities to hunt, fish, and shoot on certain Federal lands ''shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use other extraction, motorized vehicle access, road construction or maintenance or use not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act.'' That clarifies that.

It also incorporates an amendment filed by our colleague, the sponsor of the legislation, Mr. LATTA, to title VII of the bill to correct a sunset date for the existing advisory council.

So as I understand, the manager's amendment is something that has been vetted, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. I appreciate there are some clarifications in this amendment which we do support, but there are a few remaining oversights.

There was an amendment by DelBene and Kilmer from Washington State that specified that tribal jurisdiction is not to be infringed upon, where this blanket language in the Hastings amendment protecting tribal rights could well not be read. Supposedly, in a number of places here we are chasing chimeras, you know, illusions, threats, with some of the provisions about the film permitting and that.

But this might be real, which this does not deal with the potential for disputes between tribes and neighboring landowners or between tribes; and so, therefore, it would have been better to have the broader language of DelBene and Kilmer, which specified treaty-protected rights of the individual tribal members are protected, whereas this amendment only protects the rights of the tribe itself. So I worry that we are creating a loophole here that doesn't adequately protect the sovereignty of tribes and all of their members.

The amendment does attempt to address some of the wilderness issues in title VII, the so-called Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage Act, which fails to address the wilderness issues in title III, filming on public lands. We have already had extensive discussion of that. No identified problem, no hearing, nobody has ever said we need this, but it is in there. We are going to allow mechanized film crews into wilderness areas.

Then title VII creates a loophole that will allow motorized equipment and vehicles into Federal wilderness areas—now, not with permanent roads, with only temporary roads or driving off-road—to facilitate hunting in wilderness areas or otherwise restricted areas, wildlife refuges and that. And we still find that very problematic.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HANNA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Chairman, 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 3, before line 1, insert the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 3. REPORT ON ECONOMIC IMPACT.

Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Interior shall submit a report to Congress that assesses expected economic impacts of the Act. Such report shall include—

(1) a review of any expected increases in recreational hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation activities;

(2) an estimate of any jobs created in each industry expected to support such activities described in paragraph (1), including in the supply, manufacturing, distribution, and retail sectors;

(3) an estimate of wages related to jobs described in paragraph (2); and

(4) an estimate of anticipated new local, State, and Federal revenue related to jobs described in paragraph (2).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the SHARE Act and am pleased to be a sponsor of this bill.

The SHARE Act allows more Americans to enjoy outdoor hobbies such as hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on public lands. Not only do those activities provide our constituents with enjoyable hobbies and pastimes, they also contribute to our communities by creating and supporting diverse jobs in every congressional district.

When families travel and actively enjoy the outdoors, they spur demand for outdoor products and services and create jobs in the manufacturing, outfitting, retail, lodging, and hospitality industries.

□ 1515

I am proud that the village of Ilion in my congressional district is home to our Nation's oldest continually operating manufacturing company, Remington Arms. Remington manufactures firearms for hunting and recreational shooting and sustains more than 1,400 well-paying union jobs in New York's Mohawk Valley.

Legislators in Washington and in Albany should take concrete steps to support these private sector jobs, not threaten them, and I am pleased the House is taking this action today. By opening new lands for recreational use and by making the joys of the outdoors more accessible to average Americans, we can assist important sectors of our economy without spending taxpayer dollars.

My amendment would simply quantify the economic impacts of this act by detailing how the new recreational opportunities it provides will create jobs, boost wages, and generate new local, State, and Federal revenue. It is my hope that by highlighting the connection between sportsmen-friendly Federal policy and growth in outdoor industries, future Congresses will take additional steps to not only provide our constituents with greater access to hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation pursuits but also help grow jobs in the private sector and support these American traditions.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HANNA. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I want to congratulate the gentleman on offering this amendment. I think putting this aspect into this bill will help quantify how important hunting and fishing is if you put an economic component to it. So I congratulate the gentleman.

I plan to support the amendment.

Mr. HANNA. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. I believe that the information on the economic impacts of

conservation is important. It is something that we don't quantify very well.

As we have pointed out earlier, some of the provisions of this act, unfortunately, will fly in the face of conservation, the benefits of hunting and fishing activities on public lands.

So I think, actually, on balance, the gentleman's requirement here would be very useful information in the future to help land managers who have to make decisions between opening up lands to mining or to oil and gas development versus the benefits the community could realize or has been realizing or will continue to realize from the recreational hunting and fishing.

Federal lands had become essentially a reservoir, a place where these activities are protected, for the most part, from development, with the exceptions of what I had mentioned earlier. They are some of the premiere destinations for hunting and fishing in the country.

Again, the chairman and I disagree over the merits of acquiring some of these lands which are now in private ownership from willing sellers that potentially will otherwise be slated for development, using the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I believe that addressing the Land and Water Conservation Fund proactively would have been useful.

For certain, given the objections to that—because it has not yet quite expired, even though we are underutilizing it and using the tax dollars somewhere else—the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has expired. The Dingell-Wittman amendment was proposed to reauthorize that critical program, and that was not allowed. So that would also be something that would show a measurable benefit.

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

Mr. HANNA. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment to qualify and quantify the economic impact of the SHARE Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CASTRO OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Chair, 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 27, after line 18, insert the following:

''(xiii) Women's hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

''(xiv) Minority hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for considering this amendment.

Mr. Chair, this amendment concerns the composition of the Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Committee, which will advise the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior on policies and programs related to hunting and recreational activities on Federal lands. More specifically, the amendment adds a requirement that women and minority hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach or education organizations are included as discretionary committee members. Examples of such groups include the Women's Hunting and Sporting Foundation, Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and Outdoors organization, and the African American Hunting Organization.

This will bring the number of groups in that discretionary committee group to 14 from 12.

The groups that I am adding with this amendment were originally included in the committee's charter. This amendment simply codifies their inclusion. I am proud to offer the amendment to reflect a more diverse perspective on America's land use.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for offering this amendment. I think that his amendment, since the idea of the whole underlying legislation is to expand as much as we can to those that want to enjoy that, I think his amendment adds to the legislation, and I am prepared to support it.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I yield to the ranking member.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman, and I want to congratulate him on his diligence and on his foresight here to propose this amendment. It was an oversight in replacing the current council with a new membership. I am not exactly certain why we need to do that because we haven't heard particular complaints.

In any case, this is an improvement upon the newly recommended council to include minorities and women fully engaged, since I see a lot of those folks out in the back country in my State, and I am sure you do in Texas, too.

So I am pleased that for one brief moment here, we have a bipartisan consensus. With that, I congratulate the gentleman.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I thank both gentlemen and yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. GALLEGO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Chairman, 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 27, after line 18, insert the following:

''(xiii) Veterans service organization.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Chairman, I, too, would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their work on this legislation.

I can think of nothing more important that all of us, I think, can agree on than the importance of taking care of our veterans and our veterans' community, especially now that we have so many wounded warriors coming back. So many groups have taken to outdoor activities as part of the therapy for wounded warriors, making sure that we really approach making them whole again in a very real way, and nature is a huge part of that.

Last night, in fact, this Chamber held a moment of silence to honor veterans in Afghanistan and Iraq. These are folks who have put their country above all else. And what this amendment specifically would do would be to essentially correct what I believe also was an oversight in ensuring that veterans are also included in this Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee. Again, it is because so many veterans groups now in so many places are popping up where the outdoors is a great part of that therapy and a very important part of the therapy that many of our wounded warriors are receiving.

This advisory committee, as they give their advice to the administration, it is important that they do so with a veteran at the table. It is important that veterans have that voice, and they look at it with the perspective from a wounded warrior or a veteran, someone who has served our country in uniform. What is it that we can be doing to make this experience more meaningful for them?

Again, I appreciate the opportunity very much to offer the amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GALLEGO. I am happy to yield to the gentleman.

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

I want to say that this amendment, I believe, also will add to the underlying legislation, which, of course, would expand the experience of hunting and fishing. So the remarks I made to his colleague from Texas I think are applicable also to this.

So I endorse this amendment and would tell my friend from Oregon, the ranking member, that is two for two now.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GALLEGO. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Texas is batting .100 here today.

I would like to thank the gentleman for improving the proposed composition of the council. I thought your points about the healing that can come from wounded warriors being in these precious natural areas in our country is very well taken, and I appreciate that.

Not to create any discord at the moment, but there was another amendment that wasn't allowed by the Rules Committee, offered by the gentleman from California, Representative RUIZ, which is in the purview of the gentleman whose bill is on the floor today, which would have waived recreation fees for veterans with disabilities, and I hope we can revisit that issue in the future.

I congratulate the gentleman on his improvement and his recognition of our veterans.

Mr. GALLEGO. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report of 113–339.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. DEFAZIO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, as the designee of Mr. ELLISON, who is detained at the White House, 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 38, strike line 20 through page 39, line 6.

Page 39, line 7, strike ''(3)'' and insert ''(2)''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I want to applaud the gentleman from Minnesota, Congressman ELLISON, for bringing this amendment to the attention of the House.

We have had endless debate about the appropriate role of the National Environmental Policy Act in both the Natural Resources Committee as well as the House Committee on Transportation.

The underlying bill, H.R. 3590, includes language which would eliminate the need for the Fish and Wildlife Service to disclose, analyze, and take comments on decisions related to management decisions in national wildlife refuges.

□ 1530

I repeat that. They would not have to analyze or take comments from either side on decisions that relate to management decisions in national wildlife refuges. Never has there been a case made here during the lead-up to this bill, such as there was, and during the debate why we need this very broad NEPA exception which would, if they want to increase hunting, no NEPA analysis, if they want to decrease hunting, no NEPA analysis, no opportunity for the public to be involved in the process.

As we learned during the shutdown, the wildlife refuge system provides a tremendous opportunity—some of it very ephemeral in terms of seasons—for duck hunters, fishermen, and other sportsmen and -women across the country. In some densely populated areas like in Congressman THOMPSON's district, wildlife refuges are some of the only hunting areas open to the public, and especially the disabled public.

Why do we need to cut the public out, including disabled Americans, veterans, anybody, regarding these special places and their management when no evidence has been presented that NEPA is in any way an impediment to refuge management? It is just the standard boilerplate: repeal NEPA anywhere, everywhere, all the time, and maybe sooner or later it might stick. But it won't, given the veto threat on this bill and the fact that the Senate isn't going to act on it. But, anyway, it is in here.

There was an amendment to be offered by Congressman BROUN from Georgia—which I was going to strongly support—which would have fixed the bill and probably brought a fair number of votes across the aisle by stripping these extraneous provisions regarding NEPA, wilderness, and everything that is under attack in this bill that doesn't need to be under attack in this bill. But I guess somehow, even though it was made in order, the Republican side has convinced him not to offer the amendment because it would have passed, and it would have made the bill better.

So at this point, at least we could support the Ellison amendment as it relates to national wildlife refuges.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. STEWART). The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess all good things come to an end because I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. I oppose this amendment because it undermines what I consider to be a fundamental purpose of the law. The fundamental purpose that we are here for today is to protect our hunting and fishing traditions on Federal lands. We are making a clear statement that hunting and fishing are an important use of our multiple-use Federal lands.

This bill establishes a clear policy that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing unless specifically closed by a transparent and open Federal process. Let me repeat that, Mr. Chairman, that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing unless specifically closed by a transparent and open Federal process.

NEPA requires preparation of an environmental impact statement when a Federal agency proposes to take major Federal action. When H.R. 3590 is enacted in law, there will be no need for a costly and bureaucratic process currently necessary to make lands available for hunting and fishing. That process won't be necessary because it will be the law. Congress has spoken as to what the law is.

Again, this bill is designed to set out an open—unless specifically closed—process on BLM and Forest Service lands. As a result, no major Federal action would be needed or would take place to keep these lands open to these traditional important uses of our shared Federal lands.

If there is no administrative action, there is no need for an EIS or NEPA review. However, H.R. 3590 confirms an established understanding of the law that, should an agency move to close Federal lands, the agency should then undertake an open and public process before having the lands closed to our traditional uses.

Now, we know that these provisions are important because they fix a court-created problem regarding the implementation of the 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. We have seen the clear track record that antihunter groups will use to tie up hunting and fishing access to Federal lands with endless lawsuits. This bill reverses this trend and makes our lands open for hunting and fishing. Again, Mr. Chairman, we are making the policy statement that this will be what the law of the land is.

H.R. 3590 directs that our conservation dollars be spent on conservation activities in the field rather than on redundant paperwork and, of course, endless lawsuits. That is the goal of the bill that this amendment would undercut and which would undercut our goal of promoting hunting and fishing.

I urge the defeat of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I urge defeat of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MISSOURI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 44, line 22, strike ''Nothing'' and insert ''Except as provided by subsection (l), nothing''.

Page 45, after line 24, insert the following:

(l) MOTORIZED VESSELS IN THE OZARK NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAYS.—The Secretary of the Interior—

(1) shall manage the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to allow the use of motorized vessels in a manner that is not more restrictive than the use restrictions in effect on November 21, 2013; and

(2) may manage the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to allow the use of motorized vessels in a manner that is less restrictive than the use restrictions in effect on November 21, 2013.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present this amendment to H.R. 3590 today, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I couldn't be prouder of the work that we have done to continue to protect our sportsmen's ability to enjoy the outdoors. As such, I am honored to offer my amendment that would ensure that sportsmen will continue to be able to use motorized vessels in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, a national park contained wholly within my congressional district in southern Missouri.

The Ozark National Scenic Riverways is a popular destination in Missouri for fishing, gigging, and trapping. These activities have traditionally been undertaken by individuals and families for generations. An economy has arisen in my district selling boats, motors, and other products to folks who want to gig, fish, and trap within the rivers.

Recently, the National Park Service has been discussing closing down areas of the park to motorized vessels and further limiting the horsepower of these vessels in other areas. The reduction of boat motor horsepower would limit the number of folks who could be on a boat and restrict access to families. Banning motorized vessels from areas of the park where they are currently allowed would further restrict the public's use and enjoyment of the park.

Banning motorized vessels would also exclude groups from using the rivers that simply have no other options, like the elderly and disabled veterans. Why would the Park Service resort to such drastic measures to block activities that are currently allowed? One explanation is that they don't want folks to be able to utilize the river as they have for the past decades.

My amendment would simply preserve the current park regulations as they are now and how they have been for the last five decades, preventing the Park Service from regulating sportsmen off the river. The Ozark National Scenic Riverways was created for the enjoyment of the public, and it should stay with the public.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield to the gentleman.

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

Mr. Chairman, I think this amendment is in the spirit of the underlying legislation, which is to make sure that there is access for hunting and fishing. And here we have, as I said in my opening statement, the potential of bureaucratic malaise, I guess, slowing down access to this particular area that the gentleman from Missouri recommends. I think his amendment adds a great deal to this legislation, and I intend to support it.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I certainly am not an expert on the gentleman's district and what the exact issue is here; however, I do know that there has been a proposed management plan that has been out for comment since November 8. It will close on Friday. I would hope that the gentleman and concerned parties on either side of the issue have all weighed in to comment because what we are doing here today in this bill will not become law. It is already guaranteed a veto threat. The addition of this to the bill will not help resolve what is a local issue where the Park Service has to weigh comments from motorized users and nonmotorized users and then come to a conclusion weighing those comments and put forward a new management plan. That is the way this is going to get done.

It shouldn't be done from Washington, D.C. We shouldn't be dictating. If we get into every individual land use or access decision being made by every unit of the Park Service, every unit of the Fish and Wildlife Service and their refuges and every unit of the Forest Service and every unit of the BLM, we are going to be pretty busy and be embroiled in a lot of local controversy.

So this, I believe, is premature in that the comment period closes this week and the process will come to a conclusion. Comments will be weighed and a decision will be put out for final comment. It is also, at this point, being added to a bill that is going nowhere.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield to the gentleman.

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

I just want to clarify something, Mr. Chairman, that has been said here by my friend, the ranking member, that the administration has issued a veto threat. They have not issued a veto threat. They have said, and I will just read the last line of their Statement of Administration Policy. It says:

The administration looks forward to working with Congress to enact sportsmen and recreation legislation that addresses the concerns raised with certain provisions of H.R. 3590.

Now, in the letter they do say they have problems with four of the eight titles. But to simply suggest that the administration has issued a veto threat on this is simply not correct. And I ask—well, I will let it go.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. CRAWFORD

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE ____—EXEMPTIONS FOR TAKING MIGRATORY BIRDS ON CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL LAND

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Hunter and Farmer Protection Act''.

SEC. __02. EXEMPTIONS ON CERTAIN LAND.

Section 3 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 704) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) EXEMPTIONS ON CERTAIN LAND.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section prohibits the taking of any migratory game bird, including waterfowl, coots, and cranes, on or over land that—

''(A) contains—

''(i) a standing crop or flooded standing crop, including an aquatic crop;

''(ii) standing, flooded, or manipulated natural vegetation;

''(iii) flooded harvested cropland; or

''(iv) an area in a State on which seed or grain has been scattered solely as the result of an agricultural planting, harvesting, or

post-harvest manipulation practice, or a soil stabilization practice, that the head of the State office of the Cooperative Extension System of the Department of Agriculture has determined in accordance with paragraph (2) to be a normal practice in that State; and

''(B) is not otherwise a baited area.

''(2) STATE DETERMINATIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of a State office of the Cooperative Extension System may make a determination for purposes of paragraph (1)(A)(iv) upon the request of the Secretary of the Interior.

''(B) REVISIONS.—The head of a State office of the Cooperative Extension System may revise a determination under subparagraph (A) as the head of a State office determines to be necessary to reflect changing agricultural practices.

''(C) CONCURRENCE REQUIRED.—A determination or revision under this paragraph shall not be effective for purposes of this subsection unless the head of the State department of fish and wildlife concurs therein.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I consume.

My amendment will provide a limited exemption related to the taking of migratory game birds over farm fields. In short, it clarifies a recent interpretation by the Fish and Wildlife Service about what constitutes a ''baited field.''

In 2012, the agency warned rice growers that some of their fields that had been rolled—as farmer often do after the harvest to prepare the field to be planted the next spring—could be off limits to waterfowl hunting. That summer's drought led to an early rice harvest in several parts of the country, and heavy rainfall then caused a rare secondary ''ratoon'' crop to sprout. The Fish and Wildlife Service cautioned that should rice heads emerge in those fields, their guidelines stated that any field work, such as rolling, would make it a baited field where waterfowl hunting would be unlawful.

Waterfowl hunting is a vital industry in my State. Hunters come from the world over to Arkansas' First District, and farmers, small businesses, and the rural communities that dot the delta all rely on the millions of dollars hunters bring with them every year.

My amendment is a commonsense solution that simply states that a field may not be considered baited as the result of normal agricultural practices, as determined by the State Office of the Cooperative Extension Service at the request of the Secretary of the Interior, with concurrence from that State's Fish and Wildlife Service.

I ask for your support for this important amendment that will protect farmers from being punished for simply carrying out long-recognized and responsible agricultural practices.

With that, I yield to the chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I plan to support his amendment.

This is something that it seems like we wrestle with all the time here on the Federal level. There is uniqueness when you are on the ground, but yet we write rules and regulations on the one size fits all. This is clearly a unique situation, and I think the gentleman's amendment clarifies that very well.

I support the amendment.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, we often have conflicts in Oregon. We had a very substantial conflict relating to geese in terms of farmers' fields. The resolution was that the birds protected by the Migratory Bird Act would continue to be protected, but farmers would be able to hunt with the State license—and I don't know about the gentleman's State whether or not a State license would be required—the birds that were not migratory that were becoming pests and were resident in order to protect their crops.

□ 1545

This substantially resolved the problem.

I don't know if a similar fix would work here, but an amendment that gives an open license on the Migratory Bird Act, which has international implications, the migratory bird treaty, seems to me to be an extreme measure in this case. Therefore, we would oppose the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. FLEMING

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of the bill, add the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 805. RESTRICTIONS ON HUNTING IN KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST.

(a) HUNTING IN KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST.—Consistent with the Act of June 4, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 551), the Secretary of Agriculture may not restrict the use of dogs in deer hunting activities in Kisatchie National Forest, unless such restrictions—

(1) apply to the smallest practicable portions of such unit; and

(2) are necessary to reduce or control trespass onto land adjacent to such unit.

(b) PRIOR RESTRICTIONS VOID.—Any restrictions regarding the use of dogs in deer hunting activities in Kisatchie National Forest in force on the date of the enactment of this Act shall be void and have no force or effect.

(c) ADJACENT LANDOWNERS.—Landowners whose property abuts a unit of the Kisatchie National Forest may petition the Secretary of Agriculture to restrict the use of dogs in deer hunting activities that take place on such unit which abut their property. If the Secretary of Agriculture receives a petition from an adjacent landowner, the Secretary, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, may impose restrictions on the use of dogs in deer hunting—

(1) limited to those units of the Kisatchie National Forest within 300 yards of the boundary of the petitioning landowner's property; and

(2) consistent with subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My amendment today maintains the State of Louisiana's ability to regulate hunting within its borders. In a decision announced March 1, 2012, the Forest Service Regional Forester located way over in Atlanta, Georgia, went over the heads of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to forever prohibit the use of dogs to hunt deer in Kisatchie National Forest.

Deer hunting has a long and important cultural history within the State of Louisiana. When French settlers first came to Louisiana in the 18th century, thickets and dense timber covered the area. Most of these settlers had companion dogs with them, and the most treasured companions were the deerhounds. The use of dogs helped hunters drive the deer from the woods onto trails, and the plentiful herds provided exciting sport and sound nourishment.

The 600-acre Kisatchie National Forest has provided diverse hunting opportunities for decades, including the use of dogs in hunting a variety of animals. Oddly enough, the Regional Forester does not prohibit the use of dogs for hunting raccoon, squirrel, rabbit, and game birds. The dog deer season in Louisiana has been severely restricted in recent years, down from 15 days to 7 days in 2012, and dog deer hunting in the Kisatchie has been limited to certain ranger districts.

According to communication with the Forest Service, seven Southern States allow hunting in the national forest within their borders. They include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Louisiana. However, this is the first time the Forest Service has issued a ban on dog deer hunting or hunting deer with dogs within a specific State.

According to the Forest Service documents, the revenue generated from dog deer hunting, including the care of

animals, contributes approximately 18 to 29 direct jobs and results in roughly $890,000 to $1.4 million of income from hunting tourism and related activities. By the Forest Service's own assessment, it is likely that economic benefits are currently being lost as hunters leave the area to pursue the sport elsewhere. This is having a tangible economic impact on our State, robbing it of even more jobs.

I would like to emphasize that the State of Louisiana, the Kennel Club, and Safari Club International support my amendment, and a similar amendment was accepted by the House with a voice vote last Congress.

I urge support of this amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLEMING. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I think this is a good amendment, and I support the amendment. The primary purpose of this legislation is to limit unjustified Federal bureaucratic limitations on hunting and fishing.

I also want to make a point here that it is important to recognize that the authority of States to regulate hunting and fishing should be paramount over the Federal Government. Individual Federal agencies should not preempt State laws, and it sounds to me like that is what the gentleman is talking about in his case.

I think the amendment is a good amendment, and I support it.

Mr. FLEMING. I thank the gentleman, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, we have talked about major problems confronting this Congress, and here we are now trying to resolve yet another local conflict.

After considerable complaints by private property owners about hunters encroaching on their land to retrieve their dogs that have gotten lost, driving on their land and that, the Forest Service decided because of the intermingled ownership to prohibit dog deer hunting.

Now comes the gentleman who says, well, we are going to reopen it. We will countermand the locally made decision, but we will have a new process where the private landowners can petition the secretary to re-close certain areas of the area that are now closed that he is reopening because of conflicts with their private property. However, these private property owners' petitions will have to go through the dreaded NEPA process, and that is, for deciding something as minor as that, kind of problematic.

You know, I guess maybe we should have a special day here, and I have some beefs with some Federal agencies ongoing that I would like to settle with legislation, too. Maybe we should have an open amendment process some day where every little local issue we have been dealing with with a Federal agency which is contentious between conflicting users will be decided by the United States Congress in Washington, D.C., not at the local level. That is what we are doing here. It is pretty extraordinary.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to address the issues brought up here.

First of all, the gentleman said there were multiple complaints. This was studied considerably. There was 1,237 responses to a request in 2009, and by October 6, we found that there were 77 percent, a clear majority of the respondents, who were actually in favor of continuing the practice of dog deer hunting. This was requested again in 2011, and there were over 1,300 respondents, and all but 16 were in favor of dog deer hunting and against the Forest Service proposed ban.

The other thing I would like to address, Mr. Chairman, is this was not a locally made decision. This was made in Atlanta. This is the problem. This has been going on for 300 years in the State of Louisiana. It is a big part of our heritage, and somebody over in Georgia, in Atlanta, representing the Federal Government, made this decision, not locally. There was no decision locally. The State supports this. The local residents support it by a vast majority.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would like to just say that the people of Louisiana want to see this Forest Service ban overturned. This was a decision made outside of our borders. In effect, if you will, even though the people of Louisiana were asked and they gave the correct answer, it was ignored, and the decision was made by someone outside of our borders. This was a decision made by somebody in Atlanta, a Federal employee, interfering with a local issue.

This is a tradition that goes back 300 years, and I think it is pretty obvious that the people of Louisiana support the continuance of hunting deer with dogs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) ''An Act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.''.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 376. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. STEWART). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE IX—CLIMATE CHANGE

SEC. 901. AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO PLAN FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE.

Nothing in this Act limits the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to include climate change as a consideration in making decisions related to conservation and recreation on public lands.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Sportsmen are among the first to notice the effects of our changing climate as changes in seasonal distribution of game and diminished natural habitats becomes more evident. As the climate continues to change, we will experience worse drought, flood, wildfire, and extreme weather events.

For public lands and recreation there, climate change will mean changes in hunting seasons, migratory patterns, and the native and invasive species populations. We will experience sea level rise, wildfire, drought, and other manifestations of climate change. All of these are altering the landscape and changing the existing opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreation on public lands. These should be considered. These will have a greater effect on sportsmen and on fishermen and hunters than all of the other things we have been talking about today.

More than 75 percent of the Federal lands are open now for recreational

hunting, fishing and shooting, but climate change would transform irreversibly, and in fact is transforming irreversibly, our public lands in ways that will limit the ability of sportsmen to enjoy recreational activities in these areas.

So this amendment says the Department should consider those things. In fact, it is even more limited than that. It says nothing will prevent the Department from considering these things. That is what this amendment is. I would hope that the House will accept this. I have been joined by a number of members of the House Sustainable Energy Coalition in offering this amendment. It is supported by Defenders of Wildlife and the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, the primary purpose of this underlying legislation is the premise that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing recreation rather than being closed. I believe this should be the policy of all of our multiple use Federal lands. The default option should be open regardless of whether your interests are mountain biking, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, logging, building a solar energy facility, mining, wind power, or developing oil and gas. Our Nation's multiple use lands were designed to be used for the benefit of the Nation. This open-before-closed concept is the foundation of what we are trying to do through this legislation.

□ 1600

We are trying to raise the bar of bureaucracy that the bureaucracy has placed between hunters and the outdoors.

Reckless disregard of our Nation's hunting and fishing traditions means too often our Federal lands are closed off arbitrarily, and not just without public input, but against public sentiment.

Now the gentleman is proposing that we give the Secretary another new tool to close lands, without scientific decisionmaking, without accounting for their actions. The gentleman proposes that we simply grant the Secretary the sole authority to dictate that we close off any and all of our Nation's lands from hunting and fishing based simply on the Secretary's mere opinion that hunting and fishing are a threat to our Nation's land because of climate change.

Hunting and fishing are traditions and foundations that this Nation was built upon. They are not burdens to our national lands. They are one of the many purposes of our national lands.

Just yesterday, Mr. Chairman, before the Rules Committee, one of my Democrat colleagues was commenting that he had a BB gun at age 7 and a .22 rifle at age 12. He talked about how, as a young man, he learned to respect guns and traditions. Yet that same Member is concerned about what children are learning today—the lack of respect for guns and the traditions of the outdoors.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is one of the many benefits and reasons that we are here today, to help restore the opportunity for hunting and fishing traditions to take root on our Federal lands, to remind our Federal land managers that the exercise of these traditions are not a burden on our lands but one of the foundations of our lands.

Finally, let me say this. Regardless of one's views on our climate, this amendment is not about climate change. It is about granting the Secretary a blank check to ban hunting and fishing. Nothing in the bill changes the Secretary's ability to manage our lands to ensure responsible management. The bill does require lands to be opened, however, before closed; but when closing lands, the Secretary must act in a measured fashion to ensure that our hunting and fishing traditions are protected and valued.

I urge my colleagues to reject what I consider to be an antihunting and -fishing amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, may I ask the time remaining on each side.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 3 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HOLT. I thank the Chair.

I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), who is a leader of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition Caucus and a cosponsor of this amendment.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague.

As the cochair of the Green Dogs of the SEEC Caucus, I rise in support of this amendment and proud to cosponsor it.

The bill before us purports to be about expanding opportunities for sportsmen on Federal lands, yet it fails to recognize the significant effect climate change will have on such opportunities. For example, what will climate change mean for hunters who are forced away from parks because of drought or threat of wildfire? As we witnessed this year, wildfire seasons are now longer, larger, and longer-term than ever before because of climate change. The migratory patterns of ducks and, for that matter, the patterns of fish, to name just two species, are also being negatively affected.

What will climate change mean for anglers who find streams drying up and killing fish? Last September, Montana officials closed the Blackfoot River—not the Secretary, they did—the iconic backdrop for the book and film, ''A River Runs Through It,'' to protect fish from the stress of low-level river flows.

Mr. Chairman, if we really want to protect and expand outdoor recreational opportunities, shouldn't we understand what climate change will mean, not only for hunters, but for the affected wildlife and their habitat?

I urge my colleagues to support this simple, commonsense amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time and advise my friend I have no requests for time. I am prepared to yield back if the gentleman is prepared to yield back.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remaining time just to address a couple of points that my friend, the chair, from Washington has raised.

There is nothing in this amendment that gives the Secretary any new authority. It simply says that the Secretary should consider climate change in policies for managing these lands.

Climate change is the problem that needs to be addressed. You can deny it all you want, but climate change will do more to restrict hunting and fishing and recreation on public lands than these imagined administrative reductions or restrictions or lawsuits or restrictions on lead shot or any of those things.

There are a variety of adaptation strategies to promote resilience of fish and wildlife populations and forests and plant communities and freshwater resources and ocean resources. These are being studied by academic and scientific and, yes, government and nonprofit organizations.

A great deal of thought is going into this. We want to make sure that there is nothing that restricts the Secretary from using these best adaptation strategies, these best management practices, to take into account what is real. It is not imagined. The climate is changing. It is affecting the ecology of all of these public lands.

I urge support of this amendment and yield back the balance of my time.

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

I just want to point out that the gentleman wanted to clarify by saying this doesn't give authority, but the Secretary should consider. What if the Secretary considers under current law and then decides to take action?

That is the point of the argument that I made, and that is that that action, then, on climate change could cause limited or no access to our public lands. That is why I said this amendment is kind of cloaked in different clothing, because it does not speak to climate change; in fact, it speaks to the potential closing of our public lands.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 113–339.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Mr. KILDEE, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE IX—SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SNOWMOBILES ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS

SEC. 901. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The clear identification of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use in each National Forest will improve management of National Forest System lands and protect these national treasures, enhance opportunities, and address access for motorized recreation experiences on National Forest System lands and preserve areas of opportunity in each National Forest for non-motorized travel and experiences.

(2) The sport of snowmobiling supports thousands of jobs across the country and provides a variety of enriching recreational opportunities for both families and individuals.

(3) In 2005, the Forest Service promulgated a Travel Management Rule that required travel management plans for off-road vehicles, with the exception of snowmobiles, on all lands managed by the Forest Service.

(4) Under the 2005 Travel Management Rule, the Department of Agriculture deemed that the use of snowmobiles on National Forest System lands presented a different set of management issues and environmental impacts on National Forest System lands than the use of other types of motor vehicles. Therefore, the final rule exempted snowmobiles from the mandatory designation scheme provided for under section 212.51 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, but retained the National Forest System's ability to allow, restrict or prohibit snowmobile travel, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

(5) In 2013, the Ninth U.S. District Court of Idaho ruled in the case captioned as *Winter Wildlands Alliance* v. *US Forest Service*, Case No. 1:11-cv-00586–REB, ruled that the Forest Service must promulgate travel management rules that include snowmobiles. The Ninth U.S. District Court of Idaho required that the final rule be promulgated by September 14, 2014, barring no additional extension.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Forest Service should continue to allow snowmobiles access to National Forest System lands at the same levels as were allowed as of March 28, 2013, subject to closures for public health and safety at the discretion of the respective agencies, until a final travel management rule is promulgated for snowmobiles.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, in 1972, President Nixon signed Executive Order 11644, which required that the U.S. Forest Service create travel management plans for the operation of off-road vehicles in our national forests, including snowmobiles. These travel management plans were designed to address the concerns of different users. They can be simple or detailed enough to affect noise, carbon emissions, traffic patterns, and protect animal migratory patterns.

In 2005, the Forest Service finalized its travel management rules for off-road vehicles in the national forest system except for snowmobiles, which were granted an exemption.

Each year, outdoor enthusiasts contribute enormous amounts to our economy, and snowmobiles support thousands of jobs not only in my district, but across the country. Not only do many of our residents enjoy snowmobiling, but it attracts significant tourism to areas like Eagle and Summit and Grand Counties and actually creates jobs in those areas.

Although snowmobiles were exempted from this rule, individual forest managers were still able to restrict snowmobile travel as appropriate on a case-by-case basis through individual travel management plans which met the unique needs of each area.

In 2013, however, a Federal District Court in Idaho in the Winter Wildlands Alliance v. U.S. Forest Service ruled the Forest Service must develop an overarching travel management rule that includes snowmobiles to comply with President Nixon's original executive order.

This amendment states that while the National Forest Service develops this travel management plan, it is a sense of Congress that the Forest Service should continue to allow snowmobiles on Federal lands during this rule's development with the same restrictions that were in place prior to the Winter Wildlands Alliance decision to ensure that the ability of snowmobilers to recreate is not interfered with because of this period where we are developing our permanent policy.

Given the breadth of outdoor activities, it makes simple sense that public lands should be available for multiple uses, including snowmobiling. About a quarter of Americans who participate in outdoor recreation enjoy motorized vehicles as part of that activity. Like other outdoor enthusiasts, snowmobilers contribute to communities by renting equipment, staying in hotels, purchasing souvenirs, enjoying local restaurants, and more.

As off-road vehicle use expands, it becomes increasingly important for the U.S. Forest Service to issue its rules to determine whether areas are open or closed to snowmobiles. This sense of Congress will allow that certainty that will allow our tourism industry to continue and our residents to continue to enjoy snowmobiling.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POLIS. I yield to the gentleman.

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

I say on a personal note, I was looking for you on the floor at the end of last week. I was prepared to take Seattle and offer you 34 points. I think you probably would have taken that bet.

I just want to make this point. If the gentleman will say that the results on the gridiron in New Jersey last Sunday, if the gentleman will say that the better team won—and you don't have to make any other adjectives—but if the gentleman will say that, I will be more than happy to accept this amendment.

Mr. POLIS. I will be happy to say on the record that the better team on that particular day won. There is still some doubt about whether that was, in fact, the Denver Broncos that took the field.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Well, I knew that the gentleman would find something to say.

I just want to say, dealing with the amendment, I think this amendment, again, in the spirit of adding more activity on Federal lands, I think this adds to it. I am prepared to support the amendment.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the chair.

I yield to the ranking member, Mr. DEFAZIO.

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

I congratulate Mr. POLIS and Congressman KILDEE, who is detained at the White House, for offering this amendment.

I appreciate that the majority has accepted it. This will be a temporary provision until such a time as the final rule is adopted. There was never, I don't think, intent to have this sort of a blanket ban on snowmobiles, and this would correct that error by the Forest Service as they go through a deliberative process on where, when, and how snowmobiles will access Federal forest lands on a unit-by-unit basis.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Washington for his remarks. You know that when the defense of one team scores more points than the offense of the other team, your team is not in good shape. But I congratulate the gentleman on the 12-second, fastest ever score in a way that was quite embarrassing for the Broncos, but we will be back next year. We look forward to challenging in the NFL.

I appreciate the support from both the chair and the ranking member for Mr. KILDEE's and my amendment. This rule will help the U.S. Forest Service improve management, prevent the disruption of the tourism industry, allow for the continued enjoyment of residents in snowmobiling, and ensure that

off-road vehicles are used in a manner that protects natural resources, minimizes conflict with other users, and provides and protects motorized recreation.

Until we finalize the travel plan, snowmobilers will be able to, under this sense of Congress, enjoy their favorite activity, and communities should continue to reap the economic benefits of hosting these winter sport enthusiasts.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MULLIN) having assumed the chair, Mr. STEWART, 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. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 1615

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113–90)

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 Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2014.

The situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and fatal attacks against international peacekeeping forces.

Since the inauguration of President Alassane Ouattara in May 2011, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has made progress in advancing democratic freedoms and economic development. While the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make progress towards peace and prosperity, the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 4, 2014.*

SHERIFF WINDERS

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, last week, North Carolina lost a real leader and a good man—my loyal friend, Sheriff Carey Winders of Wayne County. He was only 57 years old.

Carey was one of the youngest men to be elected as sheriff in Wayne County, and 2015 would have marked his 20th year of service. He was dedicated to the people he served and respected by all. Carey was a lifelong member of Union Grove Free Will Baptist Church, where he met his wife of 33 years, Teresa. Family was everything to Carey. Carey had three daughters—Jessica, Ashley and Carianne—and two granddaughters.

Mr. Speaker, Carey was devoted to Wayne County and driven by his faith, his family and his commitment to the citizens who put their trust in him. While it is a dark time in Wayne County, we know that the light of his life and his principled example will illuminate this community in the days ahead.

THE GOP DOCTORS CAUCUS: THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, here we are now in February 2014, and the second session of the 113th Congress has begun. The administration still has to deal with daily headlines speaking of the disaster of—you guessed it—the Affordable Care Act. I have to sometimes refer to that as the ''Unaffordable Care Act.''

Today, the news came from the nonpartisan CBO, the Congressional Budget Office. My colleagues are all familiar with that. Their report states that the administration's rosy projections are a mere fairy tale. If you take a dive into these numbers from the CBO, Mr. Speaker, you will see last year's goals amended lower as the low participation and atrocious rollout of the exchanges have finally caught up with those estimates.

Let me just give you, colleagues, a few highlights:

The CBO lowered the estimate of exchange enrollees to 6 million. That is 1 million less than they estimated at this time last year. Now, this isn't all that surprising given the problems with the Web site—healthcare.gov—and the rest of the implementation of ObamaCare, but it definitely reinforces the notion that this plan is not working.

The CBO estimates that 31 million Americans will still be uninsured in 2024. Colleagues, when this bill was being discussed in Energy and Commerce way back in 2009—in 2008 even—the Democratic majority at the time said there were 45 million people who were uninsured. That number really shrunk down considerably when you realized that there were a number of people who were eligible for Medicaid who just didn't know it. It could have been as many as 10 or 11 or 12 million. Obviously, there are a lot of people in this country illegally uninsured but who are not eligible. Then there were the people making $75,000 a year in their households who could afford health insurance but who just chose, because of the Constitution—their personal liberty—to pay as they went. It is not something I recommend. The CBO estimates now that in 2024—10 years later—after its passage and full implementation on October 1 of this year, 2014, that there will still be 31 million Americans uninsured. What have we really solved here? It doesn't sound like we have really helped very much.

Now, this bill was sold to the American people as the solution to eliminating the uninsured. Instead, the bill only, really, adds cost in the form of very expensive mandates to everyone who already had insurance. A lot of them now are just saying, Heck, I will be one of these who will go bare. I will, maybe, set up my own savings account for health care, and will put $100 a month—or whatever—in a checking account and get a physical when I need it annually or biannually, and I will pay my own way—that has happened—and pay the little fine of $95.

So that is what is happening, and it is quite a legacy for the President's signature piece of legislation. I don't think it is the legacy that he anticipated, and it is certainly not the one that he wants today.

Finally, there is the headline from the newspaper, The Hill. Most of us read that, don't we, colleagues? We read all of these newspapers if we don't run out of time. In The Hill today, here is its headline: ''CBO: O-Care Slowing

Growth, Contributing to Job Losses''—with ''O'' standing for ''ObamaCare.''

The CBO projects that the law will reduce labor force compensation by 1 percent from 2017 to 2024, twice the reduction it previously had projected. This will decrease the number of full-time equivalent jobs by 2.3 million in 2021, and this is up from the previous estimate of 800,000. There is a big difference, my colleagues, between 2.3 million and 800,000. This is remarkable. Through a combination of higher health care costs, resulting in lower compensation and perverse incentives for folks to not work as much in order to preserve their subsidies, it is truly not the American Dream.

The administration, Mr. Speaker, continues to push for more money for jobs programs, yet, at the same time, it continues to fight for a bill that has yet to work and will lead to rewarding people for working less. What were these jobs programs? Just get rid of—what can I call it?—the worst bill, maybe, that has ever been passed in the history of this body, of this Congress. The Affordable Care Act has given us higher costs, not lower. It has performed much worse than was promised, and it will incent our citizens to work less. That is not what we want. That is really not what they want.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the administration to give in to reality and to let us repeal this bill. I don't think it is the first choice to just sit back and see it collapse under its own weight. You hear that expression a lot. I think that very well could happen, but let's take, maybe, a more responsible approach.

Mr. Speaker, I would say this to the President:

Mr. President, let's take a more responsible approach, and you work with the Congress—with Republicans and Democrats, with the House and the Senate. You get more engaged than you have ever been before, and work with us. Let's repeal it, and let's start over with something that truly does work, because we all agree that we have the greatest health care on the face of this Earth. Why is it that people pay thousands of dollars to get on a jet plane to fly from other countries to go to the Mayo Clinic or to Sloan-Kettering or to the WellStar Health System in my district, the 11th of Georgia, to get their health care, to get their surgery, to get their treatment for cancer? You don't see people from this country going in the opposite direction, because they get that good care here. So, Mr. President, we can work together. We can. The American people want us to. They don't want one side jamming the other. They do want us to work together.

I want to take some time during this Special Order hour that our Republican leadership has afforded us. I hope some of my colleagues from the House GOP Doctors Caucus will be joining me momentarily, and I will yield to them as this is the opportunity for us to explain to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle what needs to be done and how we can work together and clearly get this done and get it done in a timely fashion, if not this year, certainly in the 114th Congress.

This Doctors Caucus that I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, is something that I put together a number of years ago, and we are now up to about 22 members. I say ''doctors.'' There are a lot of categories of doctors, but I am talking about doctors who work specifically in the health care space, which is one-sixth of the economy of this country. These doctors can be medical doctors. They can be dentists. They can be psychologists. They can be advanced practice nurses. Indeed, even hospital administrators are part of this group because they know. They understand that in our caucus we have, probably, 600 years of accumulated clinical experience. That means there is a little gray around the sideburns on a few of us.

This knowledge—this expertise—our leadership on the Republican side recognizes that. Our committee chairs on Energy and Commerce and on Ways and Means and Education and the Workforce—every one of those committees that has any jurisdiction over health care—understand that, and they look to us. They look to us for expertise and guidance and explanations just as we who have worked in the health care sector before we got elected to the Congress look to educators, look to accountants, look to attorneys in their previous lives to help us on issues that we are not so up to date on or on which we don't have that level of expertise. That is the way it should be, and that is the way it should be, in my opinion, on both sides of the aisle.

□ 1630

So we Doctors Caucus meet, if not weekly, at least every 2 weeks. We talk about issues. We have been talking about this Affordable Care Act for the last 3 years and going through it section by section and trying to have a thorough understanding. We bring understanding to the table, but everybody can learn something that they didn't know in a 2,700-page bill. That is the due diligence that we have done over these last several years.

When we read in the media or we hear from the Democratic side of the aisle, or either in the House of Representatives or from the Majority Leader HARRY REID and the Democratic majority in the Senate, saying, well—or even, Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States. How many times have we heard him say: If you have an idea, if you have a better plan, bring it to me, bring it to me; I am all ears; I want to listen? And we have done that.

I value the opportunity to be here today to explain some of the things that have been done and that they have really come through the House GOP Doctors Caucus. One of our members is my colleague from Georgia, an orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. TOM PRICE. Dr. TOM PRICE and I served in the Georgia Senate. We are medical colleagues: he, an orthopaedic surgeon; I, an obstetrician. Now we have been in the Congress together for 10 years. And so he is a very active member of this House GOP Doctors Caucus, and he has a bill.

To just set the record straight, colleagues, let me tell you about Dr. TOM PRICE's bill, H.R. 2300, Empowering Patients First Act. Well, that bill is not 2,700 pages, but it is a comprehensive bill. A lot of the sections in that bill are individual ideas that have come from the Doctors Caucus. I am proud that he has included a number of my suggestions in regard to medical liability reform and other things. And so, it is a compendium of ideas.

It is a very good bill, a very good alternative. It is market driven. It does not interfere with the doctor-patient relationship, that sanctity, and it is a sanctity. Dr. PRICE understands that, and every member of the House GOP Doctors Caucus understands that. This bill, believe me, has the opportunity to get traction and, when it is brought to this House floor, to pass this Chamber.

Now, at the same time, we just heard, Mr. Speaker, in recent days that the Senate has drafted a bill. It doesn't have a number yet, but Dr. TOM COBURN, the OB/GYN family practitioner from Muskogee, Oklahoma, whom I have worked very closely with, the Doctors Caucus has worked very closely with, and Dr. BARRASSO and Dr. JOHN BOOZMAN. So, the Senate Republican doctors and the House Republican Doctors Caucus have worked together.

Dr. COBURN, along with Senator BURR from North Carolina and Senator ORRIN HATCH, one of the most senior and thoughtful and brilliant Members of the Senate from the State of Utah, they have this bill. They call it the Patient Choice, Affordability, Responsibility, and Empowerment Act, the acronym, Patient CARE Act from the Senate.

So, we are right there, Mr. President. With all due respect, we have ideas. We have Dr. PRICE's bill. We have Dr. COBURN's bill. We have other members of the Doctors Caucus. And the Doctors Caucus in the Senate is smaller, but we are here to help. We want to help. We truly want to bring down the cost of health care and maintain that quality that we are so proud of. It can be done. It can, indeed, be done.

Let me talk a little bit about the economy in regard to current law, PPACA, ObamaCare, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. ObamaCare has forced employers to cut hours, and as a result, part-time employment has gone through the roof. It has already forced many businesses to choose between, on the one hand, hiring new workers or providing health coverage. Mr. Speaker, they just can't do both.

President Obama always says health costs are rising at the lowest rates ever. Well, that is not because of his bill. That is because the economy is

dragging. His bill has not helped the health care industry. The costs are lower because people are not seeking care; they don't have the money. And so, yeah, sure, the overall costs of health care are going down, but that is not a good thing. That is a bad thing.

The Obama administration delayed the job-killing employer mandate for a full year so that doesn't go into effect, colleagues, until January 1 of 2015, 11 months from now. It has left the rest of Americans on the hook for this massive tax hike. The bill adds costs to running a business, massive tax increases, and of course, as I said at the outset, higher monthly premiums.

You know, one of the promises the President made, among many that he failed to keep, was that the average cost, of a health insurance premiums would be $2,500 a year lower than pre-ObamaCare.

Just the opposite has happened. And I don't think he ever said anything about what the deductible would be, Mr. Speaker. But in some of these policies, an individual deductible might go from $1,000 a year to $3,000 a year, and a family deductible from $3,000 a year to $8,000 a year. That is a 200 percent increase, a doubling of the monthly premiums. It creates just enormous uncertainty across large corporations, small businesses, and, of course, particularly the one-sixth of our economy that is the health care industry.

Think about the medical device tax and what it is doing to jobs in that industry. The medical device tax has already forced companies like Michigan-based Stryker Corporation to cut a thousand jobs. Boston Scientific canceled plans to build new facilities in the United States, instead moving these high-paying, highly technical, and innovative research jobs across the pond, overseas.

Let's look for a moment at the effect on small businesses. I speak often, and I know all of you do, too, on both sides of the aisle, because we go back home and we face our constituents; we have to, and we should. But I speak with these small business owners in the 11th District of Georgia, northwest Georgia, and my four counties. I want to know how President Obama's health care law has affected the day-to-day operations of their companies.

Well, ObamaCare has not even been fully implemented because of all these executive orders and the fiats that come down and the waivers that are granted to certain ones but not others. So ObamaCare really has not been fully implemented, even though the date is passed, but job creators and employees in Georgia and nationwide are already feeling the pain. Across the board, they have expressed frustration with its new rules and the ''moving target'' regulations, the increase in health care costs, and, of course, the uncertainty that they hate. This law has certainly created a heck of a lot of that, hasn't it, colleagues?

ObamaCare has forced employers to cut hours; and as a result of that, part-time employment has gone up, as I said a few minutes ago. It has already forced many businesses to choose, again, do I hire that 50th worker or do I just say no, I am going to take two part-time workers instead of one full-time? Or, even worse, I am going to hire that 50th worker, but I am going to drop health care coverage, Mr. Speaker, for all of my employees. And while I get a waiver for the first 30, for the next 20, I am going to pay $2,000 a year per employee that will go into the exchange.

One Georgia businessman who employs 47 people told me that ObamaCare has forced him to hire subcontractors instead of hiring new full-time employees. Another owner who has 49 workers recently purchased a robot instead of hiring new welders. That robot doesn't have to feed a family of four. It may be very efficient, but the robot doesn't have a heart and doesn't have anxiety.

On Main Street, uncertainty and higher costs get even worse when a company needs to create more than 50 jobs, as I just mentioned, creating a barrier to job creation and the expansion of their business.

ObamaCare forces employees to work fewer hours to stay on as part-time workers. It is estimated that ObamaCare will require American job creators, families, and health care providers to spend—get this, colleagues—more than 127 million hours a year on compliance. The EPA couldn't have been more onerous than this bill, and they are pretty darned onerous.

One Georgia businesswoman has been forced to hold numerous meetings on company time for her employees to help them understand the paperwork involved in trying to get health care. Besides a loss in productivity, these new rules are costing her. She recently hired an outside health care expert just to ensure she is running her company ''by the books.''

Mitzi Smith's small plumbing company in Marietta, Georgia, is known for its quality and its compassion and the excellence of its workers; and yet they are struggling to hold on, even with a wonderful reputation, because of this law.

Providing relief for taxpayers by delaying these costly mandates for 1 year is not enough, and I will continue fighting to dismantle every single piece of this train wreck law. I pledge to the people of Georgia that that is what I am going to do. It is an accountability pledge. It is not a term limit pledge. It is just to say, Look, I am not up here to be a potted plant. You have hired me to be your voice to speak for you on issues like this one. There are others. But I think now, as we approach the elections of 2014, what is more important than putting people back to work and providing them assurance that they can keep their doctor, they can keep their hospital, they can keep the health care that they want, not larded up with a bunch of funded mandates, really, that are causing those premiums to go up that they don't need and they don't want?

□ 1645

It is a one-size-fits-all. And in health care, one size, colleagues, and you know this, one size doesn't fit all.

I mentioned a few minutes ago about the excise tax, the 2.3 percent on medical devices. Let me mention a couple of companies that have been in touch with my office concerning this issue.

Smith & Nephew medical company announced in February that it will lay off almost 100 workers in their Tennessee and Massachusetts plants.

Cook Medical, a very familiar name, has canceled plans to open five, count them, five United States factories because the tax, this medical device tax, would cost them $20 million a year in the coming years. And remember, colleagues, this medical device tax is not on their profits. This is a tax on their revenue, so it is much more onerous than if it were just a tax on their profit.

Boston Scientific, planning for a more than $100 million charge against earnings in 2013, has now built, get this, a $35 million research facility in not Boston, but in Ireland, and is building a $150 million factory in China.

Stryker Corporation, based in Michigan, blames the tax for 1,000 layoffs.

Zimmer, based in Indiana, is laying off 450 people and taking a $50 million charge against earnings.

Medtronic, one of my classmates from Georgia Tech was the CEO of Medtronic, brilliant man, retired now, but I will never forget him. He was brilliant at Georgia Tech and throughout his entire career, and he was the CEO at a time for Medtronic. They make heart valves and many lifesaving medical devices. They expect an annual charge against earnings of $175 million.

Covidien has cited the tax in explaining 200 layoffs and a decision to move some production to Costa Rica and Mexico. I have nothing against Costa Rica or Mexico, great countries, great people, but, you know, when we are looking at an unemployment rate of 6.7 percent—if you believe that, it is probably closer to 15 percent when you count all the people that have just given up. They have been unemployed for over a year and they are just out of it, they are not even counted anymore.

So, I could go on and on and on and give you examples. I will give you one more.

A Guthrie, Oklahoma, Taco Bell has cut its full-time employees' hours to 28 per week or less. If you had a job and you got to work 28 hours a week, colleagues, I don't know about y'all, but I would need three of those jobs to support my family and my children and help support my grandchildren.

Former employee Johnna Davis said, and I quote Johnna, ''They informed everybody,'' the company, ''that nobody was considered full-time any longer . . . that everybody was now

considered part-time, and they would be cutting hours back to 28 or less due to ObamaCare.''

Spiritwear, an Idaho-based clothes company that specializes in licensed college and football team colors and logo apparel is poised to more than double their business this year.

Mr. Speaker, that is great news, isn't it?

However, the company is on the cusp of having 50 full-time employees. She is upset that what seems to be her best solution, hiring independent contractors, would give her less control—and it would—over worker hours and how much involvement they can have in other parts of the company.

Darden Restaurants, parent company of such well-known and very good restaurants as Olive Garden and Red Lobster and Longhorn Steakhouse, they tested making some workers part-time last year. The chain has decided not to make all full-time workers part-time, but it has not ruled out a broader shift toward that very thing, part-time work.

Then in January 2014, Target announced that they would no longer provide health care coverage for their part-time employees.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 29 minutes remaining.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we have some time left, but I think, colleagues, that you get the picture here. We have a real problem right here in River City—and by that, I mean the Nation's Capitol, but I also mean the entire country—and we have to do something about it.

We can't just keep kicking the can down the road, as we have done with Medicare and Social Security, needed reforms, protections, strengthening to make sure that these programs are there for our children and our grandchildren.

But here we have created a whole new entitlement program that really, when you look at it, it is punishing both our seniors and our young because it is forcing the young people who finally reach that 27th birthday, and they can no longer, now, be on their parents' health insurance plan. Maybe they have been living at home, post-college, and the parents have finally just said, Honey, you are just going to have to move out. We need our space. We need a little privacy.

These young people have a job, and they want to move out with a friend or someone that they went to school with. They want to move on with their lives. They are adults now, and they have got a job, and they find that, to get health insurance, it is astronomical. Yet the salary that they make, their entry-level salary, is too much to make them eligible for a subsidy.

So what are they going to do? They are going to pay that fine, that $95 fine, and maybe even when it gets to $600, they are going to pay that, and they are going to go bare. I use that as an expression of being not having health insurance coverage. They may be 10-foot tall and bulletproof. They may take care of themselves. They may not do skydiving and some risky sort of behavior. But you never know when that Mack truck is going to run you down and you are going to end up in the emergency room.

So we want to make sure we get this right. So far we have gotten it totally wrong. But we can do better. We will do better. We need to do it in a bicameral, bipartisan way.

I mentioned my colleague, Dr. PRICE, and his bill. I mentioned my other colleagues on the House GOP Doctors Caucus as we continue to work on things, my cochair, Dr. PHIL ROE, a fellow OB/GYN from Tri-Cities, Tennessee, former mayor of Kingsport or Johnson City. We can do it and we will do it.

But, Mr. President, you said, if you like what you have, you can keep it. You also said, if anybody, Member of Congress, has a better idea, bring it to you and you will consider it. Well, I have mentioned two bills here tonight. We have other ideas, and you have 2½, almost 3 years left in your second term. You want a legacy? We are going to help you have a legacy, and a good one, but you have got to work with us. It is a two-way street.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

FOREIGN POLICY

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. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives and this great deliberative body that we are part of. I appreciate the delivery of Mr. GINGREY a little bit earlier.

I wanted to take us, if I could direct your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the situation in the Middle East. And we know that the implication in our Constitution is that the President conducts the foreign policy. I would teach that class if I had the time, and I don't disagree with that.

But also, this Congress has responsibility. We have responsibilities, for example, that are specific within the enumerated powers of the Constitution. And if anyone thinks that the House of Representatives or the United States Senate or Congress itself, as a body, doesn't have a voice on foreign policy, I would direct them to the enumerated power of the power to declare war.

Certainly, we have also foreign policy responsibilities here, and we appropriate funds for foreign aid and a good number of other resources that go to help out countries that are either our allies or hopefully will become our allies one day. There is a lot that we do that has to do with foreign policy. We have a Foreign Affairs Committee. We have a Select Committee on Intelligence. We have Armed Services. All of those things are committees that deal with issues that have to do with our foreign relations and our foreign policy.

So, because of that, Mr. Speaker, a number of us in this Congress have taken a responsibility to step forward and be engaged in foreign policy, and also to have a voice and be better informed than simply letting the message come from the White House.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AND THE DROUGHT IN CALIFORNIA

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I see that my friend from Utah has just filed the rule, and I appreciate the gentleman from Utah, not only what he has done here today, but his leadership. I want to take a moment to make the message here as the topic that is coming up now is a rule that was referenced by the gentleman from Utah about the San Joaquin Valley and the drought in California.

I have traveled out there, and I have been there to see about 250,000 of 600,000 acres that were manmade drought. And now we have nature-made drought that is coupled with the manmade drought, and I intend to support the legislation that comes to the floor tomorrow.

I thank especially the California delegation for leading on this and helping the rest of the country understand how important the water issues are around the country.

I have worked with water and water management all of my professional life, and these issues come close to home when you either need water or you can't get rid of it. And that is what this bill is tomorrow. It is about needing water and directing it to the best resources.

But if I would, Mr. Speaker, revert back to the topic at hand, and that is the topic of the foreign policy and the very solid constitutional claim that Congress has to be engaged in foreign policy, to help manage that foreign policy and to appropriate resources to foreign policy.

To that end, a number of us in this Congress, and not nearly enough of us, have been involved in foreign policy and free trade agreements and traveled to a good number of countries to engage with people in other parts of the world to help stitch together and knit together our relationships that are so important.

□ 1700

So if I could, Mr. Speaker, I would like to first paint the big picture of what the world looks like. I will offer a little bit of history first and then paint a picture of how the globe looks today.

I will take us back to World War II, which was the most dramatic shift in power that the world has seen, at least

in my understanding of history. We saw the clash of the Imperial Japanese and the Nazi regimes that threatened to swamp the entire world. Having fought back a world war on two fronts, in Asia across the Pacific and in Europe, here in America, we see this as the time that America rose to become a superpower. As we saw then, immediately after World War II, we saw the Cold War begin, and the Soviet Union formed as a product, a part at least, a product of World War II, clashing with the United States in that Cold War that lasted for 45 years.

It was two different ideologies. It is free enterprise, capitalism, it is God-given liberty challenged up against the forces of the former Soviet Union, which were atheistic and communistic and a managed economy from top down.

We saw what happened. We saw how that was resolved, Mr. Speaker.

It was described, I think, best by Jeane Kirkpatrick, who was the Ambassador for Ronald Reagan to the United Nations, when she said, some time around 1984, as she stepped down as Ambassador to the United Nations, she said, What is going on in the world, in this Cold War, in this clash, this competition between the two huge ideologies, what is going on between the Soviet Union and the United States is the equivalent of playing chess and Monopoly on the same board. And the question is, Will the United States of America bankrupt the Soviet Union economically in the Monopoly part of the game before the Soviet Union checkmates the United States of America in the chess component of the game?

Monopoly and chess on the same board. The Russians, building missiles and expanding their military capability and trying to outdo the United States to the point where we would have to capitulate while we were pushing our economy. This growing, dynamic free enterprise economy was competing against the managed economy, the communist economy of the Soviet Union.

And what happened was, the monopoly game, the monopoly winners won out, and the Soviet Union was bankrupted, and because of that, the country collapsed and imploded upon itself around about 1991, and they had to reform back around to—they could say former Soviet Union, Russia—Russia and some of its federation countries, safer for the world because that clash of the two huge ideologies has been diminished significantly. The threat of a nuclear war has been diminished significantly thanks to Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Pope John Paul II, and some will say Gorbachev.

Those four personalities engaged together were the leadership that brought about the dynamic that brought an end to the Cold War. In the aftermath of the Cold War, there were those sitting around—cold warriors—to celebrate the end of the Cold War, a victory for the free world. Not only the United States, but our allies. A victory for the free world,

As they celebrated, they got ready to raise their glasses, one of them, one of them said, Just a minute. Don't be too soon to celebrate because think of this: The world will not long tolerate a lone superpower. There will be allegiances and alliances made that you have not imagined that will line up against the United States, and if those forces line up against the United States—and they will—we will find ourselves with competition and enemies that we have not seen before in the world. Some of those will be an alliance that does include Islamic nations lined up against the United States.

That statement was made in the late part of 1991, I believe it was, and that would be at least a decade, roughly a decade before the attack on the United States on September 11, 2001. That very prescient comment that was made before they celebrated the end of the Cold War, before the glasses went up, Mr. Speaker, there was a realization that we would have new enemies that would form, and they would form coalitions against us.

So because of that, we should be aware of where we are today. Those enemies that have formed against us, a lot of them have been radical Islamists that have decided that they want to kill Americans because they disagree with our ideology. We should not believe that somehow it is just a matter of, we live in one place on the globe, and others live in another place, and we end up at war with each other with people trying to kill us. That is not the circumstances in that way.

Instead, it is competing ideologies. People that have a different belief system. People that believe that they need to have enemies so that they could demonize those enemies and mobilize their people, and if they can mobilize their people against a demonized enemy, they have a better chance of hanging onto power.

Those are the circumstances in Iran, where they describe the United States of America as being ''the great Satan,'' and it is the public policy of Iran to declare America to be the great Satan. They teach it in their schools, and they are spinning centrifuges for the purposes of developing nuclear weapons and a means to deliver them. The President has contended that his negotiations with Iran have slowed down their nuclear weapons effort, and perhaps they will be able to talk Iran into stopping their nuclear efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I will take you back to September of 2003, where I sat in on a meeting with Ambassadors to the United States from France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, and they sat around with a group of Members. The discussion was about whether we should open up negotiations with Iran on their nuclear capability, and after I listened to the three of them and every Member that was around that table, of which there were not very many. I was the low man on the seniority totem pole at the time. I had to wait my turn to speak, of course. Then I asked the Ambassadors, Why are you here? What is your objective in meeting with us to have this discussion about opening up negotiations or a dialogue with Iran? Their answer was, We want to you open up dialogue with Iran so that you can help us because we think that our three countries—France, the United Kingdom, and Germany—at the table with the United States, we have a chance of convincing the Iranians not to continue any further with their nuclear endeavors. September 2003.

I listened to that response, and I said, If we open up negotiations or open up dialogue with Iran, what are you prepared to do, then, if we take step one into these negotiations? Their answer was, We want to open up dialogue. That is our objective, as if there wasn't a step two, three, four, or five.

But we know that once you have opened up the dialogue, you have to be willing to follow through with something. So I said, If the United States steps up to negotiate with Iran, and it is clear that they have an objective to develop a nuclear weapon and a means to deliver it, if the United States steps up and opens that dialogue, then you are suggesting that we enter into formal negotiations. In those negotiations, you understand that if we fail to convince Iran that they should stop nuclear development, are you prepared, then, to go to the United Nations for a resolution? Are you permitting sanctions against Iran? If the sanctions aren't effective, are you prepared to blockade Iran? If you are prepared to blockade Iran, and the blockade is not effective, and they continue to develop a nuclear weapon, and somebody has got to step up to that line in the sand with men and equipment and munitions and military supplies and put blood on the line along with the treasure, are you prepared to step up to that line in the desert sand? Of course the Ambassadors were real nervous about that discussion long before I got to the part about the line in the sand in the desert.

As they expressed their will, which was, Let's just open up dialogue, they had to also recognize that when you open up dialogue, you start down the path of dialogued negotiations, United Nations resolution, sanction, blockade, and eventually, if Iran is committed, there is going to be a showdown.

I said to them, You see, if we start down this path, we have to be prepared to follow all the way through, and let's understand that we are prepared before we start because I will tell you that Iran is committed to developing a nuclear weapon and a means to deliver it. They are committed. It isn't just a feint on their part. It isn't just a motion in that direction. They are committed, and if we aren't committed to go all the way to putting that line in the sand and lining up on that line in

the sand and following through—and I said these words this way—then Iran will play us like a fiddle, and when this is all done, they will have their nuclear weaponry, and they will have their means to deliver it, and we will just look like a bunch of foolish negotiators.

Mr. Speaker, I bring this up because now here we are, these 10-plus years later. Iran is in a position where they would like to have the rest of the world think that they have slowed down and maybe given up on their efforts to develop nuclear. They still take a public position that they never really were developing a nuclear weapon, that they were just enriching uranium for the purpose of generating electricity in their oil-rich country. Of course no one should have ever bought that from the beginning.

But our administration seems to think that if they negotiate in good faith, the Iranians are going to negotiate in good faith. I think it indicates some naivete about the minds of the people that want nuclear weapons.

A nuclear weapon capability is far more valuable to Iran in their negotiations than talking nice to the United States. Especially, why do they care about us four friends if they are teaching their children to hate us? If we are the great Satan, they don't have a lot to gain in public opinion in Iran by talking to the United States.

So we should understand their motives. Their motives are to dominate that part of the world with a nuclear capability to threaten that part of the world. They have already said that they have targets chosen in the United States. That is an Iranian public position today, and if you look at the method that they could have to deliver a nuclear weapon, which might only be weeks or months away—

We can have inspectors in Iran that are examining anything that we want to examine, but that doesn't mean the Iranians don't decide that they are going to throw a public relations tantrum and kick all of the inspectors out of Iran and only be 2 or 3 months from having that nuclear weapon.

So they can choose now when the time is right for them, when the time is right for them politically to make that move. Even if they have slowed this down and even if they are not putting more centrifuges in place, the question is, are they still spinning? What happened to the enriched uranium? Even if they dilute their enriched uranium down below 20 percent, it is another chemical reaction to enrich it again—it doesn't take very long—at best, they have slowed their operations down in order to pick up $4 billion or more into their economy that they need. Their economy is suffering because of the sanctions.

So we are being played again. It is just part of the fiddle. We are being played like a fiddle. We have been played like a fiddle for the last 10 years. The conviction and the resolve from our leaders isn't strong enough, and I have said from this floor, Mr. Speaker, that if I were the lead guy, the lead person on negotiations with Iran—and I will just take us back to the Ahmadinejad era so we can think of the personality on the other side of that—we would do it this way:

I would just simply back-channel information probably through the Swiss in the diplomatic channel, back channel in to the Ahmadinejad and the mullahs, and it would be this, presuming that I were calling the shots here on foreign policy.

It would be, Mr. Ahmadinejad and Iranian mullahs, I have decided—we, here in the United States—but I have decided the date beyond which you will not be allowed to continue your nuclear endeavor, and I have taken the liberty to put an ''X'' on the calendar that sets that date. Now, you don't know that date, but I do, and beyond that date, you will not be allowed to continue your nuclear endeavor whatsoever it takes to do so, and it will be dramatic, and the world will know. You will certainly be the ones to get the first announcement because that is when the kinetic action starts. That is the implication—not the word.

Then I would say, But, you know, if you hustle up and decommission and tear down your nuclear development equipment and you do that with our inspectors to our satisfaction or with an intermediary that we can trust, we will help you with that, and we will help you with some resources to do so. We will even help you with public opinion so that you can save face as you back up from this clash of civilizations that is bound to come if we let you go down this path.

Again, Mr. Ahmadinejad, you don't know that date, but I do, and we can forestall the inevitable if you decommission and tear this down. But you have got to mean it. It can't be a bluff. It has got to be a real ''X'' on the calendar. It has got to be a real date. Maybe no one else knows it. Maybe only the leader of the free world knows that date. But he has got to mean it.

Short of that, we get played like a fiddle, and here we are, stretching this thing out again, with the world an ever more dangerous place in that part of the world. I can stand there and listen to the intellectuals and say—Europe, for example, and I mentioned the foreign travel, and listen to them say, Well, of course a nuclear capable Iran is preferable to a military strike to take it out. They utter that in the same fashion that people in this country would utter, Well, of course it is the CO_2 emissions from U.S. industry that is one day going to cause the Earth's temperature to go up, as if somehow that was the conventional knowledge that was accepted by everyone.

□ 1715

Mr. Speaker, I reject that way of thinking. The idea that a nuclear-capable Iran is peripheral to a military strike to take it out isn't a rational conclusion that one can draw. You have to start with a flawed premise to get to that conclusion and say it is rational. There are a lot of rational conclusions that are built upon false premises, I might add, and that would be one.

A nuclear-capable Iran threatens all of the Middle East. Their immediate target would be Tel Aviv. And Tel Aviv, by the way, is not very highly populated with anything other than Jewish people, which would be their ideal target. So it is a short missile strike from Iran to Tel Aviv. They know that. They certainly know that in Israel. And today what they know is they don't have the level of confidence that the United States is standing quite as strongly next to Israel as we have in the past. That message has been sent by our President in our foreign policy for some time.

The idea that Israel should go back to the '67 borders, as if somehow the '67 borders were defensible, well, they were defended in '67 and they were defended in '73, but they expanded their defensive borders because of that. Israel traded some land for peace. It didn't work out very well. The Gaza Strip is a place to launch attacks on the Israelis from Lebanon, and Hezbollah is occupying large chunks of Beirut in Lebanon. That becomes a place where there are now some tens of thousands of missiles that are lined up there aimed at Israel, an ever more dangerous place.

Somehow we think that we can talk nice to the Iranians and they are going to treat us nice and somehow good reason is going to get something accomplished with negotiations. Mr. Speaker, it is very rare to ever see a diplomatic error take place in negotiations. Instead, you have to have leverage, and that leverage is going to be economic, military, or perhaps political. It could come mostly from other entities. If you don't have those forces in place and something that you can give, do, or give up, you are not going to just get, well, we like you, Mr. President, and you said that if we unclenched our fist, you will extend your hand. I didn't see Iran unclench its fist, but I saw our hand extended. And some of our hand was played, and some of our hand—or whole cards have been seen now and shown to the other side. It is a very, very dangerous proposition.

Looking over there in the same neighborhood as Syria, it became the issue du jour that Syria had weapons of mass destruction. It is hard to make the case in this Congress that Syria had weapons of mass destruction, that, of course, none of them came out of Iraq, because it is conventional belief over on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that Iraq didn't have weapons of mass destruction, regardless that Saddam gassed his own people, regardless that we did secure yellowcake uranium in Iraq. We did take it out of Iraq

and transport it across the Atlantic Ocean, down the St. Lawrence Seaway and up to Canada so it could be converted into power generation. In spite of all that, nobody seems to think that any of that could have gotten across the border or any weapons of mass destruction, such as gas, could have gotten across the border into Syria, even though we all agree that Assad used gas against his own people.

We would like to put an end to that. But once the President showed his hand on that and the British lost the vote on the floor—I believe it was in the House of Commons—the President came to Congress and said, well, now I want to strike Syria, and why don't you give me the authority to do that? That was an implied directive, Mr. Speaker, not a direct one, not a formal one. It was clear that neither the House nor the Senate had an appetite to go into military action in Syria.

So we fell back on Putin and the Russians to be the negotiators with the weapons of mass destruction in Syria. We saw the promise that the gas was going to be accumulated, picked up and transported out of Syria by the end of the year. That was the end of last year, not the end of this year, Mr. Speaker. So now it is going to take perhaps another 6 months and another and another and another.

It is a static position in the world now where Syria has digressed down to the point where it is hard to find a friend in Syria. The President said here in this very Chamber at his State of the Union address last week that we are going to oppose the regime and we are going to support our friends in Syria. It is hard to find friends in Syria. This conflict may have gotten to the point where there is nobody. Neither side is a side that is either going to support us or one that we should support. My message is that Syria has devolved downward into a very difficult, static, and ugly situation with a lot of blood and death that threaten to spill over.

Of course, we have the nuclear threat that has slowed down but not necessarily been suspended in Iran. In the rest of our foreign relations around that part of the world, we are 2½ years or more into the Arab Spring, and in almost every one of those changes—some regime changes, some civil war, and some that reached a static impasse—the result of that hasn't been favorable to U.S. interests, and you can go country after country, the conflicts around.

So several Members and I took a trip over into that part of the world right before Christmas to assess the situation. We need to do that because assessing the situation from here, it turns out that there is a lot of information that is not very reliable that comes out of the White House and the State Department with regard to that part of the world. So we traveled into Egypt, into Lebanon, into Libya, and into Israel, among other places. We met with their top leaders in most all of those countries and on down the line. Of course, we met with our State Department and got the in-country briefing.

It works out that the short version is that Lebanon is a mess. I think it is intractable, and I don't know how you resolve it. In Libya, the civil war didn't resolve it. The radical militant Islamists still control Benghazi, and it is not safe enough to go there for their government, let alone for representatives of our government. So Libya is at an impasse. They would like to be able to put together a functioning government in Libya, and I am impressed with some of the people that are in leadership there. But if they can't control Benghazi, Benghazi militants can come in and threaten Tripoli, for example, and have.

Egypt, though, Mr. Speaker, has turned, I think, in a very good and positive direction in that they rose up and threw Morsi out. Morsi—the face and the voice of the Muslim Brotherhood in the country of the origin of the Muslim Brotherhood—was rejected by the Egyptian people, and 30 to 33 million of 80 million Egyptians went to the streets mid last summer to demand that Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood be taken down and out of the government. It was a popular uprising. And with the pleadings of the popular uprising, then you saw the Egyptian military take charge. We have met with them, myself eye to eye at least twice and at different levels within the government and two different trips over there.

They have written a constitution, one that protects even Christian religious interests there and commits resources to rebuilding our burned churches in a place like Egypt. They have ratified a constitution in that election the 14th and 15th of January. Now you have elections set up for a parliament, and behind that, a Presidential election. I expect we will see a legitimate civilian government in Egypt sometime in less than a half a year. At that point, the voice of the Egyptian people at least is structured to be heard through the government, a relatively new experience for the Egyptians.

So there is a lot that has been turning in the world, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned the threat to Israel, that we need to stand more closely with them, shoulder to shoulder, and make an even stronger commitment to support them. They are going to have to face up to and they are going to have to decide if they have to take action against an existential threat, which is a nuclear-capable Iran.

We need to decide whom we are going to be friends with. It is not the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Even though it looks like this administration has lined up with the Muslim Brotherhood, it is not the Muslim Brotherhood. The American people don't support the Muslim Brotherhood, and they don't support the militant wings and arms that are components of the Muslim Brotherhood and those affiliates of those militant wings and arms that might say they are not but operate in concert, especially in places like Syria.

We need to understand that this world is lined up to some degree against us. We have had friends in that part of the world that go back deep and long. Egypt is one of those countries. It was 1954 when President Eisenhower made it clear that he was going to stand with the Egyptian people. We have had them as allies, and we have worked military operations in the Sinai for a long time. We need to restore those relationships with the Egyptian people and I think the soon-to-be-legitimized civilian government of Egypt. We need to let people know, like the United Arab Emirates, that we are going to stand with them as they are going to stand with us. We want to stand with the moderate interests in the Middle East that want to engage in petroleum production, diplomacy, and the growth of their own economies.

We have had a good strong interest in the Middle Eastern part of the world, and it has been fractured time after time after time by the results of radical Islamists and Muslim Brotherhood coming into these countries throughout this long, long period of the Arab Spring, summer and fall times 2.5.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation is looked to by the rest of the world to lead. That means we need to have a strong State Department, a strong foreign policy, and a clear and coherent moral message. It has got to be that we stand with our friends. We should understand that just because there is an election in a country, that doesn't mean that democracy is going to be manifested or it is going to be the solution.

Mr. Speaker, we need a stronger foreign policy, we need more Members of this Congress taking an interest, and we need a President that gets it right.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2954, PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3964, SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah (during the Special Order of Mr. KING of Iowa), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–340) on the resolution (H. Res. 472) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes, which was referred to

the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2642. An act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 5, 2014, 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:

4649. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter regarding a report on the number and characteristics of members of the Armed Forces serving on Active Duty who were diagnosed with breast cancer; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4650. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities in Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4651. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations, Elko County, NV, [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4652. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Golden Parachute Payments (RIN: 2590-AA08) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4653. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Executive Compensation (RIN: 2590-AA12) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4654. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting a notice of a proposed lease with the Government of Sweden (Transmittal No. 03-14) pursuant to Section 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4655. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4656. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4657. A letter from the Director, Office of Human Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting three reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4658. A letter from the Chief Financial Officer, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting the Board's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4659. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting a letter reporting that the Office of Government Ethics did not conduct or initiate any competitions in FY 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4660. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period April 1, 2013, through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4661. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Annual Report of the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties for the period between January 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4662. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of Class E Airspace; Danville, IL [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0657; Airspace Docket No. 13-AGL-24] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4663. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Sisseton, SD [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0641; Airspace Docket No. 13-AGL-7] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4664. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30933; Amdt. No. 3568] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4665. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Corporation Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2009-0811; Directorate Identifier 2008-NE-41-AD; Amendment 39-17715; AD 2013-26-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4666. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1004; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-34-AD; Amendment 39-17719; AD 2013-26-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4667. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Chariton, IA [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0255; Airspace Docket No. 13-ACE-4] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4668. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Gainesville, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0586; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASW-11] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4669. A letter from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Review of Medicare Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2011''; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

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:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 472. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–340). 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. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FARR, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. ESTY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. PETERS of California):

H.R. 3986. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to adjust the phaseout of the health insurance tax credit for geographic variations in the cost-of-living; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD (for himself, Mr. JONES, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 3987. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 3988. A bill to supplement the Secretary of the Army's existing authorities to review the operations of reservoirs; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 3989. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals a deduction for amounts contributed to disaster savings accounts to help defray the cost of preparing their homes to withstand a disaster and to repair or replace property damaged or destroyed in a disaster; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 3990. A bill to prevent and mitigate identity theft, to ensure privacy, to provide notice of security breaches, and to enhance criminal penalties, law enforcement assistance, and other protections against security breaches, fraudulent access, and misuse of personally identifiable information; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and 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. SMITH OF NEBRASKA (for himself, Mr. WALDEN, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 3991. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MULVANEY (for himself, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H.J. Res. 108. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to limit the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DENT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REED, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. SPEIER):

H. Res. 473. A resolution expressing support for designation of February 4, 2014, as National Cancer Prevention Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

171. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to House Resolution No. 571 memorializing the Congress to pass and the President to sign the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 3986.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 & 18

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 3987.

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

Amendment XVI.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 3988.

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 Office thereof.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 3989.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 3990.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 3991.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.J. Res. 108.

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

Article V: "The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate."

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 12: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 32: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 104: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
H.R. 149: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 164: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 184: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 279: Mr. DENHAM and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 311: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 383: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 411: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 455: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KILMER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 486: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 543: Mr. PETERSON and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 594: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 795: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 831: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 920: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 946: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1010: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1070: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 1091: Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 1141: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1179: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1249: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 1250: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1381: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 1423: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 1528: Ms. GABBARD, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1563: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 1692: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 1696: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1726: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. PETERS of California, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 1750: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1761: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 1771: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 1775: Mr. COURTNEY and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1779: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 1798: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1801: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 1821: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1857: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 1953: Mr. DINGELL.
H.R. 1998: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 2028: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 2203: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 2261: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 2300: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 2305: Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 2376: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 2387: Mr. HANNA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Ms. MENG, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ROONEY, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 2429: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 2451: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 2470: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 2506: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2509: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2553: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2575: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.
H.R. 2591: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2656: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 2662: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 2737: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2780: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2841: Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3040: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3121: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3211: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 3303: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 3306: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3310: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 3331: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 3338: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3344: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3395: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 3461: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 3488: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 3505: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3522: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 3530: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 3541: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 3546: Ms. CHU.
H.R. 3555: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3563: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3576: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HANNA, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 3590: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MICA, and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 3600: Ms. BASS, Ms. CHU, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3608: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3658: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3689: Mr. NUNNELEE.
H.R. 3725: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. CARTER.
H.R. 3774: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. COHEN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3775: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 3790: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Mr. ROONEY.
H.R. 3829: Mr. JONES, Mr. STEWART, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. FORBES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 3837: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 3854: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 3857: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3865: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3914: Mr. MORAN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3921: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 3930: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. LATTA, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. ROONEY, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3933: Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 3969: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3972: Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3973: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 3979: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DENT, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 3982: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.J. Res. 47: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
H. Res. 36: Mr. DENHAM.
H. Res. 55: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H. Res. 231: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H. Res. 283: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H. Res. 284: Mr. SESSIONS.
H. Res. 302: Ms. MATSUI.
H. Res. 418: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H. Res. 428: Mr. MASSIE.
H. Res. 440: Ms. BORDALLO.
H. Res. 442: Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. JONES, Mr. BARR, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MICA, and Mr. FINCHER.
H. Res. 447: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H. Res. 456: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. NUGENT.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative GRIJALVA, or a designee to H.R. 2954—To authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative NAPOLITANO, or a designee to H.R. 3964 the Sacramento-San Joaquin Emergency Water Delivery Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the fountain of every blessing, we lift our hearts in praise to You for You have done marvelous things. You direct our steps each day, guiding us with Your powerful providence and showering us with undeserved mercies. You hear our prayers and speedily supply our needs. Bless today the work of our lawmakers, empowering them with unceasing awareness and openness of heart. Give them wisdom and courage to glorify You through their work. May their thoughts, words, and actions be acceptable to You for You are our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 297.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill. The time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings. At approximately 2:35 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote on the adoption of the farm bill conference report.

VISIONARY REMARKS

Mr. REID. While the President pro tempore is here, I want to make a brief comment.

The headlines over the last couple of days have been about the death—in my opinion—of one of the great actors of our time, Philip Seymour Hoffman. He obviously died from a drug overdose of heroin.

The reason I wanted to say a word while the President pro tempore is presiding is because the Governor of Vermont was very visionary in directing his State of the State remarks this year to the scourge of heroin addiction that is sweeping the Nation. It really is a scourge.

According to everything I have been able to learn, it is kind of unique. We have people who start off with some kind of prescription drug and then wind up with this stuff that has been prepared by purveyors of evil. They don't know what is in it. There are some who believe they use baby laxative or other ingredients that look like heroin. It is a terrible shame.

I will send the Governor a letter, but I want to make sure my good friend from Vermont personally tells the Governor what a—I can't find a better word—visionary he was in the remarks he gave a few weeks ago.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). THE SENATOR FROM VERMONT.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the RECORD will indicate that I opened the Senate in my role as President pro tempore, and now the distinguished Senator from New Jersey is in the Chair.

I wish to respond to the distinguished senior Senator from Nevada and thank him for what he said.

I was in Montpelier, which is our capital, on Friday, and I spent some time with Governor Peter Shumlin, who did his State of the State message on this subject, as the distinguished Senator from Nevada has said. I talked to him about it. I will call him later this morning and tell him what the leader said. I am also going to wear my hat as chair of the Judiciary Committee and do a hearing on this issue.

Ours is a very special and very precious State, but I think it points out that every State in the Union can face this problem. While on the national news this morning, Governor Shumlin was great and focused the attention of this issue on many States.

I will close by saying to my dear friend from Nevada that I appreciate his comments. He knows how precious Vermont is to me and Governor Shumlin, and I will make sure the Governor knows what he said.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

A MAN OF STATURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I had a meeting with a number of Senators this morning, and one of the topics of conversation was the Presiding Officer's first speech—the so-called maiden speech—he gave last night. It was stunningly good, substantive, and it came from the heart. That is what many Senators told me this morning, and I agree. As I told the Presiding Officer last night, I had to go to a quick meeting, so I watched most of it from my office. The Senator's speech was so important. The speech focused on dealing with people who are in need.

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

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This good man, who is presiding over the Senate now, is a man of stature. He is extremely talented academically. He is a Stanford graduate and decided he would do public service. In the process of doing public service, he identified with the people who needed help.

He moved into a neighborhood that you would not think a mayor of the city would live in, but he did that because he wanted to feel the pulse of the people. It is obvious from the speech given last night that the Presiding Officer does understand the pulse of the people of his State.

We all admired him before he got here, and we admire him even more now.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1982

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk entitled S. 1982 due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night I had the good fortune to spend some time with the President, along with MICHAEL BENNET and others. It was worth commenting on that meeting with the President about the address he gave a week ago to the Congress and to the Nation.

He addressed Congress and the Nation and described the challenges facing families in America. Wages are far too low, the cost of education is far too high, and there are simply far too few jobs.

Each of these challenges places another stumbling block in front of Americans striving to enter the middle class, as well as the middle class trying to do their best to hang on to their status as part of the middle class. The middle class is being squeezed. The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and the middle class is being squeezed really hard.

Unless we open the doors of opportunity, every child in this Nation—our grandchildren—will no longer be able to do what we expect our grandchildren to be able to accomplish. Every child in this Nation—our grandchildren—will have to work longer and harder than we did just to get by, let alone just to get ahead.

Yesterday I read a story with interest. It was a long, well-researched story in the New York Times. It was in the business section. That piece argued that the richest families and the most successful corporations in America should be just as worried about these trends—the shrinking middle class—as the Presiding Officer and I are.

The article described the widespread failure of businesses that cater to the middle class. I repeat that: The widespread failure of businesses that cater to the middle class. Why? Because the middle class is going away.

While high-end retailers such as Barneys and Nordstrom flourish, mid-priced retailers such as JCPenney and Loehmann's stumble. Loehmann's actually filed bankruptcy. While posh restaurant chains such as Capital Grille prosper, more modest eateries such as Red Lobster are sinking.

The Times wrote:

As politicians and pundits in Washington continue to spar over whether economic inequality is in fact deepening, in corporate America there really is no debate at all. The post-recession reality is that the customer base for businesses that appeal to the middle class is shrinking as the top tier pulls even farther away.

Industry analysis says businesses that sell luxury goods to the top 1 percent are booming. Over the past 30 years, the top 1 percent has had their wealth increase three times while during that same 30-year period of time the earning capacity of the middle class has been cut by 10 percent.

Sadly, businesses such as Family Dollar, which caters to the growing ranks of working families barely scraping by, are also thriving. Why? Nordstrom is a great place. I love Nordstrom. They have a great return policy. I am glad they are doing well. But Family Dollar is thriving because many people who were middle class are now poor.

Families are not going out for spaghetti and meatballs. They are not even going out for hamburgers like they used to. They are not buying their kids new jeans or backpacks. They pass them down from child to child.

I can remember—it has been over a year ago—when I went to this program in North Las Vegas, NV. There are a lot of poor people in North Las Vegas. They were giving away backpacks with some pencils and paper. It was before school started. Those backpacks were so—I don't want to denigrate the wonderful things that people did—cheap. The backpacks had names of businesses on them.

These children lined up with their parents for as far as you could see. They were desperate for a backpack. It was not a very good one, but they didn't have one. So they are not buying their kids backpacks like they used to. Purchases that once seemed to be modest treats have become unaffordable luxuries.

While the economy is growing in spite of this trend, economists worry that the growth is unsustainable. One economist told the Times:

It's going to be hard to maintain strong economic growth with such a large proportion of the population falling behind. We might be able to muddle along—but can we really recover?

That is the question.

In other words, our fortunes are bound together. A shrinking middle class isn't just a problem for families in the middle; it is a problem for businesses, large and small. It is a problem that should worry the top 1 percent of wealthy Americans as much as it worries the 99 percent who are under that 1 percent. Can we really recover when so many of us are falling behind? It is a fair question and an extremely troubling question. Our entire economy is at risk unless we act now to protect and grow the middle class whose purchase power is the backbone of our economy.

How can we do that? We can create some jobs which we as a Congress have not done because every time we try, there is obstruction from the Republicans. But to achieve this goal of protecting and growing the middle class, President Obama called for commonsense investments in our future. He has called for investments in 21st century infrastructure—those old-fashioned structures such as roads and bridges and dams—as well as the new, including renewable energy projects such as solar, wind, and geothermal, which would create lots and lots of jobs; then cutting-edge technology such as the new Tesla vehicle, an all-electric vehicle. I have spoken with Elon Musk who is talking about building another big factory someplace in the West.

Investment in universal preschool is so important. Other countries are doing it. Why don't we have it mandatory for every 4-year-old?

And affordable college. Seated next to me is the assistant leader. He identified a problem years ago which is that kids are being burdened with debt, trying to go to college. Frankly, a lot of the money these young men and women borrow goes to schools that don't produce anything.

Investments in medical research. My colleagues heard me cough. I, for the first time in my life, a couple of weeks ago got the flu. I never had the flu before. I wasn't very sympathetic with people who missed work because of the flu. I am now sympathetic. The flu is devastating. I was so sick. At my home in Searchlight, we didn't have a thermometer. By the time we had someone bring one over from Vegas, my fever was very high. I started the medication Tamiflu not as early as I should have, and it turned into bronchitis.

The reason I mention this—again, speaking about my friend, the senior Senator from Illinois—he went yesterday to NIH, the National Institutes of Health. I went there a couple of months ago. We should be embarrassed by what we have done as a Congress to NIH. We have cut them. And the reason I mention my flu is because when I went there, I learned they are so close to having a flu shot that covers all flu—everything. They are so close. What do they need to go the extra mile? More money. The devastation of sequestration has hurt the National Institutes of Health significantly. Chairman MURRAY did some good work to help in the future, but money we have

lost because of sequestration is gone. We have not been fair to the National Institutes of Health. They are doing lifesaving work there, and other countries are trying to match what we have done with the National Institutes of Health. They can't; we are way ahead, but we will not remain ahead unless we put some money into the National Institutes of Health.

We need to help companies that build their products here in America. I go out of my way to buy New Balance shoes, running shoes. Why? They are made in America. The suit I am wearing, Hickey Freeman, is made in America, and I am proud of that.

The President also called on Congress to increase the Federal minimum wage to $10.10 an hour—a huge step forward guaranteeing that no American working full time lives in poverty as they now do, as the Presiding Officer so well illustrated last night. This proposal of raising the minimum wage has been endorsed by seven Nobel Prize-winning economists. I don't know the political persuasion of these Nobel Prize-winning economists, but they are all persuaded that what we have done to the working poor is wrong and we have to do something about it. The proposal would raise millions of families out of poverty and give tens of millions of children a shot at graduating from college, securing high-paying jobs, and joining the middle class.

There is something else Congress should do to prevent hundreds of thousands of Americans from descending into poverty: Extend unemployment benefits. In the month we have cut off these benefits because of obstruction by my Republican colleagues the country has lost more than $2 billion in purchasing; the State of Nevada $30 million. So we could do something now to prevent hundreds of thousands of Americans from descending into poverty. A 57-year-old woman—I read a part of her letter yesterday—said: How do you think I feel going from friend to friend to sleep on their couch? Couch surfing we call it. She said: That only lasts so long. I am selling everything I have. I don't have a home. I am trying to sell everything I have so if I get an opportunity for a job interview, I can buy gas for my car.

We must extend unemployment benefits because 1.6 million people have been out of work for months. These benefits will ensure that more than 2.3 million children have nutritious meals and a safe place to sleep while their parents hunt for jobs. Renewing emergency unemployment insurance would prevent Americans who have worked hard to get ahead from losing their grip on the ladder of success. Restoring unemployment benefits is by no means enough to secure our shrinking middle class, but it certainly is a good first step.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

EPA OVERREGULATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, over the past several years, I have often come to the floor of the Senate to draw attention to the Obama administration's radical environmental agenda and the deeply harmful effects it is having on the people of Kentucky. The Environmental Protection Agency's war on coal is the most obvious and tragic example.

Today I wish to highlight this administration's environmental agenda at perhaps its most absurd. At the heart of our story is a 2½ inch minnow—a 2½ inch minnow called the duskytail darter—a 2½ inch minnow called the duskytail darter.

Last week, the Obama administration sided with this minnow over the economic well-being of thousands of people in southeastern Kentucky who live near or depend on Lake Cumberland as a major driver of commerce, tourism, and recreation. The Obama administration did this by determining that the presence of the darter in the lake's tributaries meant that the raising of the lake's water level must be further delayed.

Lake Cumberland is a signature tourist destination in my State and one of the economic pillars of McCreary, Clinton, Laurel, Russell, Pulaski, and Wayne Counties. The water level of the lake was lowered back in January of 2007 due to problems with the dam which feeds the lake.

The past 7 years of reduced water levels have not only hurt small businesses that rely on tourism but have also strained local governments, as local towns have had to lower their water intake. Marinas have had to spend valuable dollars on both ramp upgrades and dock relocations—dollars that could have been spent on growing businesses, hiring new workers, and enhancing local commerce.

In addition, the drawdown of water has deterred tourism, as a misperception has been created among potential visitors that the lake is no longer suitable for boating, fishing, and water sports.

Every year, Lake Cumberland brings to the local community $200 million in economic activity and employs, on average, 6,000 people. Understandably, those in the local community have been anxious to see the water levels returned to their normal level, after 7 years of reduced water level.

2014 was supposed to be a great year for Lake Cumberland, as Kentuckians would mark the end of 7 years' worth of repairs to the dam and, therefore, reduced water levels and fewer visitors. Now, suddenly, the Obama administration has announced that the water level cannot be raised because it could potentially have a harmful effect on this minnow, the duskytail darter, which is on the endangered species list.

The absurdity of the Obama administration's posture on this issue is manifest. First, the administration is protecting a fish from water. Let me get this straight: Protecting a fish from water? The radical environmentalists in the Obama administration don't want this fish to be exposed to too much water? What is next, protecting birds from too much sky?

Second, the administration took this action because raising the water could—could, not would—potentially—potentially—have an adverse effect on this poor little minnow. Of course, anything in the universe could have an adverse effect on this minnow. To the people of southeastern Kentucky, the President's year of action is apparently beneficial only if you have gills.

The story of the darter would be humorous if it weren't so harmful to the economic well-being of thousands of southeastern Kentuckians. This misguided policy will have deeply harmful consequences for this region of Kentucky.

Carolyn Mounce, who is responsible for promoting tourism at Lake Cumberland at the Somerset/Pulaski Convention and Visitors Bureau, put it best when she said: ''[This is] bureaucracy run amok!'' Bureaucracy run amok, said Carolyn Mounce. She just returned from attending travel and tourism shows in Cincinnati and Louisville 2 weeks ago.

She said:

> The shows were crowded . . . people wanted to talk about Lake Cumberland. They were excited about returning the lake to normal operation. And now this.

J.D. Hamilton, who operates Lee's Ford Resort Marina in Lake Cumberland in Nancy, KY, was also disappointed to learn of this announcement. Disappointed is an understatement, as his business has been stifled by the lowering of water over the last 7 years. In response to this announcement, he said, ''The Corps is keeping its word to the fish but not to the economy.''

So, yesterday, my friend and colleague Senator RAND PAUL and I, along with our colleagues in the House, Congressman ROGERS and Congressman WHITFIELD, wrote the administration calling for an end to this intolerable further delay. I hope the Obama administration will take heed and concern itself more with endangered jobs and endangered livelihoods of actual Kentuckians and Americans than with the possible endangerment of this apparently water-averse minnow.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL ADAM D. PEAK

Mr. President, I wish to speak about a young man from my State who gave his life while serving this Nation in uniform. LCpl Adam D. Peak of Florence, KY, was tragically killed by an improvised explosive device in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, on February 21, 2010. A member of the U.S. Marine Corps, he was 25 years old.

For his service in uniform, Lance Corporal Peak received many medals,

awards, and decorations, including the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the NATO International Security Assistance Force Medal.

Born on August 30, 1984, Adam was a native of Florence, where he grew up with a reputation as a performer who made his friends and family laugh with his quick wit. He and his older sister Sara would quote movie lines back and forth to each other in a blink of an eye, and Adam especially liked to entertain his younger sister Angela. ''Adam was sarcastic with a dry sense of humor, and could get people to laugh all the time,'' says Adam's mother Diana. ''I guess what I loved most about him was his love for his sister, who was born with Down Syndrome. He had unlimited patience with her, and I knew that when his dad and I were gone, he would take care of Angela.''

Although Adam did not get a chance to have a family of his own, he loved kids. ''He was like a second father to a lot of the other Marines' kids,'' says his sister Sara. Adam's mother certainly agrees. ''He loved kids and thought that someday he would have a large family,'' she says. ''He played Santa every year for his friend's family, and the kids loved him.''

Adam attended Boone County High School, where he graduated in 2002. He then attended Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, KY. In school, he was active in the Alpha Delta Gamma fraternity, the Saints Club, the Education Club, and the Villa Players Theater Club. His mother Diana particularly remembers Adam's interest in theater. ''He developed a love for the stage while in college at Thomas More,'' she says. ''He started out behind the scenes, but his friends got him on stage for a play and he loved it. He appeared in many productions while at school.''

Richard Shuey, a business administration professor at Thomas More, taught Adam in three classes. Adam ''was one of those really nice, clean-cut northern Kentucky kids,'' Richard says. ''Always polite and interested in doing well, and obviously a true patriot.''

One of Adam's fraternity brothers, Caleb Finch, remembers him as ''a big-hearted, free-spirited, fun-loving guy who would do anything for anybody.''

After graduation from Thomas More, Adam enlisted in the Marine Corps in July of 2007. By December of that year he had been promoted to the rank of lance corporal. Adam's younger brother Sean enlisted in the Marines as well, and the two brothers served together in the same unit in Iraq in 2008. ''Their personalities were night and day,'' says Robin Peak, Adam's sister-in-law. ''But they always had each other's backs and were there together.'' In October 2009, Adam and Sean were deployed to Afghanistan, both as members of the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, Two Marine Expeditionary Force, based out of Camp Lejeune, NC. Sean accompanied his brother back home for burial, and Adam was laid to rest with full military honors in Taylor Mill, KY.

Mr. President, we are thinking of Adam's loved ones today, including his parents Bruce and Diana, his brother Sean, his sisters Sara and Angela, his sister-in-law Robin, and many other beloved family members and friends.

The loss of LCpl Adam D. Peak is tragic. Indeed, it is only appropriate that this Senate pause to honor his service and recognize his sacrifice.

I hope his family can take some comfort from the fact that both the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the country as a whole are grateful for and honored by the heroism and courage Adam displayed in his entirely too short life. The example he set for his loved ones and his country will not be forgotten.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The assistant majority leader.

COMMENDING SENATOR BOOKER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I address the farm bill, I would like to make two other points. The first is to commend the Presiding Officer. Yesterday he gave his first speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate. About 20 of us were here and listened carefully. I am glad I did. It was time well spent. It was a speech which the Presiding Officer clearly not only worked on but believes in, and it showed. He addressed the plight of working Americans, and particularly those who have lost their jobs, and the responsibility of this Congress and this Nation to stand by these families while they are in transition looking for new opportunities.

I sat here and listened and watched as the Presiding Officer spoke to this subject, addressing specific people he has met in his State who told him their stories. I thought to myself: I have met quite a few in Illinois in like circumstances. I wish every Member of the Senate would do what the Presiding Officer has done—visit the towns, the restaurants, the veterans centers, and other places where unemployed people gather and listen to them.

The point the Presiding Officer made so convincingly was those who dismiss the unemployed as just lazy people have never met them. They are not lazy. They are workers who want to work again. What they are asking for is a helping hand, and the Presiding Officer made that point so eloquently yesterday.

What was particularly good for me, having served in the Senate for a number of years, was to hear a new Member of the Senate, in his first speech, really reach back to the values that inspired many of us to run for this position. It is easy to become jaded after you have been here for a while and been engaged in the petty political fights that take place here with some frequency. It is easy to forget why you asked your family to stand behind you when you ran, why you sacrificed to try to come to this place, and why each of us—some 1,200 or so who have had this distinct honor to serve in the Senate—should not miss the opportunity to bring our values and passion to the floor every single day.

So I thank the Senator from New Jersey, our Presiding Officer, for an extraordinary maiden speech, first speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It was one of the best.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Secondly, I would like to address the issue that was raised by my colleague from the State of Kentucky. The State of Kentucky is just south of Illinois. We have coalfields too. Almost 75 percent of our State has coal under the ground. We mine that coal—not like we used to, but we still mine it and use it, and we have coal miners and coal companies, and coal is an important part of the Illinois economy.

The Senator from Kentucky came to the floor today to really take exception to a decision by the Environmental Protection Agency as it affected coal country in Kentucky. I do not know anything about the particulars of his complaint involving the Cumberland Lake and the Endangered Species Act, so I will not address that, but I would like to address one, more general topic.

To argue that the Environmental Protection Agency is the enemy of coal country is to completely ignore what has been in the newspapers for the last several weeks. There are 300,000 people in the State of West Virginia who are afraid to drink the water because of a leak from a tank that had a chemical solution used for cleaning coal. These people worry that drinking this water, cooking with this water, even bathing in this water is a danger to them. And where did they turn for some indication of safety for their families? This part of America—West Virginia, coal country, just like Kentucky and Illinois—turned to the Environmental Protection Agency. Of course they did. Is it safe? Can my child drink this water safely? Can I use it for cooking?

So to argue that the Environmental Protection Agency is the enemy of coal country is to ignore the obvious. They can make wrong decisions. We all do. Agencies do. But time and again, when we are in trouble, when it comes to something as basic as the safety of our drinking water, we turn to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and ask them to help us determine whether that water is safe.

Let me add parenthetically, Mr. President, your predecessor, Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, was a leader, and I was happy to be his partner in trying to get to the bottom of the danger of many of these chemicals. Most Americans mistakenly believe this government reviews the toxicity or danger of all the chemicals in use in this country. In fact, only a small percentage is ever reviewed by the government. We, in fact, trust those who make and sell these chemicals to do the right thing, and many times they betray that trust and sell something dangerous which we discover later after the damage has been done.

Again, the role of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control, the role of the Federal Government in monitoring these chemicals for the safety of businesses and families and individuals across America is essential whether you live in the cities of Newark or Chicago or coal country, USA. So if we are going to go to war against the Environmental Protection Agency, let's at least be honest about the critical role they play. I hope that is remembered as we reflect on some of the things said on the floor this morning.

Mr. President, this is the conference report for the Agricultural Act of 2014. Senator STABENOW was on the floor earlier. She has stepped off now. She has poured her heart and soul into this document and into this work. Two years ago we passed the farm bill on the floor of the Senate—2 years ago. She did it with Senator ROBERTS of Kansas. I voted for it, and I thought it was an exceptional effort on her part. It went to the U.S. House of Representatives—as is the custom under the Constitution—to wither and die 2 years ago.

Then a year ago they said let's try again. Let's pass the farm bill again in the U.S. Senate in the hopes that the U.S. House of Representatives will take it up—a year ago. So a year ago Senator STABENOW and Senator ROBERTS sent this measure to the House of Representatives for consideration, and again it languished. It may have been one of the longest running conference committees in the history of Congress, but thank goodness for the perseverance of Senator STABENOW and many others; they produced this document.

For those who do not live in farm country, this may seem like a foreign text, but for those of us who do live in farm country, just reading the table of contents will tell you the important elements of this bill and why it is so critically important to Illinois and virtually every State in the Union.

I commend Senator STABENOW. As I said, she really poured her heart and soul into this document. There are provisions in here that many of us may never really appreciate that she fought for over a long period of time. I am going to acknowledge a few of those during the course of my formal remarks. But while she is here on the floor, let me give special credit to my colleague. She really took on this task and did it in an extraordinary way.

After years of expirations and short-term extensions, primarily due to the problems and inaction in the House of Representatives, this bill finally is going to provide farmers in Illinois and across the Nation with some guarantee of certainty on their future.

Compared to the presequester budget levels—that is budget talk around here for past budgets—this bill is going to save $23 billion over the next 10 years. This conference report before us works to do four things: invest in energy and research, help our rural communities grow—those of us who represent smalltown America know how important that is—ensure stability for our farmers who face the vicissitudes of weather and markets, and provides food assistance for those most in need both here and overseas.

These are amazing and important goals. I am glad Senator STABENOW and all the conferees applied themselves to make this happen. I am disappointed by one provision. I know Senator STABENOW will not be surprised. Despite modest reforms, we still provide extraordinary outside premium support for many farmers who buy crop insurance.

In fairness, this bill eliminates a price support program that was no longer defensible, a program that paid farmers in good times as well as bad. So it was not what it was designed to be, emergency help for farmers in need. She eliminated the direct payment program, by and large. That, to me, is a step forward.

Instead, this bill moves farmers toward crop insurance. Most of us, stepping back, say: That sounds like a responsible thing to do. A farmer buys an insurance policy, so if things go bad on the farm, a flood, a drought, some other problem, or the prices happen to be disastrous when the farmer goes to market, the insurance policy will make sure they can live to plant again. That is a good thing. But as I have said several times, any time you put the two words ''Federal'' and ''insurance'' in the same sentence, I advise my colleagues to step back and ask some questions. This is not insurance as you envision it. It is not a matter of automobile insurance, where the automobile owners pay enough in premiums to create a reserve to cover the exposure of accidents.

This is different. Under the Crop Insurance Program, similar to many Federal insurance programs, there is a massive Federal subsidy: 62 percent of the reserves that are necessary to make the program function are provided by the Federal Treasury, not by premiums paid by farmers. So it is a good program. It is a valued program. It is critically important. But let's keep our mind on the reality. It is heavily subsidized by the Federal Government.

Senator TOM COBURN of Oklahoma, a very conservative Republican, and I decided to offer an amendment which said: If you are a farmer whose income is over $750,000 a year, we will reduce, slightly, the government's subsidy of your crop insurance. Over $750,000 in income, we will reduce, slightly, the 62-percent Federal subsidy on your crop insurance. You will pay slightly more in premiums because you are able to. You are better off than most.

This passed not once but twice on the floor of the Senate. As it turned out, the conferees, primarily from the House, hated this provision like the devil hates Holy water. So they struck this provision from the bill. That is unfortunate. Not only did we pass it twice, the House had passed on the floor an instruction to conferees to include it. Members wanted to be on record saying they liked this idea. When the conferees got their hands on it, they lopped it right out of the bill.

Let me ask the Presiding Officer to hold on to that thought for a moment while I get into another section of the bill. The areas where the House conferees worked up an appetite was when it came to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the so-called Food Stamp Program.

Again, let me commend Senator STABENOW as chairman of the Agriculture Committee. She called me several times to tell me about the battles she had to wage to protect the food stamp program.

Let's talk about the program for a minute. Almost 15 percent of households across America have trouble keeping food on the table. SNAP, the food program, provides 47 million Americans with essential food assistance. Eighty-three percent of the households that receive food stamps include a child or a person with disability or a senior citizen. Nearly 1 million veterans use the Food Stamp Program each year in America.

In Illinois, over 2 million people, almost one in seven residents, rely on SNAP benefits to buy the food they need. Who are these people? Who in the world needs food stamps in a great State such as the State of Illinois? Let me tell you about two or three of them.

One of them was the elderly lady whom I met at the Irving Park Methodist Church food pantry. She was on a walker. She had a very short haircut, suggesting that perhaps she had been through some chemotherapy or radiation. She soldiered her way right up there to get a bag of groceries. She sat down and I talked to her.

I said to her: Can you tell me a little bit about how you are doing.

Sure Senator. I am doing OK. I get $800 a month in Social Security.

I said: How in the world do you live in Chicago on $800 a month?

Ain't easy, Senator. Got to pay the rent. Got to pay the utility bills and the basics. She said: I come to this food pantry and one other one. Each one of them gives me 3 days' worth of food. So I get about 1 month, 6 days' worth of food, out of the two food pantries. I thank them for that. I get food stamps worth about $130 a month.

That is it, folks. That is what she lives on, an elderly person. When the House Republicans said what we need to do is cut $40 billion—that was their original recommendation—$40 billion out of food stamps, they apparently had never met this lady and what she was up against or they might have met a couple of workers whom I had a press conference with on Sunday in Chicago, working full time and qualifying for food stamps. One was a fellow who worked on the west side of Chicago at a used car lot. Does it all, he said—cleans the cars, shovels the lot, sells the cars, and gets paid $8.25 an hour, which is our State minimum wage—four kids, his wife is sick and cannot work.

He gets food stamps. He needs them to put food on the table for the kids, for a full-time worker at a minimum wage job. Then on the other side was a lady who is a waitress. She told the story of being a single mom. Her son is now 19. She is heading him off to the City College of Chicago. That is a great deal. But she works a job which has a guaranteed minimum wage in Illinois of about $4.50 an hour. That is what waitresses are guaranteed—tipped wage. Nationally, the tipped wage is $2.13 an hour. She said: I do not work in a fancy restaurant. I am lucky to come home with $10 or $20 in tips in a day.

So do the math. She said: Some days they do not call me in to work. I get nothing. She relies on food stamps too, a woman who is ready to work and works hard, standing all day, waiting tables. So in come the House Republicans saying we need to come down hard on these people, these lazy people on food stamps. I wish they would meet some of those folks who use food stamps to get by, to survive. These people are our neighbors. They are hard-working people who lost their jobs or got sick. They are seniors living on a limited fixed income.

This bill does cut $8 billion out of SNAP, the Food Stamp Program. I understand the cuts that were made. I think Senator STABENOW and others have done these carefully. I do not want any fraud in this program. She does not either. We think we have tightened it so it will not affect the payments to those who are truly eligible and those who need the help. Yet it will make sure the taxpayers are treated fairly as well.

But look at the contrast. Some of the conferees walked into this hearing and said that farmers who make almost $1 million a year should not have any reduction in their subsidy for crop insurance, but people such as the lady at the Irving Park Methodist Church food pantry, being paid $800 a month, we ought to take a hard look at the $130 a month we give this lady. That is upside down. That does not reflect the values of this country or the priorities we need to face.

I thank the Senator from Michigan. She worked long and hard, was a real champion when it came to SNAP, the Food Stamp Program. Incidentally, the good news is, as the economy improves and people get back to work, the number of people on food stamps is going down, which is what we want to see. But does it not say something about us as a nation, a caring, compassionate Nation, that we are going to be there to help those families living in our towns and our States, going to our churches, when they are struggling to put food on the table?

Why was that such an inviting target for some of the House conferees? I do not understand that. There is a lot of money that can be saved in government. We do not want to waste a penny of it. But let's focus primarily on those who can afford to pay and are getting a Federal subsidy as opposed to those who are just struggling to get by and are asking for a helping hand. This bill does so much. I could not even start to describe all of the different areas dealing with risk on the farm, key investments in energy and research, ag research, programs to help rural communities grow, and helping those in need.

Most importantly, this reauthorization gives Illinois farmers certainty about farm programs. They need it. That is something they have not had for the last 3 years. I am going to support this bill. I wish we had been able to preserve the provision that Senator COBURN and I included. But I believe, on balance, it is an important step forward in farm country across America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, as the Senate turns its attention this week to the farm bill conference report, my thoughts turn to the Wild West to put its provisions in context. Frankly, its 950 pages lend themselves to talking about the good, the bad, and the just plain ugly.

I mention the good, because while this farm bill falls far short of gaining my support, it is not entirely without provisions worth highlighting. Conferees, including a one-term extension of the Payments in Lieu of Taxes, or the PILT Program. That gives temporary predictability at least for counties with low tax bases due to Federal land ownership and provides Congress with time to chart a long-term solution in this regard.

In addition, the bill authorizes permanently the stewardship contracting authority. This is a critical land management tool that allows us to proactively reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. It is one I have long called for. While reforms to the liability requirements are also included, the report fails to include necessary flexibility on cancelation ceilings. That is something I will continue to work on in the future.

Sadly, when it comes to the bad, there is not enough time to list all of the items in the report that should make any lawmaker cringe who is concerned about our crushing national debt or those of us trying to reform agriculture policy.

Rather than truthfully trimming the already generous agriculture safety net, taxpayers should prepare for yet another round of entirely new alphabet soup subsidy programs. The Senator from Illinois explained very well the Crop Insurance Program that is so heavily subsidized, 62 percent.

I think all of us with auto insurance or other types of insurance would love to have that kind of contribution from the Federal Government. This report does not even provide commonsense reforms that limit waste and largess to sustained hallmarks of agriculture subsidies. The report also fails to limit agricultural payments to those who are actually involved in farming.

It cannot even provide a reasonable income limit, as was discussed by the Senator from Illinois, for those who already receive crop insurance subsidies. Incomprehensibly, any renegotiation of the arrangement between crop insurers and the Federal Government would be required to be revenue neutral, despite billions of dollars in taxpayer savings having been found in previous renegotiations.

This bill is purported to be fiscally conservative because it saves $16 billion or so in tax dollars. Before we pat each other on the back in this regard, we need to remember that Congress has a pretty dismal record of actually knowing how much farm bills are going to cost.

According to Taxpayers for Common Sense, ''The last two farms bills are on pace to exceed their Congressional Budget Office score by more than $400 billion, and there's no assurance that this farm bill will be any different.''

Let's get to the ugly. For years, direct payments have been one of the clearest signs of what needs to be changed in Federal spending. The Federal Government has been handing out roughly $5 billion a year to farmers regardless of whether they are farming the land. I want to pay tribute to the Senator from Michigan who has fought to end these direct payments.

The Senate did a pretty good job there, but the House did not. I myself have long sought to end these direct payments. I was encouraged with the Senate action to end these payments outright. But despite our fiscal situation, the best we could get in the House was allowing direct payments to continue, albeit slightly reduced for cotton, for 2014 and 2015.

This conference report purports to end direct payments but ends them in name only for cotton. Let's be clear. It simply renames direct payments for cotton for 2 years. They will now be called transition payments. Cotton growers will continue to receive payments until—wait for it—the other new subsidy programs created in this report come online.

Perhaps, instead of western movies, I should have conjured up images of Shakespeare to describe this fiscal tragedy: a government-funded handout by another name is still a government-funded handout. It is also worth recalling that when originally created in 1996, in the 1996 farm bill, direct payments went by the name AMTA payments or Agricultural Market Transition Assistance payments.

It would appear that for some commodities, there will always be a transition from something to something else that will result in a taxpayer-funded handout.

According to the CBO score, the report actually takes the zero cost from the Senate proposal and the $443 million cost from the House proposal and compromises at a higher cost of $556 million in 2015. That is some compromise, to go well above both the House and the Senate numbers.

While the 10-year score for the transition payments in the report is lower than the House proposal, the first-year costs are actually higher. It is at this point that one can simply stop being surprised at what will happen when it comes to farm subsidies. Sadly, rather than a blockbuster of fiscal sanity, taxpayers are going to be saddled with what looks to be another rerun of missed opportunities to reform Federal agricultural policy. Although livestock groups have decried the absence of fixes to ongoing regulatory problems, and fiscal conservatives are chafing at the continued waste in spending, this report is still likely to be adopted.

There are other issues addressed, and I am pleased that some of this will end up on the President's desk, but I cannot support this conference report. I will continue to push for real fiscal discipline and sound agricultural policy.

I should note I remember when I first came to Congress, or about 1 year after, I came to the floor of the House to rail against the farm bill at that time, the 2002 reauthorization. We had gone in the 1990s from the Freedom to Farm Act to the Farm Security Act. For those of us conservatives who talk about moving from freedom to security and all that means, that was actually in the title of the bill, and we haven't improved much since that time. That was more than a decade ago. I have to say we should have made progress that was simply not made in this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. I rise today to discuss legislation that benefits all Americans, and particularly my home State of Ohio.

I appreciate Senator FLAKE's comments. I admire his integrity and his focus on waste in government for the decade or so that I have known him—longer than that. I think he makes good points in this legislation. We come down on different sides in the end. Some of the things he had talked about, eliminating a lot of direct payments, were especially important and were made possible by legislation Senator THUNE and I introduced.

This is an ongoing process to improve this bill every year. Every 5 years I am hopeful we can do that. I thank Senator FLAKE for his comments.

This bill is bipartisan. It reduces the deficit, it helps farms, helps families, helps our economy, and it helps our environment. It saves 23 billion taxpayer dollars. It provides certainty and support to one of the Nation's largest job creators, agriculture. Food and agriculture together are about one in seven jobs in Ohio. Agriculture-related businesses such as food processing, fertilizer and feed sales also are part of Ohio's largest industry.

I thank Senator COCHRAN and Senator STABENOW for getting us to this point. They have been dogged in their support for our Nation's farmers and our rural communities.

I have spoken with Ohio's corn and soybean growers, as well as members of the Ohio Farm Bureau. On Friday I spoke and met with a group of 300 farmers, members of the Ohio Farmers Union, in Columbus. They have told me the importance of passing a 5-year farm bill. They especially emphasized the certainty, finally, of this bill. They can make the planning and planting decisions that business people and farmers need.

I have traveled across Ohio's 88 counties and listened to farmers from Minster to Millersburg, who have told me they want a leaner, more efficient, and market-oriented farm safety net. Taxpayers deserve that too.

This bill is a reform farm bill. It eliminates direct farm payments, links crop insurance to conservation compliance, and it reforms our risk management programs—all important things in agriculture policy.

Ohio farmers were clear they wanted a farm bill that eliminated those direct payments and provided the risk management tools they needed when times are bad, but without the market-distorting policies that ensure farmers are planting for the program and not the market. Unfortunately, that was happening far too often.

In the last 6 or 7 years during my time in the Senate, leading up to the 2007–2008 farm bill and the 2013–2014 farm bill, I held some 25 roundtables with farmers and rural development people around my State. Working with my colleagues Senator THUNE and Senator DURBIN, we were able to streamline the farm safety net and make it more market oriented. Our bill, the Aggregate Risk and Revenue Management Act, is the basis for the Agricultural Risk Coverage Program, which was included in the commodity title. By reforming commodity programs to better align with the market instead of simply sending out checks—even when times were good and in many cases to people who don't need them—this bill will provide farmers with increased risk management tools while improving the integrity of these programs.

The bill incorporates many portions of the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act that I introduced. We know too many farmers struggle to find local markets for their products. Too many Ohioans are also unable to access fresh and affordable food. This legislation helps to put them together. Whether by improving Farmers Market Promotion program, or the Value Added Producers grant, this bill makes a significant investment in local and regional food production and marketing.

We know what has happened in rural America in terms of development. While agricultural prices have been such that farmers have been prosperous enough and that many in rural America are doing OK, rural development is still an issue as people move out of the these communities looking for jobs.

Whether it is bringing broadband to southeast Ohio or a water and sewer project in Henry County or a low-interest loan to Buckeye Power, this bill will make sure rural communities have the tools, the programs, and capital that they need to succeed.

My State is home to approximately 130 companies that use agricultural crops to make new biobased products, ranging from natural pet foods to paint, soy ink, toner, and plastics. Last week, USDA Secretary Vilsack and I toured a Columbus plastics factory, where they are working to make more of their products with biobased feedstocks instead of oil. We know what that means for renewable energy in our State. Our homegrown products can replace imported oil in our everyday products. This is a win for our local economies and for Ohio farmers.

We also know the importance of helping young farmers. If someone goes to any farm organization meeting, farmers are typically in their fifties, sixties, and seventies. We don't see enough in their twenties, thirties, and forties. In this legislation, we will help to recruit, train, and retrain the next generation of farmers. That is part of this conference report. USDA needs to redouble its efforts, particularly in making capital available, and ensure that young and beginning farmers are able to succeed.

The bill streamlines and, in my opinion, improves USDA's conservation programs. That is so important in the western Lake Erie basin of the Great Lakes. We have seen what has happened with algae blooms east of Toledo along places like Port Clinton and Sandusky. It is reaching almost as far east as Lorain. We are seeing the problems it causes to water quality, recreation, tourism, and to development along the lake that is so important.

The House wanted, on the SNAP issue, to slash food stamps by $40 billion. We fought back. Our conference committee rejected every proposal passed by the House to cut off the assistance to workers and their families who have fallen on very hard times. When we couple what some in this body want to do with cutting unemployment, failing to extend unemployment insurance, failing to raise the minimum wage, making huge cuts in Food Stamp Programs, this was a huge victory in our conference committee.

This bill needs to pass. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to pass it and send it to President Obama so he can sign this bill at the end of this week or the beginning of next week.

Before I leave the floor, I do want to speak in great detail about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, and the nutrition title of the bill. SNAP benefits are very modest and are essential part of our nation's social safety net. The average SNAP household gets just over $9 a day in benefits or $1.46 per person per meal. Yet, for people that are food insecure, SNAP is the difference between putting food on the table or going hungry.

When there is an economic downturn, SNAP responds to support those who need assistance: the elderly, children, and working families. When we last strengthened the program in the 2008 farm bill, we ensured that a strong SNAP was there for families and communities. We saw the caseload rise from 28 million people in 2008 to over 47 million people today.

Too often, we forget that those who rely on SNAP are real people, and not just some statistic. I want to tell you about a couple of those people. Doris, from Reynoldsburg, is a 60-year-old who was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in 2009. The doctors only gave her 6 months to live, but nearly 5 years later, she continues to fight. Because of her illness, she had to quit her work and she lost her health insurance. Doris has worked all her life and saves the little money she has to pay her bills and rent on time. Since she is on disability, she is eligible to receive $16 a month in SNAP benefits. After the cuts to the program that went into effect on November 1, her benefit is now $10 per month. She's too young to collect Social Security, so each week she and a friend drive to Columbus to the Mid-Ohio food bank for fresh produce.

Roxanne lives in northeast Ohio and is a home-health aide. She's a single mother and has four growing children under the age of 17. Roxanne works more than 60 hours per week, but relies on SNAP to help her make ends meet and ensure her children have enough to eat. For the past 3 years she has received about $400 per month; after the November cut to SNAP, her family now receives $335 per month. Unfortunately, this usually only lasts through the third week of the month. As she has tried to stretch her income, she has been forced to choose between serving her family healthy fruits and vegetables or ordering off the dollar menu at a fast food restaurant. Roxanne never thought she would be in a situation where she would have to rely on a food pantry to help her feed her family.

I am proud that we were able to maintain a robust and responsive nutrition assistance program. The conference has rejected every proposal passed by the House to cutoff assistance to workers and their families who have fallen on very hard times. Rather than arbitrarily impose new and harsher time limits on how long unemployed workers may receive SNAP benefits, the bill strengthens SNAP employment and training program capacity. It provides modest but meaningful improvements in program administration and clarifies and codifies technical but important aspects of eligibility policy. The bill supports new anti-fraud initiatives, requires strong but efficient data matching in program administration, and supports keeping program retail operations up-to-date with the evolving food retailing environment.

There has been criticism about this bill's SNAP savings—which are far more modest than the House's proposal to cut $40 billion from SNAP. I appreciate these concerns. This bill achieves savings by correcting a quirk in the SNAP benefit calculation that allows some State agencies to give households higher benefits by allowing them to deduct more income from their shelter costs.

SNAP benefits are based on the size of the household and how much money it has available to buy food. This amount is determined by subtracting out essential costs that households must pay and cannot use to buy groceries. For example, households with high shelter costs relative to their income have less money for buying food. Shelter costs include rent or mortgage payments and the cost of utilities such as heating and cooling. Rather than trying to document each household's utility costs over the course of a year, the rules allow States to set a standard utility allowance, ''standard allowance,'' for households with these expenses. This standardization enormously reduces the time and paperwork required to calculate income. Almost every State uses the standard allowance, and most require it to be used to budget utility costs and do not allow any option to claim actual expenses.

Program rules have long recognized that the receipt of Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, aid is a simple method of determining if households incur utility costs. A few States have authorized households to receive negligible LIHEAP assistance—generally only $1—merely to get them higher benefits. This was not the intention of connecting the standard allowance to LIHEAP. This bill closes this loophole by requiring that a family's LIHEAP payment must be at least $20 in order to qualify for the standard allowance solely on the LIHEAP connection. LIHEAP funds are very limited and at this dollar level States would no longer be able to fund the broad-based benefits for SNAP households that some now offer.

This change does not affect anyone in my State of Ohio, but I recognize that this will not be an easy adjustment for households that are affected. I expect that the Department will ensure that State agencies do not summarily deny the standard allowance to households that received a nominal LIHEAP payment. State agencies and the USDA must work with families so they can determine whether they have any heating or cooling costs that would qualify for the standard allowance regardless of LIHEAP. These costs are most likely a bill from a utility company, but could be a charge from a landlord.

As I have said, this farm bill ends the policy whereby some States give $1 of payment to most if not all SNAP households. I am concerned that many if not most of these households really do have heating and cooling costs and need the standard allowance to get an adequate and correct benefit. So I expect that USDA will work with State agencies to ensure that households have a meaningful opportunity to claim these costs so that they get the right amount of benefits.

Finally, I'm concerned about the very quick implementation requirement for this provision. If a State is not able to implement within 30 days, I don't think SNAP households should be held responsible. I hope that my friend Secretary Vilsack will find a way to ensure that households who may continue to receive higher benefits because the State agency was not able to implement this policy change within 30 days will not be held accountable for mistakes arising from such an aggressive implementation schedule.

There are a number of other provisions that do not result in benefit cuts to households, but change eligibility rules or codify common practices. I would like to turn to them now.

The title codifies longstanding SNAP student eligibility policy. While SNAP remains unavailable to most college students, low-income people on SNAP who are trying to gain skills and credentials needed for immediate employment can access SNAP.

Historically, most college students have not been eligible for SNAP and this bill does nothing to expand their eligibility. But at a time when workers need to continually acquire new and better job skills, States have concluded that many participants can be best served by enhancing their vocational skills through training offered by State career and technical education networks. These networks offer training and education that aims at enabling students to keep or qualify for new jobs. Many times the programs are offered by community colleges which are considered part of the higher education system. I want to be sure that SNAP

State education and training programs can connect SNAP recipients to this type of vocational education because in the long run it has the greatest potential to help people achieve lasting self-sufficiency. Giving people a stark choice between putting food on the table today or getting a job credential that will help them get a job tomorrow is counterproductive. By helping people stay in a vocational program, we can support them so they can better support themselves.

The bill clearly stipulates that the farm bill can support this type of education, and that students in these courses can continue to get food assistance. This reinforcement of current policy is an opportunity for the Department to work more closely with State agencies to establish better connectivity with their State career and technical networks to strengthen energy and training programs. We want worker training programs that will help people learn the skills necessary to get the good paying job they want so they will no longer need SNAP benefits. In the long run, this is a much better investment than supporting programs that result in procedural sanctions that churn households on and off the program in the short run but do little to improve self-sufficiency in the long run. Another provision tightens eligibility policy to make sure that people who enjoy substantial lottery or gambling winnings are ineligible for SNAP and will not become eligible until such time as they meet the normal income and resource standards for SNAP. This provision responds to a few isolated instances in which a SNAP recipient reaped a State lottery windfall. While such cases are extremely rare, we want to be certain that they are taken into account.

I expect that the Department will construct rules that will target these extraordinary cases without burdening State agency workers and recipients with unproductive reports. The first issue is how to define ''substantial.'' I believe the intent of Congress was to identify really extraordinary windfalls that change lifestyles, and not winnings that reflect good fortune but will be rapidly dissipated by paying major bills or addressing overdue car or home repair issues.

Crucial to implementing this is how the State SNAP agency learns about these winnings. This bill requires State SNAP agencies to work with any in-State gaming authorities to establish a mechanism to report substantial winnings. We envision a process that will rely entirely on agency-to-agency reports. Our intent is twofold. First, the only truly reliable source of this information will be the State gaming or lottery commission. It will offer much more dependable and authoritative information about winnings than recipient reports. Second, we want to avoid cluttering notices on responsibilities for reporting and action on changes with items about extraordinarily rare events such as a lottery windfall. This would run the risk of distracting participants from reporting much more frequent and important events such as changes in income and household membership. We want to maintain reporting requirements that are sharp, clear, focused, and short. We do not intend for this provision to trigger any additional household reporting or require additional questions on application and certification forms.

Another issue is regaining eligibility for those who had enough winnings to be disqualified from SNAP. The bill provides for applying the regular financial eligibility standards to these households if they apply for SNAP again. We intend this to mean the normal gross and net income eligibility guidelines and the dollar-limited resource eligibility thresholds specified in the Food and Nutrition Act, and expect that normal verification rules will be applied.

The bill reinforces policy on the eligibility of felons. Felons fleeing from law enforcement or violating their parole or probation are ineligible for SNAP. This bill highlights the ineligibility of those felons convicted of crimes such as murder and armed robbery who violate their parole or probation. Ex-offenders who have completed their sentences and comply with any parole conditions placed on their release, and who are otherwise eligible for food assistance through SNAP, remain eligible for assistance. But persons on the run from justice after committing one of these crimes should not be eligible based solely on technicalities about how the crimes are designated under some jurisdiction's criminal code.

This provision should not affect current application procedures which ask applicants about fleeing felon and probation violation issues. Rather, we believe that eligibility workers must receive clear guidance on especially serious crimes that should be treated as felonies.

The bill addresses program integrity concerns about multiple requests for electronic benefit transfer, EBT, card replacements. EBT cards are routinely replaced for a wide variety of valid reasons. State agencies need to be able to quickly replace them so families can continue to buy food. A small number of households frequently request replacement cards; we are concerned that a small subset of these households may be misusing their cards and benefits. The bill aims to require States to seek explanations from households with an excessive number of card replacement requests while preserving strong procedural protections for households. We envision it to work as follows: USDA is required to set a standard for excessive requests for card replacements. I think that the floor should not be fewer than 4 replacements over the course of a year. States must seek explanations from households that exceed this threshold as to why another card is needed prior to re-issuing a card. The process must allow households the opportunity to immediately provide the explanation because of the critical importance of maintaining access to food assistance. Any delay in working with the household freezes their food purchasing. I expect the Department to monitor this process and examine how long households are going without cards. Even if a State's computer lists the household as eligible, if it cannot access its benefits, it might as well not be. Any policy that denies a household effective food assistance should be treated as the equivalent of an eligibility cut-off.

Replacement cards can be needed for a wide range of legitimate reasons. Cards can be stolen, damaged, or simply lost. Some people may not understand that the cards are reusable, or may confuse a PIN problem with a card problem. Because some people are particularly vulnerable to these problems, this bill requires that rules will establish protections for persons with disabilities, homeless persons, and crime victims. Some people with disabilities may require accommodations or authorized representatives.

The bill does not allow for using this process to suspend or terminate SNAP participation. Program rules spell out procedural standards for acting on evidence of intentional program violations. These standards enable State agencies to pursue recipient fraud in a manner that protects the due process rights of the accused. If a State believes that its evidence about multiple card replacements indicates an intentional program violation, it must replace the card and use its established disqualification procedures such as administrative disqualification hearings or court actions. It cannot force a household member to submit to an interview in order to get access to its benefits.

I want to highlight two areas where the bill provides more resources to improve program integrity. First, we are giving the Department more resources to enhance its retail store monitoring through more data mining and analysis. We recognize that the Department has been actively using its data base of retailer transactions and want to enable more activity in this area.

Second, we're authorizing funding for Federal-State partnerships to implement pilot projects to combat trafficking. I expect that the Department will seek and select State agencies that demonstrate sound and fair procedures for determining fraud.

The bill has several provisions that I worked on that will better link SNAP retailer policy to evolutions in retail technology and marketing. The Secretary is authorized to test the use of mobile technologies in SNAP. This could really help SNAP customers shop at retailers such as farmers markets and vegetable stands that are unable to install traditional debit card machines but may be able to connect to smart

phone applications. This provision was included in my Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act. But as we expand ways to accept benefits, we must maintain program integrity. That is why we are starting with a pilot project to test mobile technology in SNAP, including protections for recipients such as bans on any food price markups. We expect USDA to carefully examine program integrity issues as part of a required feasibility report, and would not expect any expansion of mobile technology unless the report shows a satisfactory level of integrity. The Department needs rock solid means of ensuring that mobile devices approved for a seemingly legitimate retailer do not end up in disqualified or other dishonest retailers' facilities.

This bill also allows pilot projects to test the feasibility of allowing the online purchase of food with SNAP benefits. More retailers are offering food delivery based on an online transaction. Food delivery can make the program more accessible to individuals who may have trouble getting out to shop. Again, any new way of redeeming benefits must meet high program integrity standards. The bill specifies that the Department must stop any growth of online transactions if we can't achieve the strong level of integrity that we expect. While the provision makes clear that delivery fees associated with online purchases may not be paid with SNAP benefits, I also expect USDA to set standards for the fees to ensure no adverse effect on food security. If consumers are paying an inordinate amount for delivery or other fees this could undermine food security. Most SNAP recipients are expected to spend a considerable amount of their own money to buy a nutritionally adequate diet, and if they are paying large delivery fees they may not be able to do that.

I would like to point out that in the mainstream retail environment these new mobile and online technologies do not rely on photo identification or other biometric information to authorize payments and maintain integrity, nor do standard credit or debit card transactions. A longstanding principle of SNAP benefit use has been that the SNAP retail transaction should look like any other debit card transaction to customers and retailers. I am concerned that USDA has approved State requirements for photos on SNAP cards to be presented at the point of purchase. This is not a condition for a regular credit or debit transactions—in many if not most cases, cardholders swipe their own cards without handing them over to a cashier. The SNAP retail environment should be consistent with general practice. The Department's regulations provide that, and they ought to be enforced.

While benefits have been issued and used successfully through EBT cards for years, there have been a few instances when cards failed to operate. In the event of a natural disaster or a major crash of the EBT system, participants may be in even greater need of assistance and must be able to use their benefits to purchase food. This requires the capacity to quickly and efficiently issue manual vouchers to affected individuals. We expect USDA to allow a switch to manual vouchers when EBT card use is undermined by major systems failures or natural disasters. States must be able to understand the criteria for issuing vouchers so that they can act quickly when a problem threatens access to food assistance, such as the cancellation of cards affected by a data breach.

The bill requires State agencies to use the Department of Homeland Security system to validate immigration status. This system—the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements—is already used by most State agencies. This bill does not change immigrant eligibility, or require anything new or different from applicants in the certification process.

The bill also requires States to have a system for verifying income and eligibility. SNAP has longstanding, rigorous, and specific verification standards. We intend that States have a system for verification and believe that all now do. We are not mandating the imposition of any specific matching requirements such as the match requirements under section 1137 of the Social Security Act. These matches were required 20 years ago and were not productive. We made them optional in the 1996 welfare reform legislation and intend that they remain optional. We expect States will employ verification systems that employ timely and useful matches with reliable sources of data.

One of the most important measures in the bill is authority and funding for pilot projects to enhance the Employment and Training Program. This bill provides support for up to ten projects and a rigorous independent evaluation of the impact of the projects on SNAP receipt, employment, and earnings.

I know that all of my colleagues share the goal of seeing more Americans earning enough so they do not need SNAP. I believe that this is best achieved through strong work programs, and not arbitrarily cutting off food benefits to people who can't find jobs. People are not choosing unemployment and SNAP over gainful employment. There simply aren't enough jobs. The ratio of the number of unemployed persons to relative to the number of job openings has been improving steadily but remains at historically high levels—about 3 unemployed people for every job opening. As a comparison, when the recent recession started this ratio was 1.8 unemployed people per job. So I think we need to do more to help SNAP participants successfully compete for the increasing number of jobs that we hope will be there as the economy continues to recover.

Employment and Training, E&T, has been a component of SNAP since 1987, but very little is known about its efficacy. E&T has afforded States substantial flexibility to design work programs and leverage Federal matching funds. The result has been a wide variation in the types and scope of services offered. While the most prevalent components are job search and job search training, followed by workfare, more States are offering career and technical education in recognition that many SNAP participants need significant skill building and education. In terms of funding, some States invest substantial amount of State funds to realize the Federal match, while many States rely exclusively on the 100 percent Federal grant to fund program components. So we have a program with huge variations but we don't know what works. And because we are not confident that we are getting results, fiscal support for the program has been tepid; the basic Federal grant was $75 million in 1987 and is only $79 million today.

What we do know is that SNAP reaches a very large number of employable low-income people. E&T presents a real opportunity to reach these Americans with better services. And this is a population we need to reach more effectively. A recent report by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia shows that low-income workers were much less likely to get skills training than better off workers. In other words, the people who most need training the most are the least likely to get it. So we need to do a better job of reaching low-income workers with training opportunities, and make sure that the services offered can help people get ahead.

What we want to do here is test different approaches to work and training programs and find which produce the best results. For far too long, we've reauthorized this program because we all want SNAP participants to be better off, but we haven't invested in learning if we are succeeding or how we can do better.

We envision a comprehensive approach to choosing the pilot projects that will incorporate a range of services and serve a range of SNAP recipients with different needs. This does not mean that every pilot must serve a wide range of participants with a wide range of services, but rather that USDA will approve a group of pilot proposals that as a whole will provide different services and reach different types of participants. The bill specifies that the pilots as a whole must reach able-bodied adults without dependents, people with low skills or very limited work experience, and people who are already employed.

Current law requires State E&T programs to be coordinated with their statewide workforce development systems. We expect that these pilots will at least be coordinated, and hopefully leverage existing infrastructure such as one-stop career centers and career and technical education networks. The bill provides for contributing funds from Federal, State, or private sources.

I want to briefly touch on employed persons who get SNAP. These are people who have shown that they can get a job but are not earning enough to make ends meet without help from SNAP. So we are interested in approaches that can help the working poor improve their circumstances. While hopefully many people will earn enough to no longer need or qualify for SNAP, others may increase their earned income but remain eligible for a smaller SNAP benefit. But they will be better off, and program costs will be reduced.

In many cases, stronger work supports could enable people to get a job or work more hours at their current job. For example, if some parents had better childcare, they may be able to take jobs that offer longer hours or better wages. Similarly, transportation support such as bus or transit passes may enable people to take a first job or get a better job. In many cases, people may be able to qualify for jobs without further training, but can't take the jobs because of issues like child care. So I see work supports—particularly child care—as a very promising E&T component that some pilot projects could support. I also believe increasing the minimum wage will help low-wage workers, but I will speak more on that issue at a later date.

Pilots may also test private sector employment as a component. This may be subsidized or unsubsidized employment. We expect USDA to ensure that any employment components adhere to the full range of worker protection standards in the Food and Nutrition Act and in other laws on issues such as workplace safety and health, wages and hours, workman's compensation, and family leave. In addition, the Department should examine whether any additional protections are needed.

If employment components are presented as an E&T requirement, new issues arise around sanctions because the State agency may not know the circumstances when an assignment does not work out. But the basic principle holds: no one should be sanctioned unless he or she willfully refused an assignment without good cause. People may not be able to keep up with jobs because of changes in schedules, transportation, child care, or sometimes because they lack the skills that an employer wants. None of these situations should lead to a sanction. Current program rules have addressed situations such as transportation and child care problems. In an employment component, a new issue arises if people are dismissed for a lack of competence. There is a real difference between refusing to work and not being able to work competently. If people are not working out in a job, maybe they need more training. Maybe they would be better in a different job. They do not deserve a sanction. We expect that State agencies—not employers—will make these decisions based on policies set out by the Department that address very specific criteria for when a sanction may be invoked in an employment component.

To get the best results from pilot projects, I think that individual assessment of participants is going to be important to get people in the right component. Pilots need to assess people's work history, education, skills, and child care and transportation situation to understand which component can help them the most. I expect the Department to examine assessment procedures as part of its monitoring. We see a strong independent evaluation as critical to the success of these pilots. The Department may use project funds for this purpose, as well as for Federal costs of managing the projects and any evaluation contracts. We expect that the evaluation will look at the impacts of different interventions such as job search, workfare, vocational training, and remedial education on different types of SNAP recipients in different local labor markets. Most importantly, we expect that the study will identify impacts on SNAP receipt and impacts on employment and earnings, including whether reductions in SNAP are attributable to higher earnings. The bill also allows the Department to authorize State-initiated reviews of their projects which can supplement the Federal evaluation.

I am pleased that these pilots strengthen the work component of SNAP without creating incentives to end assistance for people who can't find work or curtailing the ability of States with struggling labor markets economies to secure waivers of current time limits. Pilot participation by participants may be mandatory or voluntary. It is my understanding that if participation is mandatory, an individual who fails to comply with any work requirements may lose his or her SNAP benefits under the same rules that would have applied if she or he committed the same acts while assigned to the E&T program instead of the pilot. As the bill authorizes unsubsidized work as an allowable pilot activity for the first time, we expect the Secretary to issue guidance describing what I think are very limited circumstances under which a working person who loses a job could be sanctioned. Only if a person willfully refuses to continue a job without good cause should sanction policy come into play.

I turn now to some other modest improvements in program implementation.

The bill requires State agencies to use the Department of Health and Human Services' National Directory of New Hires to check on whether SNAP applicants have jobs. Currently States may use this data base to check on the employment of SNAP recipients. The bill requires States to check the National Directory data when a household applies for SNAP to enhance eligibility determinations. There is no expectation of matching during the period of certification. We expect the Secretary to issue rules to set standards to ensure that State matching practices are efficient and effective. As an example, it would seem prudent to focus matches on employable household members and not spend time and money on matches with children, elderly, and disabled members. The Secretary should work with the Department of Health and Human Services to fashion rules that balance the potential gains in payment accuracy with State administrative costs.

More Federal programs are implementing standards for exchanging information in an automated environment. This bill requires SNAP to develop these standards. More electronic data exchanges can help both participants and administrators. However, the strong privacy and confidentiality requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act must be preserved.

The bill tightens policy on using funds for program informational activities while preserving the authority to get information out so that people can make informed choices about the program. Let us review a little history. In the 1996 welfare reform law, we prohibited using Federal funds for recruitment. The idea was that support for information about the availability of help for grocery bills was okay, but we did not want to cross a line to persuade people to enroll if they already had learned about the program and decided to forego benefits.

Over the last decade, we have made enormous strides to extend food assistance to eligible families. USDA, States, and a wide range of community organizations have worked hard to inform low-income people about the availability of SNAP. And as we have changed the name of the program from the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and States have branded their own programs differently, the need to get out clear information has never been greater. I want to commend USDA and its partners inside and outside government for helping to make SNAP a more effective anti-hunger program. In this bill we have drawn some bright lines for the Secretary to use in funding information efforts. First, no support for partnerships with foreign governments. Second, no contracts based on ''bounties'' that tie compensation to the number of people enrolled. And finally, re-affirmation that recruitment is not a legitimate activity for SNAP funding. I think the first points are clear and want to expand on the last one. Giving people information about the availability and benefits of the program to enable them to make informed choices about managing family food budgets to put enough food on the table is a legitimate use of Federal funds. If it crosses over into pushing people who have made an informed choice not to apply to apply, then we have a recruitment situation that the Conferees do not support. As long as households have

the knowledge and access to participate if they so desire, what they actually decide is up to them.

Providing positive information about the program and why or how to apply or assisting them in navigating a complex application process is not recruitment and remains an allowable activity and cost. We expect SNAP to continue to provide people with the information they need to make informed decisions about participation, while ensuring that all funds for public information are used responsibly and judiciously.

Finally, I would like to raise a problem about issuance that this legislation does not address—because we thought that earlier legislation did. Staggered issuance refers to spreading the issuance dates for loading benefits on to EBT cards over a period of time—generally 10 but sometimes 15 days or more. This way you don't have so many SNAP households shopping on the same day. It benefits both retailers and their customers because stores are less crowded. The Food and Nutrition Act provides two key participant safeguards when a State agency moves to staggered issuance: first, no household can go beyond 40 days without an allotment, and, second, no household's allotment may be reduced for any period. I have become aware that the Department has been approving plans that recognize only one of these provisions; plans simply extend some households for 40 days between issuances. This means that an allotment designed to cover 30 days must now cover 40 days. Benefits are simply inadequate to stretch this far.

When a 30 day benefit must be stretched over 40 days, the daily benefit is clearly reduced. And since we eat every day, the daily benefit is a meaningful measure of benefit reduction. I am troubled that this important protection in issuance law is seemingly being ignored, and urge the Department to re-examine this situation and require supplemental issuances when States are implementing staggered issuance. Staggered issuance should be beneficial to all concerned. It should not increase hunger during transition months. Referrals to food banks during those months are a poor use of food bank resources and completely unnecessary given the act's requirement that households not suffer a loss of benefits—which having to stretch the same allotment over a longer period certainly is. Food banks are already being stretched thin and it should not be policy for SNAP recipients to rely on local food banks because benefits are stretched over this longer time period.

All in all, this farm bill represents 2 years of hard work by both Agricultural Committees. The nutrition title is not my ideal; the benefit reductions obtained by requiring significant utility assistance in order to qualify for the standard utility allowance will be painful for those households affected by it. But I believe it is a narrowly targeted way of strengthening the program, and with other modest improvements, makes the title worth supporting. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is my understanding Senator BENNET is going to be due here shortly. I should be done by that time and ask unanimous consent that I take about 15 minutes of Senator CORNYN's time.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, January 2014 may go down on record as the coldest of the months in United States history. Between the freezing temperatures from last week's polar vortex storms, much of the Nation experienced record cold weather at least once or twice, and this has been going on now for the last 3 years. While we won't have official nationwide temperature data for January for a few more weeks, we do have preliminary figures. Throughout the entire month, over 2,387 daily cold temperature records were set around the country, and many of those were in my State of Oklahoma. At least 49 of these daily records occurred on January 6 and 7 when the first round of the polar vortex hit. In Tulsa yesterday it went down to 2 below zero. That was a recordbreaker—that had held since 1912. That was the last time it got that cold. The same day in Enid, OK, it got down to minus 3. In Bartlesville—and this may be wrong, but the figure showed it was actually minus 14, making it even colder than the South Pole, where it was only minus 11.

The cold weather is continuing into February. Many schools canceled classes today around the State of Oklahoma because of the cold weather. It snowed more than 2½ inches in Tulsa yesterday, 5.2 inches in Henryetta, just south of Tulsa.

There was an article in the Daily Oklahoman. They have a great zoo over there, but they reported that the grizzly bears refused to go outside their habitat yesterday because it was too cold.

I know many in the media cry foul when I talk about global warming when it gets cold outside, but is this really any different from the President talking about global warming on a hot day in June of last year when he announced his climate action plan? No one seemed to mind that, but there seems to be a different set of rules when we talk about how cold it has been, which it has been for the last 3 years.

When we experience extreme cold like we have had the last few weeks, everyone in their right mind takes a step back and wonders if global warming is really happening. When you look at the facts, you just have to wonder. Consider this quote from the journal Nature, which stated that over the last 15 years, ''the observed [temperature] trend is . . . not significantly different from zero [and] suggests a temporary 'hiatus' in global warming.''

This is something that has been a pattern for a long period of time. I can recall—and I am going from memory now—from the time they started keeping these temperatures, we started the first cold spell of recent history in 1895, and that lasted until 1918; 1918 turned into another warming area that went to 1945; and 1945 to 1975 was again another cooling spell and, of course, from 1975 to 2000. So we know what has been happening.

The President has not acknowledged this fact. In fact, on multiple occasions he has said—and this is something he has said over and over—''the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago.'' Unfortunately for his talking points, the data that has been reported in Nature magazine, the Economist, and even in the United Nations IPCC report shows that is just simply not true.

Two weeks ago, in a hearing we had in the Environment and Public Works Committee, my friend Senator SESSIONS pressed EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on this point, asking her whether the President's statement was true. Ultimately, after running around the question for a few minutes, she said, ''I can't answer that.'' You may not think this is an important fact, but it is. The President's entire climate action plan and efforts to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are built fully on the fact that global warming is happening and that we are all going to die if we don't do something about it.

What we all need to be aware of is that the impact of the President's climate action plan, when implemented, will be stunning. It will completely adopt global warming policies and the implementation of regulations like cap and trade. The President has already done a stunning amount of this work already. We have been able to uncover that in the first 4 years he was in office, he actually spent—and people are not aware of this—$110 billion of taxpayer money on global warming-related activities.

The cap-and-trade legislation we have debated over the last 10 years carries a price tag of $300 billion to $400 billion a year. It would have been the largest tax increase in American history. It was soundly defeated—a bill in the Senate—but through the climate action plan the President is now trying to accomplish by regulation what he couldn't achieve through legislation.

We have heard the term ''the imperial President'' being used recently.

Well, listen to what was stated in the State of the Union Message, and these are the words he used: ''We are going to set new standards on carbon pollution from power plants.'' What he is saying is this: We couldn't pass it for 12 years with four bills to do that. We can't get more than 25 percent of the Members to vote for it, so we are going to do it through regulation.

The first round of greenhouse gas regulations was proposed in the first week in January. These regulations, if finalized, would impose strict regulations on new powerplants that would make it impossible to build a coal-fired powerplant. You may wonder: Do we really need coal anymore with all the new energy we have coming onto the market, with the natural gas and the shale deposits and all that? The answer is yes.

Before I go into that discussion, I think it is important to point out a problem with the timing of the new rules proposal. I had a chart here—I don't have it with me right now—that showed that when I was ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee—and this would have been way back in October 2012—we released a report highlighting the administration's actions to delay the finalization of costly environmental regulations until after the 2012 Presidential elections. Whether it was the farm dust rule or the ozone standard, the President punted regulation after regulation until after the election to minimize the influence it would have on voters. It appears that is exactly what is happening today with the first round of greenhouse gas regulations for the construction of new powerplants.

As we know, under the Clean Air Act new rules for powerplants must be finalized within 1 year of the proposal's publication in the Federal Register—that is what kicks it off, when it is written in the Federal Register—or the proposed rule is invalidated. This is important because after announcing his climate action plan, the President ordered the EPA to ''issue a new proposal by no later than September 20, 2013.'' The EPA proposed a new rule on September 20, but it did not publish in the Federal Register until January 8, 2014—this past January. Had the EPA published this rule in the Register on the same day they proposed it on September 20, 2013, they would have been forced to finalize the rule by September 20, 2014, which would be 6 weeks before the 2014 elections.

This reveals an astounding double standard and is consistent with the remarks made at the State of the Union. On the one hand, the President says we don't have time to delay action on global warming. He says we must act before it is too late. But on the other hand, his actions show that it is OK to wait to finalize rules that will harm the economy until after the elections. Ultimately, this hypocrisy reveals that the administration is fully aware that the EPA's greenhouse gas regulations will put a drag on the economy, and now that we are starting to see strains of our electricity markets develop, the cost is becoming real to consumers.

Consider American Electric Power, one of the country's largest electric companies. They are the ones that actually supply the power for my State of Oklahoma. Last week, during the recent cold weather, they reported they were running 89 percent of the coal generation they scheduled to retire in 2015. But these coal-fired powerplants, which were critical to keeping homes all around the country warm during these cold temperatures, are going to be shut down because of President Obama's environmental regulations.

American Electric Power said: What it should make everyone think about is, what are we going to do when the generation is not available? We need to be thinking about reliability and resilience in extreme times, not just the status quo.

If this recent cold weather occurs again in a year or two from now, once these plants are shut down, there simply will not be enough electricity available to keep homes and businesses warm. If cold weather pushes electricity demand up to the point where remaining powerplants are overloaded—the ones that haven't been shut down by the President—it could result in massive blackouts, and when Americans need their electricity it won't be there. It would be as if we were living in the 1600s and everyone will be cold. Again, the annual cost of this would be in excess of $300 billion to $400 billion that would be a hit on the GDP. And this does not even begin to measure the suffering we would have to experience.

The President, as he has done with ObamaCare, may just say that these plants can stay open, that he won't enforce these new rules he is creating, but I don't think that is realistic. American Electric Power's warning comes in the wake of regulations the President has already finalized. The new ones that are being developed will make things even worse by making coal-fired powerplants impossible to build or keep open. What has been a steady source of cheap electricity will be gone in just a few short years.

I have long said the Clean Air Act was never intended to regulate greenhouse gas emissions; it was written only to include the most egregious, harmful air pollutants, not carbon dioxide and other harmless greenhouse gases.

Surprisingly, even some Democrats are starting to publicly agree with me. Last week, at an Energy and Commerce Committee meeting over in the House, Congressman JOHN DINGELL from Michigan, a staunch Democrat, said, ''Like most members of this committee, I think the Supreme Court came up with a very much erroneous decision on whether the Clean Air Act covers greenhouse gases. Like many members of this committee, I was present when we wrote that legislation, and we thought it was clear enough that we didn't clarify it, thinking that even the Supreme Court was not stupid enough to make that finding.''

That is a direct quote from JOHN DINGELL. So I wish the Supreme Court would have sided with Congressman DINGELL.

As things now stand, the EPA is poised to put the Nation out of business with greenhouse gas regulations that would cost the entire economy some $300 billion to $400 billion.

Every year I always calculate the number of people in my State of Oklahoma who file Federal income taxes. This $300 billion to $400 billion cost would mean about $3,000 per family of those who file Federal income tax returns. So it is a huge amount, and it would be the largest tax increase in history. Out of this concern, I am introducing a commonsense bill today, the Electricity Reliability and Affordability Act, which will allow States to keep their powerplants open if they believe it is necessary to maintain electricity, reliability, and affordability. In other words, the States can opt out.

American Electric Power's announcement should cause all of us great concern, but the EPA is not listening. States have long protected and conserved their environments with great success, and State governments are in a much better position to determine which powerplants should and should not remain open, despite the regulations.

I know my friend from Colorado is waiting to take the floor, so the last thing I will say is that in the State of the Union Message, the President made the statement that he is going to go ahead and do this, regardless of the fact that we have killed this legislation four times over the last 12 years. And at that time, I was talking about $300 billion to $400 billion as the cost, but that would have been the cost if this had been legislation. Specifically, talking about legislation such as the Lieberman-Warner act and several of the others, that would regulate sources with at least 10,000 tons of CO_2 emissions. However, if you do it by regulation and not legislation, that would have to be under the Clean Air Act, which would regulate systems of 250 tons of CO_2 a year. So while the legislation would have regulated the CO_2 emissions for powerplants, refineries, and major factories, if the President is able to do it through regulations, that would cover every school, every church, and every apartment house in the Nation. So it is very significant.

I know that right now we are on the farm bill, but we have to remind people that this is something that has been just announced that they are going to be doing.

I remember when Lisa Jackson was the Director of the EPA. She was appointed by President Obama. I asked her the question: If we are to regulate this and one of these bills would pass,

which means we would be regulating CO_2 emissions, would this have the effect of reducing CO_2 worldwide?

She said: No, because that would only apply to the United States of America.

That is not where the problem is. The problem is in China, India, in Mexico, and other places.

So I remind my fellow Members this is something very serious and worthy of consideration at this time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Oklahoma for yielding.

I wish to speak about the farm bill which, thanks to months and months and actually years of tireless work by Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, and other conferees on the bill, Democrats and Republicans in both Houses of Congress—thanks to all of this work, we are going to be able to pass this bill this afternoon.

There are 16 million people working in agriculture in our country. These workers and our rural communities are demanding the certainty which comes with a long-term bill. I am pleased to say we are passing not a 2-month extension, not a 10-minute extension, not an ''I hope we get it done tomorrow before we leave town'' extension but a genuine 5-year farm bill, which is going to give us a lot of certainty.

This bill eliminates direct payments made to farmers regardless of market conditions or what they planted and prioritizes what is working for producers; namely, crop insurance.

I have spoken on the floor before about Colorado's battle against historic drought conditions. Some of our farmers lost half their corn yields in 2012. It is hard to imagine any business losing half its production in 1 year, but that is what has happened to many Colorado corn producers. Mr. President, 2013 was a little better for corn in our State, but it is hard to celebrate when producers still face significant losses fighting against this dry soil. The Crop Insurance Program is what is keeping these farmers and rural economies in business during these tough times. That is why it is a priority.

That is why we should have passed it 1 year ago, 2 years ago, but today we finally have the chance to do it.

Beyond crop insurance, another key highlight of this bill is its conservation title. I spoke last week on the floor about the revamped easement programs, and the important linkage between conservation practices and crop insurance which has been preserved in this conference agreement.

But beyond those highlights, the bill places a new emphasis on water conservation, which is so important to the West. Programs such as EQIP and the Regional Conservation Partnerships Program are going to be critical as the West faces record drought conditions brought on by climate change. New conservation tools, coupled with crop insurance to help hedge risk, will help our producers as we move into a new normal of a drier American West.

The conservation title programs help producers, but they also help the fish in our rivers and the wildlife on our lands.

Here is a great illustration of why sportsmen groups support this bill. This is a photo taken of my friend John Gale hunting pheasants in Yuma County, CO. The Conservation Reserve Program, CRP—a program reauthorized through this farm bill—provides important habitat for pheasants and other upland birds all across the country. The land surrounding this photo is all CRP land.

The program protects habitat but also helps hold highly erodible soils in place—such as the soil in Baca County, CO, where over 250,000 acres are enrolled in CRP. As the Presiding Officer may know, Baca County in many ways was the epicenter of the area devastated by the Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Thanks to CRP, Baca County has weathered recent droughts a lot better than their forefathers did. Healthy grasslands, open landscapes, and abundant wildlife are a fundamental part of the West, to be a part of the West, and we need to preserve those grasslands, those open spaces, and our species. That is what the conservation title of the farm bill does. A lot of people don't know about it, but it is a very important part of the farm bill.

As a result, this farm bill is supported by over 250 conservation and environmental organizations—groups such as Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, National Wildlife Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the National Rifle Association, among others.

This legislation not only ensures we have healthy croplands and grasslands but also prioritizes the health of our forests—an issue of huge importance to western States as we deal with our massive wildfires.

Here we can see the Waldo Canyon fire from 2012. I chair the agriculture subcommittee on forestry, and we held a hearing on wildfires not too long ago. We looked at the terrible fires which have raged across the West, the budgetary nightmare they have caused, and Washington's inability to understand what we are actually facing out there. My clearest takeaway from this hearing was that when it comes to our forests, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

If we prioritize the fuel mitigation work on the front end, we will save on fire suppression and recovery costs on the back end. If we don't, we will break our budget and not preserve our forests. The Congressional Budget Office has found that for every $1 we invest in forest health, we save $5 in costs associated with wildfire.

This farm bill conference report makes these investments and gives the Forest Service new tools to treat areas in need of restoration and mitigation. This bill makes commonsense reforms, reduces the deficit, and will bring certainty and continued prosperity to rural America. It passed the House last week with broad bipartisan support.

I strongly urge a ''yes'' vote when we vote on the farm bill conference report later today. With all the uncertainty our farmers and ranchers are facing in these tough times, in these drought times, it is the least we can do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and friend from Colorado for his words about the farm bill. He and I are an example of how this bill is important to every region of the country. His kind of farming is very different than our kind of farming, but they are equally important to our States.

I rise to talk about the farm bill. This bill is a long time coming. There has been back-and-forth between the two Chambers, the House and Senate, and between various regions, probably most famous, South versus Midwest farming, but that is not the only one—different types of crops and different types of farm products. It may be sugar, milk, soybeans or corn. Who knows what it is going to be.

Nonetheless, I am happy to report that finally this bill overcame the partisan gridlock we have seen in Washington. I am sorry it took so long. I know last year the House basically blew up this bill on kind of ''my way or the highway'' politics. I thought that was very unfortunate. But here we are with a bipartisan farm bill, one that got a huge vote in the House and I hope will get a huge vote in the Senate.

I am glad this cut, cut, cut ideology did not prevail, because when we look at this bill and how important it is, not just to my State but to every State in the Union and so important to the U.S. economy—this bill is very important to the Nation's economy and to the future of our Nation.

Agriculture is something we do in this country better than anybody else in the world. We do a lot of things great in this country, and we should be proud of those, but no one does agriculture better than the good old United States of America. Our farmers, our producers, our agribusiness do incredible work. We literally are the envy of the world. It is a core strength of the U.S. economy.

It is critical to keeping our Nation's economy strong that we have a strong agricultural sector. It is critical to our Nation that we have strong rural communities and to a large extent—not completely but a lot of what this bill is about is helping rural communities.

Not everyone in this country lives in the big cities or lives in the suburbs. This bill will help every American in lots of ways, no matter where they live, whether they live in the biggest city in the country or the smallest town out in the countryside. But it will

also help millions and millions of hard-working people and their families in rural America. Why in the world would we want to let ideological fights and partisan bickering jeopardize this economic powerhouse we built for ourselves? Nonetheless, today we have overcome that.

This legislation is a win-win for everyone. We have seen Democrats and Republicans from all regions of the country come to the floor to talk about this farm bill, why it is important to them and why it is important that it pass.

Just a few of the provisions in there:

There are market protections for our farmers and ranchers all over the country.

The PILT Program is so critical to a number of western States but certainly a number of our counties in Arkansas. We have counties in our State where literally half or more of their land is Federal. They can't get any tax base off of it, so PILT helps to fix that.

The Catfish Inspection Program. We don't subsidize catfish, but we have the inspection program to make sure imported catfish meet U.S. standards. This is critical. We want a safe and good food supply. There is a big emphasis on exports. We all know we have a terrible trade deficit. Our trade deficit would be horrendous if it wasn't for agriculture.

Of course, there is nutritional assistance for hard-working families in this country. We have the richest, most bountiful, most blessed Nation in the history of the world, and we have people who are hungry. These nutrition programs in many cases are the difference between life and death.

This bill also focuses on conservation. Not everyone is a farmer, but there are millions of people all over this country who love to enjoy the great outdoors. They like to go hunting, they like to go fishing, and other activities. Conservation programs are critical to keep habitat where it is and critical for large sections of our economy. Hunting and fishing is a huge part of our economy, not just in Arkansas but all over the country.

The rural development programs are essential for rural America. We know there is everything from wastewater programs in here to rural housing, to all kinds of programs. But rural development programs are critical for the quality of life in rural America.

I am the first to say this bill isn't perfect. I think all of us agree this is a series of compromises. There are probably things each one of us would do differently if we could change a provision or two in the bill, but it is a good bill. It is going to provide and stabilize good jobs and economic security for our country.

Our agricultural producers not only feed us and clothe us, but they feed and clothe the world. In the Senate we hear every day from the business community. They want more certainty. They want more stability. This bill provides that in the agricultural economy. Our farmers, producers, and others deserve that same certainty and stability, and this bill provides that.

In closing, I would read a quick passage from James 5:7. I was going to read it from King James, but I will paraphrase it. Be patient, therefore, brothers . . . see how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the Earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and late rains.

Our agricultural producers have been patient long enough. They have waited and waited and waited on this legislation. I sincerely hope all of us will give this bill strong consideration. This bill provides good common ground. It provides economic security. It continues the safe and abundant food supply that we have in this Nation.

I hope Members on both sides of the aisle will join me in voting yes for this conference report today.

I yield the floor.

MILK PRICING FORMULA

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from Michigan, her committee and staff for their tireless work that has brought this farm bill to fruition. Further, I greatly appreciate the Senator's willingness to discuss an issue that is absolutely critical for dairy farmers in the Northeast: prehearings to review the Federal pricing formula for class III and class IV milk.

Ms. STABENOW. I want to thank the Senator from Maine. This legislation addresses many aspects of agriculture including dairy. During our deliberations we heard clearly from various dairy stakeholders who argued that the class III and class IV milk product pricing systems are outdated and not responsive to the needs of producers or consumers.

Mr. KING. The senior Senator from Maine and the junior Senator from New York authored the provision included in the Senate farm bill which required USDA to address the pricing formula for class III and class IV milk through a public, transparent prehearing process. Their work has been essential in moving this conversation forward.

As the Senator from Michigan well knows, milk pricing policy is a complex, convoluted, and controversial business and challenging to handle in a package such as the farm bill. Does the Senator believe that the USDA, which is charged with stabilizing farm income; conserving soil, water, and other natural resources, and ensuring the availability and quality of food and fiber products, should provide an opportunity for a thoughtful, balanced process for addressing essential dairy pricing structure?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, the USDA has the economists and experts that can analyze various alternatives to the current system of pricing milk—and if the system is not working well for most of the players in the dairy industry, especially the farmers, the Department should make changes. A public, thoughtful and thorough discussion of those alternatives needs to take place, guided by nonbiased people who are focused on the goal of creating the best policy.

Mr. KING. I thank the Senator for her response. The dairy producers in Maine have told me that they believe that it will take just such a thorough review of proposals from interested parties, to help address concerns from industry, assist with the stabilization of the price of milk and provide greater certainty for dairy producers.

Does the Senator agree that the Secretary has the authority and ability to conduct a prehearing procedure to consider alternative pricing formulas for class III and class IV milk products?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, I believe that not only does the Secretary have the authority to act upon a petition, but as was said earlier, the USDA has the ability to conduct a thoroughly researched prehearing procedure to consider alternative pricing formulas for class III and class IV milk products and that would be welcomed by the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Mr. KING. I understand that the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee has recommended that the Secretary take such action and review interested party proposals to address class III and class IV pricing formula changes in a participatory and transparent manner.

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, that is correct; the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee has recommended such action. Further, I believe that a study of pricing alternatives, followed by a rigorous prehearing process, would cut to the heart of the issue. This would not only clear the air on many of the disagreements that plagued the farm bill debates but might even reduce the reliance on temporary stopgap government supports through better financial connections for all sectors of the dairy industry with the consumer value of dairy products.

Mr. KING. The dairy producers that I have spoken with are calling on the USDA Secretary to undertake a study of alternatives and to agree to hold prehearings on such alternatives as a basic component of the USDA's fundamental mission to the dairy industry. They believe it is time for Congress to direct the USDA to take the bull by the horns and to ensure that all regions of the United States can sustain viable dairy sectors and meet local, national and international demand for high quality U.S. dairy products.

Ms. STABENOW. I am happy to assist dairy farmers in their efforts and will contact the Secretary to ask that he take action on a prehearing request.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today, I will vote nay on the Agricultural Act of 2014, also known as the farm bill.

Florida's economy and the livelihoods of many family-owned businesses and workers rely on a vibrant agricultural industry. Unfortunately, this farm bill goes far beyond agricultural

programs and includes antipoverty programs and renewable energy programs, among other spending measures that total nearly $1 trillion.

With Washington facing a $17 trillion debt and another debt ceiling increase in a few weeks, this bill does not undertake any fundamental reforms to ensure every taxpayer dollar is being properly spent to secure our Nation's food supply instead of needlessly growing government or continuing the status quo on programs that need reform.

For example, Food Stamp Programs are an important part of our safety net, but we should have a separate debate on these and other antipoverty programs with the goal of empowering States to better design these programs to help their people escape poverty.

While energy innovation is an important debate and will be a key economic growth driver in the 21st century, we should be discussing renewable energy and biofuels programs in the context of energy policy, not lumping them in to this bill that is supposed to be about securing our Nation's food supply.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today we will pass the final conference report for the farm bill, called the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. This important bipartisan bill protects jobs and identifies new reforms that will ensure the long-term success of our Nation's agricultural industry. I would like to thank Chairman STABENOW for her leadership and commitment to getting this bill passed. In addition, I would like to thank Senator COCHRAN for his work on this bipartisan bill.

The U.S. citrus industry is facing a devastating disease called greening, for which we know no cure and which kills the citrus tree within 5 years. The disease is spread by an insect called the Asian citrus psyllid. Citrus greening spreads quickly and, because of its dormancy period, has often already destroyed surrounding groves once it has been discovered.

In a 2012 report, University of Florida researchers found that the disease cost Florida's economy $4.5 billion and 8,000 jobs between 2006 and 2012. Florida was ground zero, but the disease is spreading to every citrus-producing State, including Texas, California, and Arizona. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has already affirmed this emergency with the citrus quarantine for Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Mississippi as well as parts of California, South Carolina, and Arizona in October 2012. If we don't do something, soon we won't have a domestic citrus industry.

The farm bill sets up a new research initiative especially for the citrus industry within the existing Special Crop Research Initiative, which is called the Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program. The primary goal of this program is to help fund research to find a cure to citrus greening and save the U.S. citrus industry.

The new Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program will ensure the close collaboration between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the citrus industry stakeholders, and the relevant entities engaged in scientific research under this program. The farm bill directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture to consult closely and regularly with the industry stakeholders in the formulation, consideration, and approval of research projects and grants performed under this program and will give great weight to input from these stakeholders. This close coordination will ensure the research program will advance the research for citrus greening and other threats to the U.S. citrus industry.

Because of the devastating nature of the citrus greening disease, I worked to make sure the citrus program established guaranteed funding in the farm bill. Senator STABENOW agreed and worked with other members of the farm bill conference to include $125 million in mandatory funding for the citrus research program. Money in this grant program will go toward scientific research aimed at addressing diseases, domestic and invasive pests, and other challenges to the U.S. citrus industry, helping to also disseminate the research findings to growers.

In this age of economic uncertainty, Congress should be doing everything it can to improve our economic situation. In this case, we are doing just that by saving an industry that is vital to not only Florida's economy but to Texas, California, Louisiana, Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, and the Nation as a whole.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, while this is far from a perfect bill, I am pleased that the Senate will pass the Agriculture Act of 2014. This legislation—a result of more than 2 years of deliberation—reaches a compromise that protects small farmers, fights hunger, and saves taxpayers more than $16 billion.

I thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Ranking Member COCHRAN, along with leaders in the House of Representatives, for their hard work in reaching this agreement.

This year's farm bill makes targeted investments in our Nation's agricultural and nutrition sectors while eliminating some of the wasteful subsidies that cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The bill supports our rural economies and helps protect our farmland and forests for generations to come. And it makes historic investments in fruit and vegetable farming and in organic agriculture.

During negotiations on this bill, I worked with Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator LEAHY to ensure that new dairy programs will adequately protect New Hampshire's small farms, which are struggling to deal with high feed costs and volatility in milk prices. I am hopeful that the new dairy program will provide stability for New Hampshire's dairies and create an environment in which these family-owned businesses that are so important to our State's economy can grow and thrive.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report includes language nearly identical to my bipartisan legislation, the Oilheat Efficiency, Renewable Fuel Research and Jobs Training Act.

This important provision will reauthorize the widely supported National Oilheat Research Alliance, NORA, the oilheat industry's national program for research and development, consumer education and technical training. It will allow the industry to continue funding vital national oilheat efforts for 5 years—at no cost to local, State or Federal governments.

Consumers will benefit from the development of improved and efficient equipment, increased safety through technical training, and the availability of up-to-date information regarding safety practices and fuel conservation. Importantly, these objectives will be achieved without raising consumer costs. NORA provides a direct path for responsible, domestically produced and efficient energy consumption without raising consumer costs. Its inclusion in the farm bill is good for consumers, American businesses, and the environment and will provide tangible value for the country for many years to come.

I also thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator WYDEN for working with me to preserve the Environmental Protection Agency's treatment of regulating forest roads as nonpoint sources through State-adopted best-management practices. This approach will allow for the continued sustainable development of working forests in New Hampshire.

In New Hampshire, more than 100,000 people rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program each month to keep from going hungry. The farm bill reauthorizes SNAP and other critical programs that help millions of American families put food on the table. The bill also contains important reforms that will provide food for our Nation's food banks and improve low-income Americans' access to fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods.

The legislation also improves consumer access to local foods with increased funding for farmers' markets. In recent years, interest in supporting local agriculture has grown significantly. New Hampshire currently has more than 70 farmers markets across the State, with nearly 30 open through the winter. Americans want to know where their food comes from, and farmers want to be able to sell their products in their communities.

The farm bill significantly increases funding for programs that support small and beginning farmers, including greater support for grant programs that enable small farmers to invest in improving the value of their products.

One dairy farmer from Landaff, NH, accessed these programs to help her grow her cheese-making business. Because of the grant, she was able to hire two full-time employees and several

part-time employees, and her second-generation farm now sells award-winning cheeses in stores and restaurants around the country. These are the kind of job-creating investments we need to be making in rural America.

However, while the legislation implements some reforms to subsidy programs that will save taxpayer dollars, it does not go far enough in cutting wasteful spending.

Senator MCCAIN and I worked to repeal a duplicative catfish inspection program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which has already cost taxpayers $20 million over the past 5 years and has yet to inspect a single fish. Unfortunately, this bill does nothing to end this unnecessary and wasteful program.

I am also disappointed that this bill continues the Federal Sugar Program with no changes. Taxpayers were forced to pay nearly $300 million last year to bail out the sugar industry, in addition to the $14 billion this wasteful program has cost consumers and businesses over the past 5 years. The high price supports and strict trade restrictions continued with no reform in this bill will ensure that sugar remains the most tightly controlled commodity in America.

This bill also continues the wasteful practice of providing subsidies to large and wealthy farm businesses with no meaningful payment limits. Some programs in the bill will allow huge farming operations to receive unlimited subsidies, and the new crop insurance program includes no individual caps or means testing requirements.

The Senate-passed bill would have reduced subsidy payments for the wealthiest farmers, but this provision was removed from the final conference report. And there was no consideration of implementing a provision I offered with Senator TOOMEY to place a reasonable cap on crop insurance subsidies that would have saved taxpayers $3.4 billion over the next 10 years.

As we confront our Federal debt and deficit and as millions of families across the country are tightening their belts, we cannot justify unlimited subsidies for wealthy farmers and giant agribusinesses.

While I will continue working to end wasteful farm bill programs and protect taxpayers, I support this legislation because it supports New Hampshire farmers and our State's rural communities, reduces the deficit, invests in healthy foods, and helps prevent low-income Americans from going hungry.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, reauthorization of the farm bill presented an opportunity to make much needed changes in our agriculture policy to rein in taxpayer subsidies for big agribusiness, support the growth of small farms and local food systems, and ensure that our constituents in need do not go hungry. Unfortunately, despite the extraordinary efforts of Chairwoman STABENOW, the reforms included in the bill before us today fall much too short.

Most troubling is that the bill cuts more than $8 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. I cannot support reducing hunger assistance for the most vulnerable Americans while creating new crop insurance programs, increasing crop insurance spending by $5.7 billion, and continuing to subsidize the wealthiest farmers. As such, I will oppose this bill.

The nutrition cuts are particularly challenging in my State, where roughly 1 in 6 Rhode Islanders receive SNAP benefits—a reflection of the challenging economic times in our State, where the unemployment rate remains above 9 percent, the highest in the country. According to a survey by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than 15 percent of Rhode Islanders are food insecure, meaning they do not always know where they will find their next meal and thus are at risk of hunger. And this number has grown over the last 5 years, from 58,000 households to more than 66,500 today. Many local food banks like the Rhode Island Community Food Bank—are struggling to keep pace as the need for food assistance grows. The SNAP cuts in this bill cannot be easily made up by food banks and other charitable organizations even with increased funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

While the conference agreement does not include the far more damaging policy changes proposed by the House, it will reduce benefits for about 850,000 low-income households by an average of $90 a month, according to the Congressional Budget Office. This is on top of the across-the-board cut that hit all SNAP households last November when the benefit boost under the 2009 Recovery Act expired. When these cuts went into effect, families of 4 lost an average of $36 a month, while single-person households lost an average of $11. Without the Recovery Act boost, SNAP benefits will average less than $1.40 per person per meal in 2014. Now we are asking some of our most vulnerable constituents to get by with even less—all while growing the safety net for the wealthiest farmers and the crop insurance industry. This is unacceptable.

As I noted, these remain trying economic times, with many Americans still struggling to find work or working low-wage jobs that do not provide the resources necessary to meet basic needs like food. This is not the time to cut a lifeline benefit like SNAP. I am deeply disappointed that some of the savings generated in this bill were not reinvested into SNAP to help meet the need for food assistance across this country.

Unfortunately, the conference agreement also maintains the duplicative USDA catfish program—a program that both the House and the Senate have voted to repeal, the Government Accountability Office has called wasteful, and the administration proposed defunding in its fiscal year 2014 budget. This program would require seafood processors to comply with USDA regulations for catfish while the FDA would continue to oversee inspections for all other seafood. According to the GAO, repealing this program would avoid duplication of Federal programs and save taxpayers millions of dollars annually. We should be finding ways to make government processes more efficient, not less.

While I am unable to support the conference report because of the deep cuts to SNAP and inadequate reforms to crop insurance and farm subsidy payments, I would like to acknowledge several provisions in this bill, including several that will support the development of local and regional food systems and improve the affordability of and access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income families. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes many measures from a bill that I cosponsored, Senator BROWN's Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act, that will increase funding for specialty crop block grants to support research and promotion of fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops. Another measure is the enhancement of the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program to aid direct producer-to-consumer marketing channels and local food sales to retailers and institutions.

The bill also allows Community Supported Agriculture operations to redeem SNAP benefits and creates Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grants, providing $100 million over 5 years for a national pilot to incentivize the purchase of fruits and vegetables at farmers markets by SNAP participants. A similar program has already been successfully implemented in Rhode Island. Farm Fresh Rhode Island runs the ''Bonus Bucks'' program where every $5 in SNAP benefits spent at a farmers market allows low-income individuals to receive an additional $2 to spend on fresh vegetables, fruit, eggs, fish, meats, and cheeses produced by local farmers and fishermen. Within the first year that ''Bonus Bucks'' was implemented, Farm Fresh Rhode Island saw a 675 percent increase in the amount of SNAP spent at their markets. In 2013, 22 Rhode Island farmers markets up from 8 in 2008, have booths that can accept EBT cards.

It is exciting to see the ingenuity of our States replicated at the national level in ways to help ensure that low-income families have access to nutritious local foods. These types of programs also help grow local food economies by encouraging purchases from local producers. A win-win.

The bill also makes several changes to enhance and promote conservation. Requiring farmers to comply with conservation practices in order to receive taxpayer-supported subsidies on crop insurance will help further the conservation of natural resources and ensure that our farmers remain good stewards of the land.

Thankfully, the conferees rejected a harmful amendment included in the

House bill that would have had far-reaching consequences by prohibiting States from regulating agricultural products within their jurisdiction. This bill also makes it a federal crime to attend or bring a child under the age of 16 to an animal fighting event—a slightly modified version of a bill I cosponsored that was introduced by Senator BLUMENTHAL.

The conference report also includes legislation to reauthorize the National Oilheat Research Alliance, NORA. I have cosponsored bills to reauthorize this program during the last several Congresses and am glad it will now become law. NORA seeks to strengthen and improve the oil heating industry through education and training and improving home heating efficiency. With more than 1 in 3 Rhode Islanders dependent on fuel oil to heat their homes this winter and heating oil prices on the rise, it is important to reauthorize NORA.

While Chairwoman STABENOW's efforts helped to ensure some positive provisions and reforms, the bill simply does not go far enough. It wisely eliminates direct payments but restores some of those cuts by creating new crop insurance programs, while not going far enough to limit commodity and crop insurance subsidy payouts. The bill does not even include an amendment that I cosponsored and was passed in the Senate to set income limitations for crop insurance making a very modest 5 percent reduction for farmers making over $750,000 annually.

We must do more to ensure that farm subsidies are available to the small and medium-sized farms that need it most and rein in the taxpayer subsidies to large, wealthy farming operations. And we certainly should not be paying for expensive farm programs by cutting SNAP, thereby placing additional burdens on those who are struggling to make ends meet.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of the bipartisan farm bill conference agreement before us today. This 5 year bill provides certainty to both the producer and the consumer. It's a jobs bill supporting 16 million jobs across the Nation. It also is a reform bill that cracks down on fraud and abuse and ends direct payments.

Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Maryland. We have 12,800 farms and 350,000 Marylanders employed in the industry. Poultry is Maryland's largest agricultural industry followed by nursery grown plants and dairy.

Maryland's Eastern Shore is home to a $1.4 billion poultry industry responsible for over 5,000 jobs. There are nearly 1,000 chicken farms and three processing plants. In fact, one in seven jobs on the Eastern Shore is poultry related.

For poultry growers, this bill continues the supplemental agriculture insurance assistance which provides disaster aid. This program lapsed in 2011, and this bill makes the program retroactive to 2012. This means Maryland's chicken farmers will continue to get disaster payments. The bill also continues to allow farm operating loans for poultry growers who do not qualify for operating credit at other lenders.

This farm bill requires country-of-origin labeling, which I have long supported. Every consumer has the right to know where their food comes from on their dinner table. I acknowledge there are some in the poultry industry that oppose these requirements. I think it is the right thing to do.

For Maryland's 500 dairy farms, the bill creates two new price and income support programs. The Dairy Production Margin Protection Program takes into consideration the high price of feed costs. This is a first for dairy programs and a win for dairy farmers struggling to survive with escalating variable and fixed operation costs. The premium cost to participate in this program will be very low for Maryland's small dairy farmers. The Dairy Production Donation Program will guarantee a profit for dairy farmers when the market becomes over saturated.

This legislation is important to the Chesapeake Bay conservation efforts. It includes the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, a new competitive program. The bill provides $100 million annually for this program. The Bay Watershed will compete with eight other regions for these critical conservation dollars. This bill also ties farmers' conservation compliance to crop insurance. This means if your land is not compliant, you will not receive a premium subsidy.

For sugar producers and refineries, the bill continues the existing Sugar Program. The U.S. Sugar Program supports over 140,000 American jobs, including 500 jobs at Domino Sugar located at the Port of Baltimore. Significant reforms to this program will put these jobs at risk and they may be shipped overseas.

This bill helps Maryland's growing specialty crop and organic farmers by gradually increasing specialty crops block grants from $55 million a year in 2014 to $85 million in 2018. Maryland receives more than $1.7 million from this program. The bill also increases organic research funding to assist farmers transitioning to organics.

The bill makes modest reforms to the food aid program following a similar path as the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. I support the reforms in the bill and believe this is another step in the right direction to allow more locally purchased food.

Finally, I would like to address food stamps, now called SNAP. I am for food stamps and always will be. We have approximately 800,000 Marylanders receiving food stamp benefits. In November, I visited the Maryland Food Bank with my House Democratic colleagues. We announced that we were standing up for SNAP and opposing the House's harmful cuts to the program.

During my visit, I met Tracey Coleman, a hard-working Marylander whose husband was laid off through no fault of his own when the steel plant in Baltimore closed last year. Tracey has three kids, including a daughter with special needs. She shouldn't have to choose between her son's asthma medication and a family meal. Tracey had nowhere else to turn. She signed up for SNAP benefits to keep food on the dinner table for her family.

I personally thank Senator STABENOW for working so hard to protect SNAP families in this bill. She fought off the House Republicans that wanted to gut the program, cutting $40 billion from SNAP and axing SNAP benefits for 4 million people, including putting 77,000 Marylanders at risk. I am happy to report no American will lose their benefits under this bill—not one. Most important to me, no Marylander will see their benefits reduced from the reforms in this bill.

I know some of my colleagues are going to vote against the bill because of the changes to the standard utility allowance calculation that will reduce benefits for their constituents. I understand. But what we all have to understand is that a compromise is a compromise and Senator STABENOW fended off the worst. I was recently in her shoes negotiating the appropriations bill with the House. It is tough.

I commend Senators STABENOW and COCHRAN for their hard work on this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support this bill. It is good news for American farmers and consumers.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today I will support final passage of the conference report of the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. The conference report is particularly important to my home State of Michigan, where agriculture, the State's second-largest industry, supports one in four jobs.

While the legislation presented contains many laudable provisions, I am deeply disappointed that the final conference report includes cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP. SNAP benefits provide nutrition assistance to millions of families. It is distressing that we are reducing food stamp support for those families.

While I oppose the SNAP cuts, the positives of this legislation are important enough that it deserves support. I applaud the work of my colleague from Michigan, Senator STABENOW, whose leadership as the chair of the Agriculture Committee helped craft this important compromise. This legislation makes critical reforms, reduces our deficit, and brings certainty to farmers and business owners.

This legislation is more than just a farm bill. This legislation covers conservation, nutrition assistance, crop insurance, international food aid, forestry and so much more.

This legislation makes significant modifications to help farmers better manage their risk by eliminating direct payments to farmers and replacing

it with two new risk management programs. This will ensure farmers receive support only when there is a drop in farmers' income. This legislation also creates a new and voluntary insurance program to protect dairy farmers from losses. It also includes valuable reforms to disaster assistance. Of note is the creation of a permanent livestock disaster assistance program and retroactive coverage for orchardists and nursery growers who have recently been affected by droughts and winter storms.

Importantly, this legislation also strengthens agriculture research programs, such as the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. This investment in specialty crops is vital to Michigan, which leads the nation in growing a wide variety of specialty crops including tart cherries, blueberries, cucumbers, dry black and red beans, and cranberries.

I am pleased the conference agreement retains important conservation provisions that will help protect our water and air quality, restore fish and wildlife habitat, and improve flood control. The agreement consolidates 23 existing conservation programs into 13 programs which should streamline implementation. Further, conservation compliance is tied to crop insurance, which should ensure that basic conservation practices are implemented more broadly. Conservation provisions in the farm bill will help prevent soil erosion, reduce water runoff and pollution, and shift production away from sensitive lands. In addition, the conference agreement retains the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which should benefit Great Lakes water quality and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

The bill also includes a 1-year extension of the Payments in Lieu of Taxes—PILT—Program, which provides funding to rural communities to help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries. Each year, Michigan typically receives about $2.5 million under PILT, funding that is vital for providing essential services such as education, law enforcement, and emergency response.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I too rise to speak on the farm bill.

Similar to many Nebraskans, I am relieved that a final conference agreement has been reached and will provide much needed certainty for both producers and consumers. This legislation accomplishes a great deal. It provides risk management and disaster assistance programs. It promotes environmental stewardship. It bolsters export opportunities. It encourages rural development, advances research, helps beginning farmers and ranchers, and delivers nutrition assistance to our needy families.

While the bill is not perfect, it is the result of compromise and a long collaborative legislative process.

One of the most challenging issues for lawmakers was addressing nutrition assistance programs, which comprise 80 percent of the farm bill's total spending. With one in every seven Americans receiving supplemental nutrition assistance, it is important to strengthen the program's integrity and its accountability, while better targeting programs to serve those in need.

I am also pleased the bill empowers States to help capable adults enroll in work programs to reduce reliance on taxpayer assistance. The bill provides tools to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse, including cracking down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.

While these are all steps in the right direction, it is disappointing that the bill will not achieve additional savings from nutrition programs, which are projected to cost more than $756 billion over the next decade.

True farm programs—the commodity programs and crop insurance—only comprise about 14 percent of all of the farm bill spending, but they account for more than half of the savings under this proposed bill. In fact, the commodity title contributes more savings than any other title in the entire farm bill.

The legislation makes significant reforms to farm policy. Direct payments are repealed and replaced with risk management that offers protection only when warranted by significant price or revenue declines. In Nebraska, agriculture is our No. 1 industry, and it is one of which we are very proud. Our farmers and ranchers take on an enormous amount of risk. They endure the elements every day as they work to feed the world and responsibly take care of our natural resources.

I am pleased this farm bill maintains and strengthens one of the most important risk management tools for our farmers, and that is crop insurance. This is a very successful public-private partnership that helps farmers invest in their own risk management by purchasing insurance policies so they are protected from adverse weather or market conditions.

This legislation also provides needed disaster assistance to livestock producers. Unfortunately, the Livestock Forage Program and the Livestock Indemnity Program both expired in 2011 under the last farm bill. In 2012, livestock producers experienced the most devastating loss of pasture, rangeland, and forage in decades due to widespread drought, affecting approximately 80 percent of our country.

Then, in October of 2013, an unexpected early fall blizzard killed more than 20,000 cattle, sheep, horses, and bison in the Dakotas and in my State of Nebraska. While those affected by these hardships have been without assistance for more than 2 years, this farm bill will now help producers to rebuild those herds and sustain their ranching operations.

I also appreciate that this farm bill continues our commitment to strong conservation programs. The bill consolidates and streamlines those programs, providing landowners with incentives and assistance to protect and improve our land, our water, and our air.

Agriculture continues to be a bright spot for U.S. trade, thanks in part to the successful export promotion programs, and those are reauthorized in this bill as well. An independent study conducted for USDA in 2010 found that for every dollar expended by government and industry on market development, U.S. food and agricultural exports increased by $35. Through the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program, we can expect increased demand for U.S.-grown agricultural products and commodities.

This farm bill also continues investment in rural development, providing assistance to communities to build that very critical infrastructure and access to credit to help grow small businesses.

Also supported by this farm bill are critical agricultural research initiatives which allow American producers to innovate, to become more efficient and productive with fewer and fewer resources. Moreover, the bill also provides support for developing technologies that reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Finally, this bill provides some needed regulatory relief for the agricultural industry. I am very pleased the bill includes an amendment I offered to fix bureaucratic hurdles impacting farmers' access to seeds. This bipartisan amendment, cosponsored by Senator CARPER, ensures that EPA does not treat biotech seeds as pesticides when those shipments are imported.

I was disappointed, though, that the conference did not include language to address one of the worst regulatory challenges confronting farmers: EPA's overregulation of on-farm fuel storage under its Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Program.

The House farm bill included an SPCC relief provision, and the Senate unanimously passed a similar amendment which I cosponsored to reduce farmers' SPCC compliance burdens during consideration of the Water Resources Development Act. There is bipartisan agreement on both sides of the dome that this regulation needs to be fixed. The farm bill did provide the perfect opportunity for getting this relief enacted into law, but that chance was missed. However, I stand ready to work with my colleagues to ensure we don't miss another opportunity to address this issue—to fix this issue—and we can do that during the WRDA conference.

As I said, this bill is not perfect, but on balance this farm bill goes a long way in promoting opportunity and providing certainty for both producers and consumers. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the final passage of the farm bill.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor for the third time to express my opposition to the farm bill—obviously not in total, but to certain provisions of it, particularly provisions I had a hand in writing—and to set the record straight, once again.

I come here because several of my colleagues have approached me indicating confusion on whether the payment limits provisions I fought for are in this bill or not in this bill. People are going to tell colleagues there are payment limitations in this bill, but I am here to set the record straight with facts. They don't accomplish what I tried to accomplish, and they are even much more liberal than in existing law in regard to my amendment.

My original payment limit provisions included a $50,000 individual/$100,000 married couple cap for the shallow loss programs shown as Price Loss Coverage—PLC—and the Agricultural Risk Coverage—ARC—programs. In this bill farmers will have to pick one of those programs for the next 5 years.

The conference report allows individual farmers to get $125,000 and married couples to get $250,000 from the PLC and the ARC programs.

This is where this has really exploded because what I just referenced is a 150-percent increase over what my limits allowed—the limits that passed the Senate without discussion and limits adopted in the House of Representatives on a 230-to-194 vote. That is just a plain, simple fact—a 150-percent increase over what my limits allowed. The conference report allows the PLC and ARC programs to pay out 150 percent more than my limits did.

This intentional change by the conference committee allows each farmer to get significantly more from these new countercyclical programs that are not even World Trade Organization—or, as we say around here, WTO—compliant.

Another way of looking at this, under the 2008 farm bill, an individual farmer could only get $65,000 from the countercyclical program. Under this bill, they can get $125,000 from the countercyclical program. That means they almost doubled what the countercyclical program will pay out compared to current law.

Furthermore, some university analysis has already shown the high target prices for certain crops in this bill will likely have a 70- to 80-percent chance of triggering payments through the PLC program any given year of this farm bill.

So, I say to my colleagues, please don't buy what my opponents are selling on this issue, or at least trying to sell. My payment limits are not in this bill. The result of that is going to be a countercyclical program that will be much more market-distorting than the current ones for a few crops. How can it not be more distorting? The PLC program is designed to trigger more often and pay out larger amounts than the old countercyclical program for certain crops in the 2008 farm bill.

That is just a plain, simple fact. I am sorry if proponents are having a tough time acknowledging that publicly, but that is what this bill actually does. Their bill does lots of things, but brilliantly reforming Title I is not one of them.

I am sure we have been told that this bill reforms. It is like some of the opponents of payment limits still thinking this is 1975 or some year back then. Back then, the national debt was still measured in billions and the WTO didn't even exist. Unfortunately for them, things are very different today. Recently, the WTO declared our cotton program noncompliant, and we happen to have a $17 trillion national debt. But worse than this, I say to my colleagues, is the fact that these amendments were adopted on the floor of the Senate, and they were adopted in the House of Representatives by a 230-to-194 vote. They should not have even been subject to negotiations.

The moral authority of the people of the United States was behind what both Houses did. Because we have a $17 trillion national debt, we ought to be able to save this $387 million that this amendment would have saved. It had the moral authority of a majority of the House and the Senate, which moral authority should not have been overridden by a handful of people sitting in conference.

I stress this latter point for one simple reason: Rule XXVIII of the Senate says if things are the same in both Houses, they should not be conferenceable. I say this to my friends, not that this bill is going to go down to defeat and we start over again and maybe accomplish what I want to accomplish, but to make sure other conferences do not abuse the Senate rule like this conference abused the Senate rule; and also to tell my colleagues here that, both working with what rules maybe we can get through the U.S. Department of Agriculture or on some other piece of legislation, I intend to pursue these goals that I sought, and I intend to keep reminding my colleagues of Senate rules being violated by conferees that should not have been violated.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the many ways ObamaCare continues to negatively affect Americans.

Yesterday, the Washington Post published an article exposing yet another problem with healthcare.gov. I would like to share a couple of excerpts from that article. The article begins:

> Tens of thousands of people who discovered that HealthCare.gov made mistakes as they were signing up for a health plan are confronting a new roadblock: The government cannot yet fix the errors. Roughly 22,000 Americans have filed appeals with the government to try to get mistakes corrected. . . .

Those mistakes, according to the Post, include being overcharged for health insurance, being directed to the wrong insurance program or being wrongly denied coverage.

So what is the status of those appeals?

The Post reports:

> For now, the appeals are sitting, untouched, inside a government computer. And an unknown number of consumers who are trying to get help through less formal means—by calling the health-care marketplace directly—are told that HealthCare.gov's computer system is not yet allowing federal workers to go into enrollment records and change them. . . .

So let me summarize here. Mr. President, 22,000 Americans are either without insurance or are paying too much for insurance as a result of mistakes made by the Federal health exchange.

Healthcare.gov contains no appeals process. Attempts to find recourse by other means have been unsuccessful, and the administration's response is basically: Tough luck.

President Obama was interviewed by FOX News' Bill O'Reilly this weekend. One of the topics they covered was healthcare.gov's problems.

The President said:

> The goods news is that right away we decided how we're going to fix it. It got fixed within a month and a half. It was up and running, and now it's working the way it's supposed to. . . .

Let me repeat that The President of the United States said: '' . . . now it's working the way it's supposed to. . . .''

Well, tell that to the 22,000 people wondering why there is no appeals process on the Web site or why their paper appeals are stuck in a computer system at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, where, the Post says, the appeals process is currently stopped because ''the part of the computer system that would allow agency workers to read and handle appeals has not been built.''

When Bill O'Reilly asked President Obama about the Web site problems, the President responded by saying that—and I quote again—''I don't think anybody anticipated the degree of problems that you had on healthcare.gov.''

That is not an excuse. It was the President's job to ensure that people in the administration were anticipating the problems that would occur, and the President owes the American people an explanation of why he did not because this is not just a story of bureaucratic incompetence. It is the stories of the tens of thousands of individual Americans who are suffering as a result of the Web site glitches and who are wondering how they will afford their health care under ObamaCare—Americans like Addie Wilson, whose story is highlighted in the Post article.

Addie is a 27-year-old who makes just $22,000 a year. She was sure she would

qualify for a subsidy on the exchanges, and she was absolutely right. She did—only healthcare.gov did not tell her that.

So Addie phoned one of the call centers, which told her to sign up at the more expensive price she was quoted and to appeal the decision later.

Since her old insurance plan was on its way out and she needed surgery in January, that is what she did. Now she is stuck paying $100 more a month than she should be paying, along with a deductible that is $4,000 higher than it should be. That too-high of a deductible is of particular concern since she incurred huge hospital bills in January when she was forced to have surgery. If she does not get relief from the appeals process, she could end up paying $4,000 in medical bills that she should not have to pay and cannot afford.

But it is not just the Web site that is driving up Americans' medical bills—it is the law itself. As awful as Addie's situation is, at least maybe she will get help eventually. For millions of other Americans, their high deductibles are no mistake.

For too many Americans on and off the exchanges, the reality of the so-called Affordable Care Act has been a staggering increase in health care costs.

Some family plans on the exchanges carry deductibles of almost $13,000. That is more than some families will spend this year on their mortgage.

Upper-income families may be able to absorb these costs—and some limited help is available for lower-income families—but what middle-class family can afford $13,000 a year in medical costs?

Too many families around the country will be putting on hold their plans to buy a home or send their kids to college because they have to devote every spare dollar to paying their health care bills.

On top of crippling cost hikes, many of these same families are facing the loss of doctors and hospitals, as insurance companies narrow their networks in response to ObamaCare's mandates.

So far I have only mentioned the personal devastation ObamaCare is causing. But ObamaCare is not just affecting families' pocketbooks; it is affecting the economy as a whole.

In response to ObamaCare's burdensome mandates and new taxes, businesses are cutting employees' hours, declining to hire new employees, and abandoning their plans to expand. That means fewer jobs available for the millions of Americans looking for work and fewer opportunities for career growth and advancement.

In fact, just this morning, there was a story in the Wall Street Journal, and it references the Congressional Budget Office report that estimates now that the impact of this law through the year 2024 will mean 2.5 million fewer jobs—2.5 million in job losses as a result of ObamaCare. It is so much so that you see many of the very labor unions that supported and wholeheartedly endorsed ObamaCare when it passed coming out now and saying ''[i]t would be a sad irony''—and I am quoting from a letter that went out from several of the labor unions—''[i]t would be a sad irony indeed if the signature legislative accomplishment of an Administration committed to reducing income inequality cut living standards for middle income and low wage workers.'' The letter also says that the ObamaCare law ''undermines fair marketplace competition'' and that they are ''bitterly disappointed.'' This comes from labor unions in this country that wholeheartedly endorsed this law when it passed several years ago.

The American people have endured 5 years of economic stagnation, and ObamaCare has been making things worse.

The President has called for 2014 to be a year of action, but I have seen no evidence that he plans to address the causes of our sluggish growth or provide relief for the millions of Americans struggling with crippling health care costs.

Republicans have a number of health care proposals, from comprehensive plans like that proposed by Senators COBURN, HATCH, and BURR, to commonsense ideas to lower costs by allowing businesses to pool together to negotiate lower rates, and by allowing insurance companies to sell health care plans across State lines to promote more competition and give people more choices.

If the President really wanted to make health care more affordable and accessible, he would abandon this government takeover of one-sixth of our economy and work with Republicans to pass real health care reform. But given the President's record, I am not holding my breath that is going to happen.

But at the very least—the very least—I hope the President will see his way to supporting bipartisan proposals to improve the economy and to open new jobs and opportunities to struggling Americans.

Just last Friday, the Obama State Department released its fifth environmental impact study on the Keystone XL Pipeline. Once again, the review found that the pipeline would have no significant impact on global carbon emissions. Senators and Representatives of both parties support this job-creating measure. It is high time for the President to approve the pipeline and open the 42,000 shovel-ready jobs it will support.

He should also pick up the phone that he keeps talking about to call the Senate majority leader to tell him to stop obstructing bipartisan trade promotion authority legislation that would help American farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and job creators gain access to a billion new consumers around the globe.

The President and the majority leader held a White House meeting yesterday, we are told, yet an aide reported that there was no discussion of the majority leader's antitrade comments last week.

Given this legislation's importance for increasing American jobs, it is difficult to understand why the President would not bring this bill up at that meeting.

Finally, the President of the United States also should join the vast bipartisan majority in the Senate that supports repeal of the job-killing ObamaCare medical device tax, which is forcing American companies to send jobs overseas.

The President will be visiting the Democrats' retreat tomorrow, which would be a prime opportunity for him to get on the same page with his party in support of these bipartisan measures.

Republicans are ready and willing to work with the President and with Democrats, and we hope we will have willing partners to do the things that are necessary to get people back to work, to create jobs, to grow our economy, and to help provide and build a better future for middle class families in this country.

The American people should not have to wait any longer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, once again, the President of the United States has failed to meet the statutory deadline to propose a budget. In fact, he has missed the deadline so many times that people hardly notice anymore. Failure seems to become the rule, not the exception. The President has now missed the budget deadline five times since he took office in 2009. By comparison, his three White House predecessors missed the deadline a total of four times in 20 years. Five times under President Obama; four times in the last 20 years under his three immediate predecessors.

All totaled, it is now the 18th time that the Obama administration has missed a legal deadline related to the Federal budget. I guess the President and his administration consider the law purely an advisory matter not binding on them. The law is for other people, not for this President and for his administration, seems to be their attitude.

The reason this is so important is because, as we all know—whether it a family budget or a budget for your business—setting a budget is where you establish your priorities: the things you have to have, the things you would like to have but maybe need to put off, and then those things you really cannot afford. That is how you budget. That is why it is so important.

But if your budget includes massive amounts of new spending, along with firm opposition to major reforms, you would have no choice but to ask for a huge tax increase. The President, I do not think, wants to put himself on record again, like he did last year, for

another huge tax increase, nor does he want his party's members, who are running for election in 2014, to have to cast the hard vote on the President's own budget.

Last year, his 2014 budget proposal would have raised taxes by roughly $1 trillion—a trillion-dollar tax increase. That is on top of the $1.7 trillion that taxes have gone up during the last 5 years under this administration.

It looks as if the President's priorities are more taxes, more spending, and more debt.

But if those sorts of priorities led to robust economic growth and job creation, we would see one of the strongest economic recoveries in American history. But the truth is more taxes, more spending, and more debt are not a recipe for economic growth and job creation—just the opposite.

We are seeing the evidence of that right now. We are suffering through the weakest economic recovery since the great recession in modern history. Actually, we are seeing the weakest economic recovery since the Great Depression right now. There are a lot of reasons, but the Congressional Budget Office has given us some reasons that I want to talk about just briefly.

They talk about ObamaCare and its impact on job growth and economic growth. As a matter of fact, the Affordable Care Act, the President's signature legislative accomplishment—the Congressional Budget Office said the number of full-time workers will go down by 2 million in the coming years as a result of the Affordable Care Act. So in addition to people getting cancelled policies or sticker shock and finding out that their health care costs did not go down, they went up, or finding if you like your doctors you cannot keep them, what we are finding is that these same people may find themselves out of work as a result of the policies in the Affordable Care Act.

The Congressional Budget Office looked primarily at how employers would respond to a new penalty for failing to offer insurance to employees who worked more than 30 hours. That response would include cutting people's hours, hiring fewer workers, and lowering wages for new jobs. I know my friends on the other side of the aisle agree with the President when he said we ought to raise the minimum wage.

Well, one of the problems is the President's own health care policy that they all voted for is killing full-time work and putting people in part-time work, meaning that their weekly wages have been depressed. For them the answer is not to deal with the source of that problem, which is ObamaCare, but to fix wages at 40 percent higher than they currently are per hour, which we know—economists tell us and it is intuitively true—is going to put more people out of work, put more pressure on workers.

Perhaps one of the most distressing things about the Congressional Budget Office's report today is what they said, what the prospects look like for the President's remaining term in office. The Congressional Budget Office does not see unemployment falling below 6 percent for the rest of President Obama's term—6 percent for the remainder of his term.

Yet, despite all of this, the President still will not get behind genuine progrowth reforms. He will not support genuine reforms of our existing programs such as Medicare and Social Security that would actually save them and put them on a fiscally sustainable path. He has no plan for controlling our national debt.

I went back and looked. Last time Congress came within one vote of passing a balanced budget amendment, do you know what the national debt was then? It was $4.85 trillion. Do you know what it is today? It is in excess of $17 trillion, with no end in sight. So the truth is Republicans have put forward ideas for streamlining Federal regulations, for mitigating the negative effects of the Affordable Care Act and for replacing ObamaCare with patient-centered reforms that would cut costs, broaden quality insurance coverage, and improve patient access. But so far, the majority leader and the President have shown zero interest in trying to work with Republicans to solve our Nation's most serious economic challenges, which are having a direct impact on the American people.

Instead, the President said he is going to go it alone. He has a pen; he has a phone. But as I have suggested before, one of the things he could do that would put Americans back to work almost immediately and make us more North American energy-independent would be to sign the Keystone XL Pipeline.

I know my time is expired. I ask unanimous consent that the three articles I was referring to on the CBO report be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 4, 2014]

CBO: HEALTH-CARE LAW WILL REDUCE JOBS BY TWO MILLION

(By Zachary A. Goldfarb and Sarah Kliff)

The Affordable Care Act will reduce the number of full-time workers by more than two million in coming years, congressional budget analysts said Tuesday in the most detailed analysis of the law's impact on jobs.

After obtaining coverage through the health law, some workers may forgo employment, while others may reduce hours, according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office. Low-wage workers are the most likely to drop out of the workforce as a result of the law, it said. The CB0 said the law's impact on jobs mostly would be felt after 2016.

The agency previously estimated that the economy would have 800,000 fewer jobs in 2021 as a result of the law. In that analysis, the CBO looked primarily at how employers would respond to a new penalty for failing to offer insurance to employees who work more than 30 hours a week. That response would include cutting people's hours, hiring fewer workers and lowering wages for new jobs.

On Tuesday, the agency released a more detailed estimate that includes how ordinary Americans would react to those changes by employers. Some would choose to keep Medicaid rather than take a job at reduced wages. Others, who typically do not work full-time, would delay returning to work in order to keep subsidies for private insurance that are provided under the law.

As a result, by 2021, the number of full-time positions would be reduced by 2.3 million, the agency said.

The reduction in employment from the health care law ''includes some people choosing not to work at all and other people choosing to work fewer hours than they would have in the absence of the law,'' the CBO said.

The law also estimated that the botched rollout of the health law's Web site may reduce the number of people who will sign up for coverage by 1 million through March 31, the CB0 estimated. Initially, the agency predicted 7 million would have signed up by then.

In its new analysis, the CBO said it had reduced its estimate of how many Americans would sign up for the insurance through the online marketplaces ''in light of technical problems that impeded many people's enrollment in exchanges in the first months of the open enrollment period.''

The CBO said that the program would catch up over time, with a total of 13 million Americans signing up in 2015 and 24 million by 2017.

Late last month, the Obama administration announced that about 3 million Americans had signed up for private health plans so far under the federal health exchange and separate exchanges that are being run by 14 states.

The administration and the CBO agree there should be a surge of sign-ups near the March deadline to apply for coverage in 2014.

The CBO estimated that 84 percent of the U.S. population would have health insurance in 2014, rising to 89 percent within a few years. Medicaid, the program for the poor expanded under the law, should add 6 million more people this year.

At the same time, the CB0 reported that the federal budget is rapidly shrinking and is projected to decline to $514 billion this year, providing fresh evidence that the problem that has been Washington's obsession for the past several years has become far less urgent.

Tax hikes, spending cuts and faster economic growth have helped close the deficit, which topped $1 trillion for several years following the onset of the Great Recession.

The budget deficit would equal 3 percent of the total size of the nation's economy this year—what many economists see as a healthy level. The deficit is expected to decrease to $478 billion next year, or 2.6 percent of the size of the economy.

One of the more troubling aspects of the CBO report was its assessment of long-term economic growth.

The CBO said that the economy will continue to enjoy a solid recovery for the next several years, but will slow to a pace of expansion of 2.2 percent a year from 2018 to 2024.

Much of the slowdown has to do with fewer workers active in the economy—mainly a result of baby boomers retiring.

The slow growth the economy will reduce taxes by $1.4 trillion of the next years, leading to a larger than expected deficit by 2024 $1.07 trillion, or 4 percent of the size of the economy.

The CBO said it would still take until 2017 for the unemployment rate, currently at 6.7 percent, to fall to 5.8 percent, and may not reach 5.5 percent until 2024.

Today, the agency said the economy is about six million jobs short of where it should be.

[From The Hill, Feb. 4, 2014]

CBO: O-CARE SLOWING GROWTH, CONTRIBUTING TO JOB LOSSES

The new healthcare law will slow economic growth over the next decade, costing the nation about 2.5 million jobs and contributing to a $1 trillion increase in projected deficits, the Congressional Budget Office said in a report released Tuesday.

The non-partisan group's report found that the healthcare law's negative effects on the economy will be ''substantially larger'' than what it had previously anticipated.

The CBO is now estimating that the law will reduce labor force compensation by 1 percent from 2017 to 2024, twice the reduction it previously had projected.

This will decrease the number of full-time equivalent jobs in 2021 by 2.3 million, it said. It had previously estimated the decrease would be 800,000.

It said this decrease would be caused partly be people leaving the workforce in response to lower jobs offered by employers, and increased insurance coverage through the healthcare law.

It also said employer penalties in the law will decrease wages, and that part-year workers will be slower to return to the work force because they will seek to retain ObamaCare insurance subsidies.

The healthcare law isn't the only reason the CBO is projecting slower economic growth between 2014 and 2023, however. It also cited inflation and lower productivity as reasons why it was lowering its projections.

The slower growth will mean less tax revenue, which will add to the deficit. Instead of adding $6.3 trillion in deficits from 2014 to 2023, the government will add $7.3 trillion, CBO now projects.

By 2023, the gross debt of the United States will be $26 trillion, up from a projected $25 trillion. A year later the debt will rise to $27 trillion as the $1.074 trillion deficit for fiscal 2024 is added in.

''Most of the increase in projected deficits results from lower projections for the growth of real GDP and for inflation, which have resulted in projected revenues between 2014 and 2023 by $1.4 trillion,'' CBO explained.

CBO now thinks the economy will grow at 3.1 percent in this fiscal year, which ends in October, rather than the 3.4 percent growth it predicted last year.

The unemployment rate is projected to fall to 6.7 percent by the end of the year, much lower than the 7.6 percent CBO saw for 2014 previously. The budget office does not see unemployment falling below 6 percent for the rest of President Obama's term, however.

In the near term, the CBO is projecting smaller deficits.

The budget office says that legislation enacted since last May has reduced deficits by $400 billion.

For 2014, the deficit is slated to be $514 billion, an improvement of $46 billion from last year's projection.

In 2015, the deficit falls to $478 billion. That is still higher than the last full year of the Bush administration when the deficit was $458 billion, but it is a steep drop from the $1 trillion deficits of most of the Obama years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in asking for the passage of the farm bill that we are going to have a vote on shortly. I thank my colleague from Michigan, the Chair of the Agriculture Committee, for her unbelievable work on this very important policy for America. I know she understands these issues well because, while everybody thinks of Michigan as a manufacturing State, it also is a very big agricultural State. We share a lot of the same crops, being kind of on a northern plateau: apples and wine and a variety of others. I certainly thank her for her help and support in getting an important new program in our school lunches for very nutritious peas and lentils, called pulse crops, and to thank her for her input.

I rise today to talk about the importance of the farm bill, because it is a jobs bill for our Nation. Two years ago I joined my colleague Senator JOHANNS from Nebraska and sent a bipartisan letter with 44 Senators saying it was time to act on the farm bill because we thought it was so important for our economy as we were still struggling coming out of a recession. Today it is finally here, that opportunity to put all of that hard work into a bill that goes to the President's desk.

Agriculture employs 16 million Americans, and it produces exports worth $115 billion of agricultural products to markets around the world. I do not think we always focus on that. A lot of times we come out here and we talk about the individual crops in our State or the individual focus. But what we really need to understand is it is a very big product for the United States.

We live in a very competitive global economy. One of the biggest advantages we have in this global economy is that we in the United States of America know how to grow things. So the emerging middle class around the world can now afford to eat higher quality products. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce CEO Tom Donohue put it best in a speech he gave about the global marketplace last year. He said:

You play to your strength. You leverage your advantages and then you find ways to improve them. And one of the greatest strengths in America is agriculture.

Mr. Donohue said those remarks as an example of what innovation is driving in American agriculture. He is absolutely right, because not only do we know how to grow things but we also know how to innovate. There is a lot of innovation going on in the ag economy. In fact, there are some people in the Pacific Northwest who say now there is as much investment going into new innovations in agriculture as there was recently in high tech or even green energy. So people get it. It is a great investment.

I have seen in Washington State cutting-edge research done at our lab in Prosser for new wheat rotation crops in the Palouse, to savvy entrepreneurs making connections like getting Washington cherries into the new Korean market. So simply put, this is a growing, growing opportunity for the U.S. economy.

American farmers and businesses are seeing demands for their products rise on two fronts: First, American consumers want to buy their products directly from the farms in their communities, so that means the farms are creating products for exactly what their end customer wants. Because they are doing that, they can make more money on delivering to the end customer exactly the kind of product they want.

Secondly, a rising middle class in places such as Asia to South America wants to use their new-found spending power on purchasing our products as well. So this farm bill helps on both of those fronts. Again, thanks to the chairwoman from Michigan. It helps get more goods to the market, whether that is a farmer's market around the corner from your local supermarket, or whether that is a new market in South Korea.

In 2030, China's middle class will have 1 billion people. That is up from 150 million today. India's middle class will grow by more than 800 percent. Maybe because we sit on the Pacific, just like the Presiding Officer, he knows how important it is to get products to those marketplaces.

In 2012, the United Nations reported that the world will need 70 percent more food by the middle of the century. This is a tremendous opportunity but only if Congress acts today and passes the farm bill. We need to maintain our investment in research and exports so American farmers can thrive and win in the expanding global marketplace. I am confident if we do that, our farmers and our businesses—and we make sure that they have a level playing—will win.

But other countries are playing for keeps too. Every farmer around the world wants access to that rising middle class. The European Union spent $700 million on export promotion for food products in 2011. That is nearly three times as much as America spent. China is planning to boost its agricultural investment over the next decade. It is a sentiment that I heard in October when I visited one of our wholesalers when he was talking to an overseas client. He was talking about export and agricultural leaders in Washington State and how other countries were starting to use particularly the apple market to try to open new opportunities.

That is why we need to increase opportunities within the farm bill and to move forward on trade deals that help open the door to new agricultural markets. That will help unleash an entrepreneurial spirit we need to be aggressive about. Many people have heard of Walla Walla—or maybe you have not or maybe you thought that was a term. But Walla Walla is a great community in the southeast corner of our State with 30,000 people. It is deeply tied to the global economy. It has wine and wheat and peas and lentils. The farmers there, I know, are very appreciative of the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. They thanked me many times for making sure that got passed. I can

tell you that many of those farmers went to Bogota to try to sell wheat to the growing Colombian middle class. That is what entrepreneurship in America is all about.

So Congress mist not dampen our entrepreneurial spirit. Farmers need to start this season and make sure they can put long-term plans in place. Then the seeds that will be planted, the fields that will be harvested, the crops that will be shipped, the smart, targeted investment toward those new international markets will be done. That is what this farm bill is about.

The bill, I can tell you, is a compromise. Again, I thank the chairwoman for her hard work, because I know how hard she worked on forging those compromises. I can tell you that it cuts SNAP far more than I would have cut it. I was one of 26 Senators who voted for the amendment by my colleague from New York offered to restore those cuts. But it is time we move forward.

I want to take a second to talk about three reasons why people should be for this farm bill. First, as I talked about, it continues to expand the export programs that are so important for America's new markets. While I might have been for a more robust program, some of my colleagues obviously have not quite understood why this is such a great benefit to market U.S. products around the globe. I think some people think of big global corporations and things; why do we need that?

Well, I can tell you, when I am talking about apples or cherries or pears, these are not big corporations. They are a collection of hundreds or thousands of farmers working together. When MAP helps target getting people in the Asian market to consume those products, it is a win-win situation for America.

Secondly, this bill funds research, making our crops stronger and healthier and more competitive.

Third, it starts initiatives on products such as a pulse crop that I think can be so beneficial to us over the long run with new, as I said, school lunches, but just healthier products.

Our new farm bill will do the research on specialty crops that are so important for us in the Pacific Northwest. This is the first time in this farm bill that the reauthorization makes long-term investments in specialty crop block grant programs and specialty crop research initiatives. Again, I thank the Senator from Michigan for her help on that, understanding how important these specialty crops are.

I think everybody in America and around the world knows the brand of Washington apples. I can tell you, I have been in the Chinese marketplace and seen how people took off the Washington label, particularly on Fuji apples, and tried to stick it on other apples, because they knew if that sticker was on that apple, everybody in China would consume those apples even though they were not really Washington Fuji.

So what this specialty research initiative does is say we are not going to let apples and pears and cherries basically constantly fall off the radar as it relates to research, but they will be a permanent part of a program for research and have a block grant program so they can basically continue to do the research that is needed.

Again, if any of my colleagues have ever had a chance to visit the research facilities within their State, they will know what I am talking about. If they haven't, they should go and do it.

But when we are fighting against or upon a competitive field with Israel, China, or anybody else when it comes to apples, we constantly have to answer questions about phytosanitary issues, and we have to constantly talk about ways we can make sure we gain access to those marketplaces. Science and research are the only ways we can fight some of these trade barriers that exist when our products can't get into those countries. So we need to make sure we continue to fight that.

Lastly, I am very pleased about pulse crops—peas, lentils, things like chickpeas. I am sure a lot of people ate a lot of hummus over the weekend while they were watching the Super Bowl and the Seattle Seahawks victory. Hummus is a crop that has exploded 500 percent in the last 15 years. It is definitely a product people have been consuming all over the world for a long time, but we in the United States are starting to consume more of it. The fact that product has had such a huge increase has given our farmers in Washington State great opportunity. But this product is also a very healthy product and one that we fought hard to make sure would be included in a new school lunch program, something where students could get access to a high-protein, high-fiber product that certainly is more affordable for our schools. With the research that is going to go on on pulse crop derivatives and the fact that school lunches are now going to have the opportunity to serve pulse crops more aggressively, we are very excited about this farm bill.

I thank my colleagues in the Senate, Senators CRAPO and RISCH. I also thank my colleagues from South Dakota and North Dakota for helping because both States are very big on these pulse crops. They certainly helped to make sure this stayed in the conference report.

To all of my colleagues, please vote for a bill that will really help our economy, will help us tackle the growing middle class around the world and keep America putting great products on those market shelves and help create more jobs in the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am proud of what we were able to accomplish in the nutrition title of the Farm Bill. It achieves important reforms in SNAP, but also protects food assistance for families, many of whom never dreamed that they would need help putting food on their table. We are adopting important reforms to clarify the law or rules in a few places where members had legitimate concerns. At the same time, and perhaps more importantly, we are rejecting many draconian proposals that would have caused serious harm to program participants by slashing benefits or kicking families off of SNAP, undermining the primary purpose and the basic framework of the program.

Let's start by reviewing some of the improvements we made to SNAP to address concerns around minor eligibility issues.

In Michigan, we discovered two lottery winners were continuing to receive benefits after winning a million dollars. In a program with 46 million participants, this really is an example of a very rare problem. Nevertheless, we want to make absolutely clear in federal law that individuals who win the lottery are not eligible for SNAP. So we tightened rules in a way to ensure that not even one lottery winner can get SNAP. But we also wanted to make sure that this prohibition does not result in a burdensome new requirement to ask all applicants and participants if they had recently won the lottery.

The provision requires that State SNAP agencies and local lotteries and gaming commissions set up data-sharing to ensure that the SNAP agency is informed when individuals win substantial sums of money. A SNAP agency can then take action to contact the winning participant and review their eligibility in light of these major winnings. I'm pleased that we managed to find a way to address this problem without imposing new requirements on the millions of struggling low income households who participate in this program. There is no need to put questions about the lottery or gambling on the application form, and we expect USDA to ensure that won't happen. In other words, this change allows us to use our data and technology to prevent this extremely rare event from happening again without putting new burdens on participants.

States will apply regular income and asset tests apply to lottery winners—if someone has winnings that make them ineligible, they can be disqualified from SNAP. But if that person paid off debts or was able to finally afford costly home repair or health care and now had income that made them eligible, they have every right to receive SNAP benefits.

Another area of eligibility that follows the same principle on implementation is eligibility for ex-offenders felons who are fleeing criminal justice. Current SNAP law prohibits people with criminal records who are fleeing from law enforcement or violating the terms of their parole from participating in SNAP. Because criminal law

is a complicated mix of federal and State statutes and definitions, members wanted to make very clear that people committing odious crimes would be ineligible for SNAP if they were fleeing or violating their parole. This does not apply to any convicted criminal who satisfies his or her debt to society by serving out the sentence and complying with any court order. So, it's a narrow group of people that we're highlighting. For that reason, we do not expect any changes to the SNAP application and eligibility process. Applicants are already asked about their fleeing felon status, so we expect that additional inquiries about applicants' criminal records will not be necessary.

We did include one provision that will result in a cut to SNAP benefits for some households. Some States have been providing as little as $1 in heating assistance for the sole purpose of qualifying recipients for higher benefit. While I agree that SNAP benefits are often insufficient to cover a family's food needs over the course of a month, the very structure of SNAP is meant to award benefits based on how much money a family has available to purchase food. Providing $1 in heating assistance skews benefits away from this income and expense based system. So the change we made means a SNAP recipient now must receive $20 in heating assistance to qualify for the Standard Utility Allowance. If you do not receive at least $20 in low income heating assistance, you will need to produce a utility bill. This is intended to make the energy assistance a real contribution to the actual expenses of a poor household. Congress never intended to permit households that don't have heating or cooling costs because they are included in rent or covered by the landlord to get a deduction as if they did have expenses. The law is ambiguous on this point, so this bill would clarify the issue.

When we decided to make this change, I insisted that we do it in a way that did not harm any household that had actual heating or cooling costs, including costs passed on by a landlord or shared with another family. That means we expect USDA to make three things a priority when overseeing State implementation of this change. One priority is that anyone currently getting this $1 in energy assistance must be given a chance to show whether they have energy costs of any kind. I think many of these households will have these costs and qualify for the deduction that raises their benefits. That's how the current program works in the majority of States that do not offer this minimal energy assistance. States must give households a chance to document actual costs. I expect USDA to provide guidance to States to ensure that reflects many different living scenarios that low-income households experience are taken into account when implementing this change.

The second priority for USDA is to make clear that this change should have no effect on anyone currently receive a more typical LIHEAP payment. We continue to support the connection between SNAP and LIHEAP and do not expect these changes to cause problems for the majority of people who rely on and receive LIHEAP, or are applying and are likely to receive it, in getting the SNAP utility deduction. I know this puts the burden on States to make sure their application process and benefit calculations are performed in a way that allows them to determine everyone eligible for the deduction based on receiving energy assistance. We expect households to be given the opportunity to attest to their participation in LIHEAP. Many States offer that option to households now, and we do not intend to change that. We expect that a State SNAP agency could certify that its State State does not provide LIHEAP payments of less than $20 per year. This would mean there is no need for households to provide information about the amount of LIHEAP they receive or the method or frequency of those payments. We expect the Secretary to monitor this change closely and help States come up with the least burdensome implementation options available. Because CBO did not assume any savings from reduced benefits in States that have not implemented this practice, we expect the Secretary to implement this change in a way that is consistent with the intent to not impact those States.

Although we did provide States the flexibility to phase in the provision for most participating households, I remain concerned that the timetable for implementation of these changes is short. For new applicants and households, the provision is effective just 30 days after enactment. Under SNAP regulations, States will be protected from being cited for errors during the first few months after enactment. However, low-income households do not have the same administrative protection. It is possible that they could receive higher benefits as a result of the State not being able to convert its systems quickly enough. I urge the Secretary to work with States to waive any household liability that results from receiving slightly higher benefits because States were unable to implement the provision in a timely manner.

Let me turn now to a significant outcome in the nutrition title. I am particularly pleased with the reforms that we have proposed to SNAP's employment and training program. A key element of that effort is a new demonstration project to test innovative strategies to help build individuals' skills and employability. The majority of adults enrolled in SNAP who can work do. Even more work just before or just after their participation in SNAP. Nevertheless, all of the conferees had a shared goal of exploring whether there were ways that SNAP could more affirmatively support SNAP participants' desire to work and improve their and their families' situation. We agreed to look for ways to help adults get the training, support and encouragement to find suitable employment. Of course, we had to do this in an environment with very constrained resources.

We worked on a package of ideas that would make better use of existing federal resources, provide modest new sums of money for SNAP employment and training and provided funding to test innovative new approaches. We wanted to be sure that by the time of the next reauthorization we would have a better sense of what kinds of services States were offering, what was producing results for families, and that USDA would have more capacity to oversee an employment and training effort.

The bill provides $200 million to for up to 10 State pilot projects that will test new strategies to support individuals to return to work, enhance their skills to improve their earnings, and address households' barriers to work. The pilot will operate within SNAP's employment and training program framework, but we have also expanded the types of activities that can be offered. Now States will have the option to include activities offered through the State's cash assistance as well as supportive services that are allowed under SNAP. States can use the funding to cover the mandated supportive services, such as child care, for participants in the pilot. Moreover they can test whether supportive services such as child care or transitional housing are appropriate interventions on their own. After all, a mother with safe, stable high quality child care is far more likely to be able to look for and maintain employment than one without such help. Similarly an individual with a place to live is far more likely to find and keep employment than someone without housing.

It was important to me to include unsubsidized employment as an allowable activity because that's ultimately what we want all job training participants to find. This required some careful consideration. Private employment is a different kind of activity than a class or program run and monitored by the State. States, very understandably, will have very limited ability to oversee private employment situations. So we wanted to ensure that the kinds of protections that exist in the private labor market, such as workplace protection laws, health and safety standards and wage and hour protections also apply to any private employment programs under SNAP employment and training programs. We also made clear that placements into unsubsidized employment cannot displace an existing worker at the employment site. That has long been the rule under other types of SNAP employment and training programs, and we expect the same here. I expect that USDA will issue comprehensive standards that incorporate all existing SNAP protections as well as the appropriate private employee protections such as the Fair

Labor Standards Act into the requirements for offering unsubsidized employment. Despite that responsibility, I hope USDA shares my excitement that including unsubsidized employment as an education and training activity is an unprecedented opportunity to support low-income individuals as they enter or rejoin the workforce.

I specifically focus on one challenge in offering unsubsidized work. The pilot projects will allow States to apply SNAP's sanction policy to any individual who is assigned a work activity, but willfully refuses, without good cause, to take an action that he or she could safely take. In the traditional education and training setting, it is usually—though not always—relatively straightforward to determine whether an individual has complied. Did the person participate in the required activity? If not, did the person have good cause, like sickness, not to do so? But in the unsubsidized work placement, it may be difficult to make the correct assessment when an individual does not meet the work requirement. The private employer may have reduced work hours or transferred the individual into a position for which they are clearly not qualified. Such action does not speak to the individual's willingness to work. Because of the inherent challenges in determining compliance with unsubsidized work activities, the pilot program requires clear evidence that an individual willfully refused to take a safe and proper action without good cause before the State can subject him or her to sanctions. I also encourage the Secretary to issue guidance about the very limited circumstances under which a person who is working could be sanctioned for losing his or her job. When someone who is working loses the job for reasons beyond their control, we want to ensure they are not doubly punished by losing SNAP benefits as well.

The only way we will know if the pilot projects are succeeding is if we have a high quality, longitudinal evaluation. So any State applying to conduct a pilot must also participate in a comprehensive evaluation to determine what works and what doesn't. We want to measure actual outcomes—employment and changes in earnings, as well as documented improvements in a participant's skills, training and experience, since successfully completing a job training program is not a guarantee of immediate employment. We also want to better understand how to ensure that the assessment of each job training participant helps match the individual with the training or support best suited for their needs. After all, if a job training volunteer really just needs help with child care or transportation in order to accept a job offer, we don't want that person assigned to job search or workfare. Assessment is already a requirement under federal rules. Gaining more insight into how a good assessment and assignment system can improve participant outcomes may be one of the most cost-effective lessons we can hope to gain from this effort.

This is an area where I want to thank my fellow conferees for all of their hard work. We came to the conference with very different ideas about what the issues facing the program and clients are, and what SNAP's approach towards promoting work out to be. We spent a tremendous amount of time educating ourselves about the issues, the opportunities and the risks of various approaches. I believe we ended up with a stronger program that encourages work without penalizing those who are willing to work but unable to find a job in this economy. The pilot program represents a true compromise and an important step forward in helping low-income Americans succeed in the labor market.

In addition to the pilot projects, the bill requires States to begin measuring actual individual-based outcomes from participating in job training. We directed USDA to compile and analyze this information so we can learn what kinds of services work best to provide SNAP participants with the skills and experience they need to find employment. Because matching an individual's employment needs to an appropriate program or service is critical to positive employment outcomes, this review should include a focus on the individualized assessment that is required of SNAP work registrants. As I mentioned earlier, this is an aspect of employment and training that is already required. Understanding individuals' needs and abilities is crucial to matching them to a job training or work program where they can succeed. That is the first important step in making future improvement in the program. We were very clear that successful outcomes can mean more than a full-time job placement. We expect that the State outcome data reflect this by including measures of improved employability, like educational attainment, credentials and work experience. We also expect USDA's analysis to acknowledge the reality that getting suitable employment may take more than the completion of a job training course. This admittedly increases the attention both USDA and the States must place on their education and training programs, but it will give us invaluable information about how best to meet the needs of SNAP participants.

Another area of the legislation where we made some important investments is enhancing USDA's efforts to combat fraud. The agency has done a remarkable job of identifying and preventing fraud and trafficking; even as household and retailer participation grew drastically, fraud remained at a historic low percentage. So we targeted every small area we could to improve the integrity of the program.

We've increased funding for USDA to address retailer fraud through data mining and expand State and federal partnerships to combat retailer fraud. Historically, States have pursued household fraud and USDA has dealt with retailer fraud. But, in some cases, the fraudulent activity involves both types of parties, so we're creating pilot projects to see how collaboration can help stretch resources. While States have done a good job with their responsibility to prevent and prosecute fraud, some States have developed troubling techniques that pressure innocent low-income households to admit wrongdoing. When USDA selects States to partner with, we intend that they prioritize States that have a record of addressing fraud through investigations, hearings and actual third-party findings of fraud. We urge USDA to take a close look at States that have a high number of disqualifications that come from client confessions in the absence of investigations. States that are ready to take on new responsibilities under the pilot must be those that ensure their disqualifications are in fact a result of documented fraud.

Another provision deals with a rare, but important, participant integrity issue. SNAP benefits are paid on a debit card we call Electronic Benefit Transfer or EBT cards. Clients use these at the grocery store to buy food just like any other consumer. Clients who lose their card can request replacements. That's an important customer service feature which ensures needy households don't lose the assistance they need. However, some households requesting multiple replacements may raise red flags. Multiple care replacements might be an indication that the household needs help in how to use the debit card. In other cases, multiple replacements could be an indication that an individual in the household is trying to sell the card.

The farm bill requires the household to provide an explanation when they request an excessive number of replacements in a given year. In order for this to be helpful in fighting fraud, rather than become a burden on innocent households that struggle to keep their cards, we added a set of protections that USDA must implement. After consultation with the Department, we expect they would consider it excessive if a household requested more than four replacement cards per year. USDA's own analysis indicates that fraud is only an issue when the requests are that frequent. Second, the provision requires that households be given the flexibility in how they want to provide their explanation. In particular, States may not require households to go to the local SNAP office or to be interviewed about their card loss. The goal was to avoid undue burdens on households, including those who are working, are homebound, or who may not have the means to travel to a SNAP office. This provision also does not empower the State to withhold household benefits based on the household's explanation. If the State questions the validity of the household's reason, we

encourage the State to pursue a fraud investigation. SNAP has processes in place already for program violations and we expect these processes to be followed. This provision does not expand or alter that authority.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that this process is not just a way to identify potential fraud; it's also a way to identify households that need help in using the benefits they are eligible for. There are many perfectly legitimate reasons to need a new card, and we intended that this integrity measure not entrap households that have done nothing wrong. That's why we require USDA to include specific protections for the homeless, people with disabilities and victims of crime. My colleague, Senator HARKIN, has led the way in championing the needs of people with disabilities and making clear that federal programs have an obligation to provide such individuals accommodation. We expect this provision to result in States' intensifying their efforts to identify and assist individuals who would benefit from more assistance.

SNAP retailers operate within a rapidly changing food retail environment. We've seen fundamental changes in the way food is sold since the last farm bill, so the conferees sought to make some changes in the way SNAP benefits can be redeemed. This farm bill will direct USDA to conduct pilots to test both mobile technologies, like smart phone apps, and online technologies. These pilots offer an exciting opportunity for farmers markets and other small retailers who find the point-of-sale EBT equipment to be too expensive or cumbersome. They also provide access to SNAP recipients that may have real physical or geographical challenges in getting to the store. But one of the risks of embracing new technology is that bad actors will find a way to defraud the program. So we included a set of protections, for both recipients and retailers, and expect USDA to carefully monitor the pilot programs for evidence of fraud. This may require USDA to develop standards of transparence and recordkeeping for mobile technologies that differ from those used in traditional brick-and-mortar stores. Most online retailers charge a fee for the delivery of food. For low-income SNAP participants, fees like that can really cut into their food budget. We were clear that SNAP benefits cannot be used to pay for any delivery fee or premium, and we required that the cost of food be the same as the in-the-store price, but we cannot prevent retailers from charging for delivery. So we urge USDA to pay special attention to these fees and be willing to deny participation to entities that cannot ensure that fees will be minimal. We also want USDA to assess whether fees undermine the ability of a household to afford an adequate diet with SNAP benefits.

Since we are moving towards adapting SNAP to emerging retail trends, I'd like to note what we did not do in this bill. First, we have not removed the requirement that SNAP households be treated the same as other customers. Whatever steps States and USDA take to modernize benefit redemption methods cannot result in overt identification of SNAP households, such as SNAP-only lanes in grocery stores.

Because technology continues to evolve, we included several provisions that have to do with ''data matches.'' Data matching is where the SNAP agency or eligibility worker can check information about SNAP participants' household circumstances with third party data bases. When done well, this is a cost effective means to test the veracity of client statements as well as to catch information that client may fail to provide the program. If done poorly, data matching can result in lots of confusing data matches that do not actually improve verification. We don't want States to undertake data matching for data matching's sake. The point is to empower States with good information at the right time to inform effective eligibility processing.

First, we include a provision to add federal standards for data exchanges to SNAP so that SNAP can more easily share data with other programs. This is a commonsense provision that will ensure that across the various State and federal programs, our systems can ''talk'' with one another other. SNAP law and the privacy act protects client's personal privacy and this authority does not change that obligation.

Second, we required States to use the Department of Health and Human Services' National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). This database primarily is for State child support agencies to learn information about the employment of noncustodial parents who live or work in other States and States currently have the option to use it for SNAP. By requiring its use at the time a household is certified for SNAP, we believe it can help States determine eligibility and the correct level of benefits. We do not, however, dictate how States must use the data.

Third, the bill codifies the existing State practice of verifying immigration status by using the Citizenship and Immigration Services database for immigrants' status through the federal Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements program. Currently in SNAP, States have the option to use SAVE and nearly every State currently does. The Food and Nutrition Act references SAVE and another database, the Income Eligibility Verification Systems, or IEVS, in the same place in the Social Security Act. I want to make clear that we are only mandating States use SAVE. We did not intend to change anything about how States use IEVS—use of that database would continue to be optional for States. Longstanding SNAP policy has required rigorous verification procedures, and IEVS is one of many ways to get information to ensure correct eligibility decisions.

We want States to have a plan for using the data available to them. The goal is not to require data matches that States know to be unhelpful, or where they determine it is not cost-effective to do so. Moreover, we are not pressing States to run afoul of simplified reporting and check these databases between reviews. In our last two farm bills, we took great pains to reduce needless paperwork burdens on States and households between certifications. These changes are not meant to override the framework of simplified reporting. Instead, States will use third-party data to make periodic reviews as accurate as efficiently possible while always providing participants the ability to challenge data matches they believe to be inaccurate.

The nutrition title also takes steps to ensure that federal funds used to inform Americans about the SNAP cannot be used in inappropriate ways. To be clear, USDA has done a fine and necessary job getting information about SNAP to low-income households that struggle to put food on the table. The program cannot be effective if those who may need it are unaware of its existence or believe they are not eligible. Moreover, outreach and program promotional materials can be helpful to improving program integrity. Applicants and clients who are informed about their responsibilities and educated about what the application process entails will be better prepared to complete the application and renew process. That's likely to increase program accuracy, reduce fraud and enhance overall efficiencies.

It's important that we provide low-income households with accurate information about the program, just as we do with Social Security or Medicare benefits. That's the only way that individuals can make the right choice for them about whether or not to apply. In this bill, Congress continues to support this kind of information sharing, while clarifying that aggressive recruitment, including recruitment outside of the United States, is not permissible. Recruitment is trying to persuade or convince someone who has made an informed decision not to apply to change his or her mind. That hasn't been a permissible activity, and the bill simply codifies that practice. Providing and producing positive information about the program and the benefits of applying or assisting households to navigate the complicated application process would still be permitted. We expect the agency will continue to provide necessary information while ensuring that education funds are used appropriately.

As I said at the start, this bill is not perfect. I much prefer to be discussing more ways we could better ensure SNAP benefits were adequate to help families have enough healthy food throughout the month. However, I continue to believe this farm bill protects SNAP, which is the best defense we have against hunger in our communities. We have continued the long tradition in the Agriculture Committee of

bipartisan support for the program. This was not an easy task, given how far apart the House and Senate were just a few months ago. This farm bill is an important step in dealing with the most important food and agricultural issues facing the nation today. I urge my colleagues to support it.

I understand we will recessing for lunch in a moment, but there are some very important people I would like to thank today. I wish to take this moment before we have the final vote to do so. I know, listening to other colleagues, as we come to major pieces of legislation, at the end they talk about the importance of their staff. I have come to realize just how powerful those words are. I have been blessed with an incredibly talented, hard-working staff. They are the reason we are here today talking about the Agricultural Act of 2014. Every single one of them should be very proud of their contribution, as I am proud of them.

This certainly starts with our staff director Chris Adamo. We have been on speed dial for so long, I am sure I will be doing that probably out of habit from now on, day and night. I appreciate his incredible leadership, tenacity, talent, and hard work. Chris deserves a tremendous amount of credit for leading us with his team. I thank him.

I also thank Joe Schultz, who is our chief economist. No matter what the problem, he seemed to make the numbers add up, whether it is the commodity title, crop insurance, or dairy. When at the very end it became very clear that after 3 years of hard work and passing a dairy policy, it wouldn't get the support of the House Republicans and we were going to have to rewrite it in a week and a half—which was no small thing—Joe continued to give us the right kind of advice. I am proud to say that we started with a commitment to have $23 billion in deficit reduction, counting our sequestration and spending cuts, and we have ended with $23 billion in deficit reduction and spending reductions in agriculture. Joe has been a huge reason why we have been able to get there.

I thank Jonathan Cordone, who is our chief counsel. He made sure we were right on the process and worked specifically on issues such as trust funds with many colleges and around the complex areas to help them to be able to meet the issues of their States. There were important issues, such as payment reforms and a number of legal issues. He has been an incredibly valuable and important member.

Russ Benham is our counsel on regulatory issues. Some of the trust fund issues we had to address related to regulatory issues and forestry issues. We are very proud that in this bill there is an agriculture advisory committee to the EPA, moving forward on rules. It is extremely significant to have the voice of agriculture involved with the EPA in a formal way. In this and so many other areas, Russ has been very instrumental.

To our conservation team, Tina May is amazing. She is going back to the USDA next week to help lead the implementation, which gives me confidence that this is really going to be done as we intended. Tina May's brilliance in strategy, negotiation, and commitment on these issues is unmatched. Her team is Kevin Norton and Hanna AbouElSeoud. The area of conservation is really landmark in reforms, protecting our land, water, conservation compliance, and setting real standards around strong conservation practices and in forestry as well. These are important areas that we have addressed in forestry and international food aid—America's opportunity to fulfill our values around the world and create more flexibility for us to help feed a hungry world.

Karla Thieman is also on speed dial. The very last phone calls I was making and emails before we wrote and finalized the conference report were with Karla and Chris. Our energy title is about jobs and about energy efficiency. I am so proud of what we were able to do; a landmark energy title; livestock disaster assistance, all of the areas that support livestock and, again, dairy. Karla was our lead on dairy. I think we may have finally stopped waking up in the middle of the night, dreaming about dairy policy. I am not sure, but we are getting there.

Cory Claussen led our efforts on farm credit and beginning farmers. I am so proud we have added our veterans to the support there. I thank him so much.

Brandon McBride—rural development, jobs, and quality of life in rural America. Brandon led our effort to make sure we were strengthening tools for businesses and local units of government and all of those who count on rural development; also research, a new research foundation and partnership, a real commitment to research in a way we have not seen before. I thank Brandon for leading that effort.

Of course, on nutrition, fruits and vegetables, Jacqlyn Schneider and Katie Naessens led an extremely complicated area. Jacqlyn had to negotiate some very difficult areas. I am proud to say that we rejected every harmful policy in the House bill. Because of Jacqlyn and Katie's efforts, we have a strengthened commitment to organics and farmers markets, fresh fruit and vegetables for our children's schools, and so many other areas in which we are beginning to change the paradigm about local food systems and strengthening opportunities for local markets for our farmers.

Grant Colvin has worked so hard on commodities as well as livestock and trade and, of course, exports. They are so very important to us. It is an area of real strength and jobs for our country. I thank Grant for all of his expertise.

As staff assistants, Alexis Stanczuk and Kyle Varner helped the entire team every step of the way. They have been there to help us on every single project, every single effort we needed help with. I thank Alexis and Kyle.

Jessie Williams and Nicole Hertenstein are clerks. Their entire team basically kept the whole thing together. They made sure we were doing the right thing on point. I thank Jessie, Nicole, and their team as well.

Finally, I would like to thank my personal staff.

Bill Sweeney, my chief of staff, has been with me in a multitude of different capacities—from telling the story on the floor with our charts to making sure we had a coordinated team between the Agriculture Committee staff and all of the talented people on my personal staff, as well as wonderful strategy advice. Bill, as my chief of staff, I am proud to say, has been invaluable in this process.

Matt VanKuiken, my legislative director, worked as a team every single step of the way.

Our press team, when we looked at telling the story of the new farm bill approach, Cullen Schwarz, Ben Becker, Alex Barriger, Will Eberle, and Matt Williams—they were telling this story and getting the facts out every step of the way.

My State team, led by my State director Teresa Plachetka, Kali Fox, Mary Judnich, Brandon Fewins, Korey Hall, Jeremy Hosking, and Adrian Walker—they made sure Michigan's voice was heard in every part of this bill, a tremendous amount of hard work. This bill is better, certainly, for Michigan as a result of all their efforts.

Kasey Gillette in Senator REID's office worked as our partner on everything.

Gary Myrick, Trish Engle, Tim Mitchell, and all of our floor staff—I thank them for all of their patience as we have passed this once, passed this twice, and finally we are going to pass the conference report this afternoon.

I also thank legislative counsel Michelle Johnson-Wieder and Gary Endicott.

I thank Senator COCHRAN's staff of T.A. Hawks and James Glick for their partnership and excellent work.

Finally, I thank Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack and the USDA. The technical expertise we have received on every single section has been absolutely invaluable. When it came to the final days on dairy, the Secretary played a very critical role in helping us get the compromise that will allow us to meet the goals and address farmers all over the country.

Last but not least, I thank the Congressional Budget Office, which we called on day and night. We appreciate their efforts.

I appreciate the patience of the Presiding Officer, who allowed me to speak at this time to make sure we had a chance to say thank you to a lot of folks who deserve, as usual, a tremendous amount of credit for getting this done. They are the folks behind the scenes who have made this happen. I am very proud of each and every one of them.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014—CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 20 minutes equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. If no time is yielded, time will be equally charged to both sides.

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, we have heard a lot from colleagues the last 2 days about just how important this farm bill is, and that is because there is so much more in this bill than what we would call a farm bill. It is really 12 different pieces of legislation, from farm to research, to fruits and vegetables, to energy across the board all put together in something we call the farm bill.

This is, most importantly, a major bipartisan jobs bill that makes sure the 16 million people who work in agriculture—from Michigan to Mississippi, to Minnesota, to Oklahoma, and everywhere in between—have the support they need.

This is an exports bill that will help expand opportunities for American agricultural exports, one of the few areas where our Nation maintains a healthy, robust trade surplus.

This is a research bill that will make a permanent long-term commitment through a new public-private foundation and other investments that will allow us to find solutions to pests and diseases and focus on innovations for the future.

This is an energy bill that will help create the next generation of biofuel to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and will help farmers and rural small business owners generate their own power to improve energy efficiency and lower their costs for their businesses.

This is an economic development bill that will help rural businesses and communities get broadband Internet access so they can find new customers and compete and connect around the country and around the world.

This is a conservation bill that helps farmers and ranchers protect our precious land and water resources. This is our country's largest investment in conservation on private lands that we make as Americans. Most of our land is privately owned. It includes a historic new agreement between commodity and conservation groups that ties conservation compliance with crop insurance so we are being the best possible stewards of our land.

This bill will save taxpayers money and conserve our lands and waters for years to come by preserving millions of acres of wildlife habitat, which in turn has helped rebuild populations of ducks and quail and pheasants, among others. That is why the bill has the strong support of the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, and the World Wildlife Fund, which are only a handful of the more than 250 conservation groups that have endorsed this farm bill.

This is a nutrition bill that makes sure families have a safety net, just as we do for farmers. The savings in food assistance comes solely through addressing fraud and misuse while maintaining and protecting critical benefits for those who need help, most often temporarily, putting food on the table for their families while they get back on their feet after having lost their job.

It strengthens the integrity and accountability of SNAP, making sure every single dollar goes to families in need while they get back on their feet. It gives our children more healthy food options in schools and will help bring more healthy, locally grown food into our communities.

This is a deficit reduction bill that will save taxpayers $23 billion. All together we have cut spending, a portion of it accounts through sequestration, the rest in additional spending in this bill, where we have voluntarily—as I have often said—voluntarily agreed to cut spending in our own area of jurisdiction. By the way, that $23 billion is more than double the amount of agricultural cuts recommended by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles Commission.

This is a reform bill that contains the greatest reforms to agricultural programs in decades. We have finally ended direct payment subsidies which are given to farmers even in good times. Instead, we move to a responsible risk-management approach that only gives farmers assistance when they experience a loss. This farm bill is focused on the future, not the past. This bill is taking a critical step toward changing the paradigm of agriculture and the broad range of agricultural production in this country.

This bill has the support of over 370 groups and counting from all parts of the country and ideological backgrounds. That is because as we wrote this bill we worked hard to find common ground to develop a bill that works for every kind of agricultural production in every region of our country. We worked hard and together—and I want to thank my ranking member, the distinguished senior Senator from Mississippi, for his leadership and partnership in this effort—we have included valuable input from both sides of the aisle and from the House and the Senate. I wish to thank all of our colleagues for their ideas, for their willingness to put partisanship aside and work together. This is an example of how we can get work done, and I hope it is just one step of a productive year moving forward.

Thanks to all that work, we have arrived at a farm bill that works for all of America—for families and farmers, for consumers, for those who care so deeply about protecting our lands and our water. This bill will strengthen agriculture for years to come. It is time to pass it. It is time to get it to the President for signature.

Every single Senator in this Chamber has constituents who work and benefit from agriculture, and certainly just coming from lunch today we should each be thanking a farmer for the safest, most affordable food supply in the world.

After 491 days without a farm bill, our constituents need us to get this done. I urge colleagues to join in a bipartisan way, as we have throughout this process, to vote yes on this farm bill and to give our farmers, our ranchers, and the rest of the 16 million people who work in agriculture the farm bill they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I first of all want to commend the distinguished Senator from Michigan for her outstanding leadership of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. As we proceeded from the hearings to review those suggestions being made for change and modernization of our agriculture act to the final days of committee hearings and now full debate in the Senate and in the House, it comes to this final vote.

Last night there was a decisive vote of 72 to 22 to end debate on the farm bill. That reflects the appreciation and respect the Senate has for the work of this committee, led by our distinguished chairman, the Senator from Michigan. So I thank her, as well as our House committee counterparts, FRANK LUCAS of Oklahoma and ranking member COLLIN PETERSON of Minnesota, as well as the members of their staff, as we worked our way through the conference between the House and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry leadership.

I wish to thank, too, our majority staff director Chris Adamo and all of Chairwoman STABENOW's staff for their hard work in developing this farm bill. Our committee clerk Jessie Williams and her staff have also provided great assistance throughout this process. They have worked diligently and competently and thoughtfully on this legislation. Their dedication to developing the bill and the conference report led to long days, many working weekends, and we do owe them a very strong debt of gratitude and commendation for this work product.

My staff director T.A. Hawks has been at the job, it seems like, day and night for a long time to help make sure we pass a bill that reflects the sentiment and the suggestions for this Congress for modernization of our agriculture legislation. James Glueck also worked closely with T.A. Hawks and has been a trusted adviser. I am grateful for his good help as well.

All of our staff members have done great work in helping move the farm bill to a successful conclusion and the approval by the Senate of this work. My personal office agriculture LA Daniel Ulmer also was involved in the work of this committee and advising me personally as we worked our way to the conclusion of our responsibilities. He worked very closely with the committee to help develop the farm bill; likewise, chief of staff Bruce Evans, legislative director Adam Telle, legislative aide Bennett Mize, and others from my staff have added valuable input into this process, and I appreciate their good work.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I realize we will be having the vote at 2:35, so let me just take one more moment to stress how important it is that we recognize this was an effort in good faith between the House and the Senate and Republicans and Democrats.

I too wish to join with my ranking member Senator COCHRAN in thanking the chairman in the House FRANK LUCAS. He and ranking member COLLIN PETERSON were true partners with us as we moved through this process.

We actually started about 2½ years ago when the supercommittee on deficit reduction at that time asked each committee to come up with a way to reduce the deficit, to cut spending in their area of jurisdiction. We decided to do it a little differently. Chairman LUCAS and I talked and we decided the four of us would get together and actually come up with a House-Senate, Democratic-Republican recommendation that would be solidly supported by all sides. So it was a prenegotiation on the farm bill that we were going to be doing in the next year.

So in July, August of 2011, we sat down and started going through ways we could save dollars. We all agreed direct payment subsidies could no longer be justified and needed to be eliminated. We also knew it was important to have a safety net for our farmers, and disaster assistance for our ranchers and farmers as well, and that we needed to help them manage their risk. We came up with an approach which took part of the dollars we cut and put it back into strengthening risk management tools, such as crop insurance—which is just like any other insurance: you pay a premium, you get a bill—not a check—and you don't get any kind of help unless you have a loss.

But we also took a look at other areas of the farm bill. We found there were 23 different conservation programs. Every time somebody had a good idea, we added a new program. We thought, let's go back and really take a look at this. If we were starting from scratch, how would we put together all these important programs and do it in a way that is more user friendly for farmers and ranchers and organizations that work on land and water preservation. So we went from 23 to 13 programs and put them in 4 different buckets, or subject areas, and we saved money.

Then we looked at every part of the farm bill. I asked our staff not to talk about programs but principles: What should we be doing? What should the farm bill be doing for agriculture, for farmers, ranchers, families, consumers, rural communities, job creators? Let's not protect programs. Let's look broadly at principles.

So we did that, and we ended up eliminating about 100 different authorization programs, consolidating, cutting down on duplication, doing what I think Americans are asking us to do in every part of the Federal Government.

We then turned around to set priorities about where to invest, because it is not just cutting for cutting's sake, it is trying to make things work better, be more effective, and save precious dollars, but at the same time investing in the future—investing in that which will strengthen agriculture, create jobs, strengthen rural communities, and new opportunities for the broad array of production, what consumers are asking for in organics, local food systems, and so on.

So we basically put together a plan that started with the deficit reduction process, the supercommittee, and we made a recommendation of $23 billion in cuts and deficit reduction. We all know that the broader deficit reduction process did not proceed, but we decided to keep the commitment to that $23 billion, and so we have. We have moved forward. Part of the cuts now that we have put into place have been accounted for by the Budget Office as part of sequestration. Most have not. But when we add it all up, it is still $23 billion that we started with back in 2011, when the four of us together decided to sit down and listen to each other, understand each other, find common ground, and make some tough decisions about how we could do things better in the area of agriculture and the farm bill.

As we come to a close, I again thank colleagues who have given such valuable input and been involved every step of the way. I hope everyone will feel a sense of pride that this is something we have done together—that people expect us to do together, which is do our job, to make decisions and to govern, and to operate in a way which allows us to listen to each other, find common ground, and get our work done.

Madam President, I yield back all remaining time.

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

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on adoption of the conference report.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Alexander	Graham	Mikulski
Baldwin	Hagan	Moran
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Hatch	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Portman
Blunt	Heitkamp	Pryor
Boozman	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Hoeven	Risch
Brown	Isakson	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Johanns	Sanders
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Landrieu	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	Levin	Udall (NM)
Durbin	Manchin	Vitter
Enzi	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden
Franken	Merkley	

NAYS—32

Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Grassley	Roberts
Booker	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Coburn	Lee	Shelby
Collins	Markey	Toomey
Corker	McCain	Warren
Cornyn	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Cruz	Murphy	

The conference was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, did we move to reconsider and lay on the table the previous vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. COCHRAN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, would the Presiding Officer tell me the pending business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950.

Mr. REID. The motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297 is the pending business; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

Mr. REID. I withdraw my motion to proceed.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, what is now pending before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. S. 1845, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1845) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 2631, relating to extension and modification of emergency unemployment compensation program.

Reid amendment No. 2632 (to amendment No. 2631), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 2633, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2634 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 2633), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2635 (to amendment No. 2634), of a perfecting nature.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITHDRAWN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask that the pending motion to commit be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the pending amendment No. 2631.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Could we have order in the Chamber.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We have a number of ideas on this side of the aisle to promote economic growth and job creation, and we would like the opportunity to offer amendments to implement these ideas.

For example, Senator PAUL has an amendment to create economic freedom zones to help struggling areas of our country to recover from the economic downturn. Senator TIM SCOTT's SKILLS Act would improve job training programs for the very long-term unemployed that this extension is actually designed to help. In addition, Senators AYOTTE, COLLINS, PORTMAN, and others have been working very hard—Senator COATS as well—to come up with a path forward on a meaningful offset that would extend unemployment benefits without adding to the deficit.

Their ideas have so far been blocked. So I would like to ask the majority leader to modify his request to provide for an orderly process for amendments. I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendments and motions be withdrawn and that the minority and majority sides be permitted to offer amendments in alternating fashion so that these important ideas can be considered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the majority leader so modify his request?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, when we last dealt with unemployment insurance, I offered a unanimous consent request at that time that would have allowed up to 20 relevant amendments—20.

Mr. President, my friend, the Republican leader—he is again, through a lot of words, saying: We do not want this. We are not going to help you pass it. There is more than one way to filibuster a bill. Providing for an endless number of amendments is one of those ways to kill this bill.

Mr. President, what we are going to do here is offer a fully paid for 3-month extension of unemployment insurance. Simple as that. Simple as that. That is what the Republicans said they wanted, and we agreed to do it.

We will not agree to an unlimited number of amendments. I look forward to hearing from my Republican colleagues if they have a proposal that is different than this, which is, again, a different way of saying: We do not care about unemployment compensation as it is now focused, and we are not going to support it.

In the meantime, I object to an order providing amendments without limit and without any commitment to vote on passage of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to table the pending amendment No. 2631.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) is necessarily absent

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

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

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 22 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Cruz	Landrieu
Ayotte	Donnelly	Leahy
Baldwin	Durbin	Lee
Barrasso	Enzi	Levin
Baucus	Feinstein	Manchin
Begich	Fischer	Markey
Bennet	Flake	McCain
Blumenthal	Franken	McCaskill
Blunt	Gillibrand	McConnell
Booker	Graham	Menendez
Boozman	Grassley	Merkley
Boxer	Hagan	Mikulski
Brown	Harkin	Moran
Burr	Hatch	Murkowski
Cantwell	Heinrich	Murphy
Cardin	Heitkamp	Murray
Carper	Heller	Nelson
Casey	Hirono	Paul
Chambliss	Hoeven	Portman
Coats	Inhofe	Pryor
Coburn	Isakson	Reed
Cochran	Johanns	Reid
Collins	Johnson (SD)	Risch
Coons	Johnson (WI)	Roberts
Corker	King	Rockefeller
Cornyn	Kirk	Rubio
Crapo	Klobuchar	Sanders
Schatz	Tester	Warner
Schumer	Thune	Warren
Sessions	Toomey	Whitehouse
Shaheen	Udall (CO)	Wicker
Shelby	Udall (NM)	Wyden
Stabenow	Vitter	

NOT VOTING—2

Kaine	Scott

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 2714

Mr. REID. On behalf of Senator REED of Rhode Island, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. REED of Rhode Island, proposes an amendment numbered 2714.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2715 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2714

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2715 to amendment numbered 2714.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 7 days after enactment.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion on the Reed of Rhode Island amendment and ask that it be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reed (RI) amendment No. 2714 to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Barbara Boxer, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2716

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a motion to commit S. 1845, with instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance with instructions to report back with the following amendment numbered 2716.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

AMENDMENT NO. 2717

Mr. REID. I have an amendment to the instructions at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2717 to the instructions of the motion to commit.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''8 days'' and insert ''9 days''.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2718 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2717

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes amendment numbered 2718 to amendment numbered 2717.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''9 days'' and insert ''10 days''.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows: Senators.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Barbara Boxer, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—Motion to Proceed

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived for the cloture motions just filed and that Wednesday, February 5, 2014, count as an intervening day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I want to take a moment to explain where we are. Over the last few months, we have been struggling to find a way to help some desperate people in our country. It is hard to find a way to convince our Republican colleagues that these people are in a desperate situation and to join with us in extending unemployment insurance benefits for 1.6 million of our fellow citizens.

Last month, we tried to pass a bipartisan bill that would simply extend those benefits on a short-term basis for 3 months. All but a few Republicans voted against proceeding to that measure. Republicans complained that we had not paid for the extension, so we offered them a paid-for 11-month extension. Every Republican voted against the cloture motion, every Republican, and all but one Republican voted against cloture on the bipartisan 3-month extension. So today we are trying yet again, offering an amendment that extends unemployment benefits for 3 months and pays for that extension, not a disputed, controversial extension and certainly not a controversial pay-for. Our alternative also includes something that Senator COBURN has been talking about for several months, an amendment to prevent millionaires from getting unemployment benefits, because it has happened. A person won a lottery and still got unemployment benefits.

Thursday, we are going to vote on cloture on that amendment, one that is paid for and would take care of this issue for lots of people. After that have we will vote on cloture on the bill, as amended. In the meantime, I am pleased to continue discussions with Senators about setting up votes on the relevant amendments.

The Republican leader's proposal is an absolute absurdity. I don't know why they just don't come out and say we are not going to do this, we are not going to extend unemployment benefits. But they have alternating amendments, and they want amendments related to—George Mitchell, who was the Democratic leader for a period of time that I served here, a wonderful human being, his statement was don't depend on the Republicans; they will break your heart every time, and that is what they are doing. They are breaking our hearts, and 1.6 million people, their hearts are broken.

The main proponent of this bill has been JACK REED of Rhode Island. JACK REED and I have a contest—I wish we didn't—and that is which State, Rhode Island or Nevada, has the highest unemployment number.

We care about this greatly, but others care about this. I am sure there are some Republicans who care about it, but why are they hung up on this foolishness that they can only do it if one time they have alternating amendments? They wouldn't take 20 amendments.

There are a handful of Republicans who tried very hard and worked in good faith with Senator REED of Rhode Island. But the problem is they have no control over the tea-party-driven Republicans who make up most of this Republican caucus.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. We are at a critical moment. It has been 38 days since the emergency unemployment compensation expired, forcing now not 1.6 million but 1.7 million Americans off an economic cliff and also draining $2.2 billion from State economies, and this is according to estimates based on data from the Department of Labor and the Ways and Means Committee Democrats. This has had a huge impact on families and a huge impact on the economy throughout this country.

Congress should be doing everything to focus on creating jobs and improving our economy. This week we have an opportunity to do that. That is why we should vote to renew unemployment insurance and help put more Americans back to work.

Restoring these benefits is an imperative. We must do it. We have to act with a sense of urgency. People are out there every day looking for employment. They are doing everything they can to support their families and themselves. While this modest level of support helps them stay afloat, what they really want is a job. So our constituents, who are trying so hard and doing what they need to do in order to provide for themselves and their families, are looking to Congress to uphold its end of the bargain.

Many of our constituents are running out of options. The rent is coming due. The telephone bill is coming due, and without a phone they can't actively compete for work. There is no way employers can get hold of them.

College tuition is coming due for middle-aged people who are out looking for jobs, for their children, and some people who are paying their way through college. They are being squeezed from all sides, and the expiration of these benefits is hurting not only them but it is hurting our economy overall.

Time is of the essence. It has been 7 weeks since Senator HELLER and I introduced a bipartisan short-term plan that was designed to provide immediate relief. We tried different permutations of extending these benefits, provisions the other side said they wanted, but to this point without success.

I must say that I have found not only Senator HELLER but many of my colleagues on the other side both thoughtful and willing to contribute—Senator COLLINS, Senator COATS, Senator PORTMAN, and so many others, who are

sincere in trying to get this done. But what we have to do is get over this 60-vote threshold, at least to provide this immediate relief of 3 months to our constituents.

Again, the face of those unemployed in this downturn is a bit different than in the past. We are hearing and seeing more and more middle-aged workers who have worked all their lives and for the first time are confronted with unemployment. They sent out hundreds of resumes. They sought job interviews, many times unsuccessfully. They are squeezed because they are trying to support parents at the same time they are trying to support children who are in college or young adults who are at home.

This is a tremendous toll on people who have worked hard all of their lives. They are simply asking us to step up, as we have done consistently in the past, and give them some modest support while they search for work.

We are 1 month into 2014 and still debating a 3-month fix. At some point, we will reach the point where the retroactive benefits will be greater than the benefits going forward for the 3-month fix. That is not a place we want to be, not for people who have worked hard. The only way to qualify for unemployment insurance is to be working and then, through no fault of your own, to be dismissed from your work—and you still have to look for work. That is the whole program. So it is not right.

I think we have to move forward, and we have done this on a bipartisan basis three times under President Ronald Reagan, five times under George W. Bush, with overwhelming majorities on a bipartisan basis, no question. In fact, most times they were completely unpaid for. It was emergency spending, not only because people needed the emergency aid, but it is a great form of economic support to our economy.

The CBO estimates that if we fail to extend for the full year these benefits, we will lose 200,000 jobs over 2014, at a time when our first priority should be to put more jobs in the marketplace.

We have a plan today that is short term, 3 months, retroactive to December 28. It is fully paid for by extending pension smoothing for 4 more years.

In addition to paying for these benefits, it will reduce the deficit by $1.2 billion over 10 years, so we have a mechanism that not only helps people but also goes to the issue of the deficit, which is another pressing concern, particularly to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

This offset has been used before. It passed 79 to 19 as part of the 2012 MAP–21 transportation bill. This is a noncontroversial pay-for. It has been proposed by Members on both sides of the aisle with various proposals requiring pay-fors.

We have an urgent need, a very short-term focus, and a noncontroversial pay-for, and I will urge my colleagues, let's support this, let's move this. If there is work to be done on the architecture of unemployment insurance, if there are other collateral issues or issues that could be thrown into the mix, let's get this done and then let's focus on those issues.

This amendment also incorporates a measure that Senator COBURN has proposed that would bar millionaires, individuals making over $1 million, from qualifying for unemployment insurance. This measure has been unanimously supported 100 to 0 in this Chamber, so we thought we would go ahead and put that in as an additional measure that would be embraced by everyone in the Chamber.

This is an issue that has huge support among the American public. There is a FOX News poll that says over two-thirds of Americans support and want Congress to act now to extend unemployment insurance.

Let me again thank my colleagues on the other side who have worked very sincerely and very diligently to come up with a solution. I say to them: Thank you. I appreciate it.

My concern is helping—as their concern is—those constituents who are getting increasingly desperate. We share this. Now what we have to do is find a pathway forward.

I hope, because of the short-term nature of this bill, because of the noncontroversial pay-for, that we can get this done, and then I think we can embark on a much more expansive review on a much more expansive set of issues with respect to UI and other issues that have come before the Chamber. It is time to vote—vote aye—to get this measure passed.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

2012 BENGHAZI ATTACK

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the attack on our consulate on September 11, 2012. I am here to talk about the fact that four brave Americans were murdered that day by an act of terrorism. One of those murdered was our Ambassador to Libya when those four Americans were killed at Benghazi at our consulate.

I really want to talk about what I believe is a pattern of misinformation, misimpressions, and, frankly, misleading the American people about what happened there and, during an election season, what was represented about the attack on our consulate on September 11. Let me walk through some of the situation and the tangled web that was woven here.

First of all, right after this attack occurred—we know that on September 16 Ambassador Susan Rice appeared on behalf of the administration on every major Sunday television show, and during that time people rightly wanted to know what happened. This was a big deal. An ambassador had been murdered, along with three other Americans in Libya, where we had gone in to remove, working with our NATO partners, Qadhafi and really had established alliances with Libya. So here we have a murdered Ambassador on September 11, and that day Ambassador Rice, during the context of a Presidential election, went on every Sunday television show, and when she was asked about what happened on that day, she blamed it on the spontaneous reaction to a hateful video.

Recently, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence did some very good bipartisan work looking at what happened with regard to the attack at the consulate. That report contains something very telling. That report found that ''contrary to many press reports at the time, eyewitness statements by U.S. personnel indicate there were no protests at the start of the attacks.'' In fact, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA received an email sent from the CIA's Chief of Station in Tripoli to him on September 15—4 days after the attacks occurred—and in that email the Deputy Director of the CIA, Mike Morell, was told the attacks were ''not an escalation of protests.'' Not an escalation of protests.

Why is that important? It is important for many reasons because what ends up happening during this period is that Ambassador Rice is going on the Sunday shows to talk about this. She is designated to do this on behalf of the administration. We have always wondered why. Why did she go on, as opposed to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton or perhaps then-Secretary Panetta, the Secretary of Defense? But she is sent that day onto the Sunday shows, and on those shows she said this was a direct result of a heinous video—protests that came as a result of this video.

Yet the day before, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA had already gotten an email from the people on the ground—eyewitness statements. There were survivors, people who survived this attack and who were interviewed to find out what happened. As you would in any situation where you have had a terrorist attack or a murder case, you are going to talk to the eyewitnesses on the ground. So there were eyewitnesses, and they were spoken to. As a result of those eyewitness interviews, the day before she goes on those Sunday shows, the Deputy Director of the CIA is told that there was not an escalation of protests, that what has been reported is not the case. Yet she went on the show and said that anyway.

What is even more troubling is that this information is communicated to the Deputy Director of the CIA, and somehow there are talking points prepared that don't reflect this information. Moreover, somehow this information that was given to the Deputy Director of the CIA was not given to the President—or, I don't know, maybe they didn't like the story they received because during that period of time, if we look at this, on September 11 the President gave many media interviews

during this period. It was during a Presidential election.

On September 18, which is 7 days after the attacks on the consulate, 2 days after Susan Rice went on the Sunday shows, the President is on the Dave Letterman show. We have all watched the comedy show, the Dave Letterman show, and Dave Letterman asks the President about the attacks in Benghazi. On that show he talks about the video, this heinous video being a cause of what happened and the attack at the consulate. Yet, on September 15, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA already had some information that said this is not an escalation of protests. There were interviews done of the survivors on the ground. Yet on the Dave Letterman show a week later—in fact, 3 days after this information is received by the Deputy Director of the CIA—we have the President talking about the video.

But it gets worse. Nine days later—9 days after the attack, so on September 20—the President gives another interview at the Univision Town Hall. This is 5 days after the Deputy Director of the CIA is given this information, apparently coming from the survivors. And what does the President say?

> What we do know is that the natural protests that arose because of the outrage over the video were used as an excuse by extremists to see if they can also directly harm U.S. interests.

That is what he says when he is asked about the attacks on our consulate.

So here we are 9 days after the attack, 5 days after this information is given to Mike Morell, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA, and yet we have another interview on ''The View,'' another popular show, 13 days—almost 2 weeks after the attack on the consulate, and again the President of United States talks about this being about the video and a reaction to the video.

So here we have the work that was done on this—clear misinformation about what happened that day and a very troubling pattern in the context of an election, where on those Sunday shows Ambassador Rice made sure to tell everyone Al Qaeda has been decimated because that was the narrative during this time period, that Al Qaeda has been decimated. So if this was a terrorist attack, that would be problematic to that narrative.

In fact, we had testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee from then-Defense Secretary Panetta. When he testified before the Armed Services Committee, he said clearly:

> There was no question in my mind it was a terrorist attack.

In fact, he said:

> When I appeared before the committee 3 days afterwards, I said it was a terrorist attack.

Secretary Panetta made clear he knew from the beginning this was a terrorist attack. Yet the President, on September 12, even though the day of it he said, ''We won't tolerate any act of terror''—he is asked directly by the interviewer, Mr. Kroft from ''60 Minutes,'' ''Mr. President, this morning you went out of your way to avoid the use of the word terrorism in connection with the Libya attack. Do you believe this was a terrorism attack?'' The President said, ''Well, it's too early to tell exactly how this came about, what group was involved, but obviously it was an attack on Americans.'' The President refused then to call it what it was, what his own Secretary of Defense knew—that it was a terrorist attack—because, of course, we know the narrative at the time was that Al Qaeda had been decimated, and if it was a terrorist attack, it didn't quite fit with that narrative.

In fact, recently the President gave an interview on FOX News with Bill O'Reilly—on February 2—and this is what he said when he was asked about the attack on the consulate:

> We revealed to the American people exactly what we understood at the time. The notion that we would hide the ball for political purposes when a week later we all said in fact there was a terrorist attack taking place the day after I said it was an act of terror, that wouldn't be a very good coverup.

I guess the President, when he told Mr. O'Reilly that, forgot about the interview he had given on ''The View,'' which was almost 2 weeks after this event—13 days after it.

Almost 2 weeks later he was asked by Ms. Behar:

> I heard Hillary Clinton say it was an act of terrorism. Is it? What do you say?

Well, no act of terrorism then. He doesn't acknowledge it. He said:

> We're still doing an investigation. There's no doubt that [with] the kind of weapons that were used, the ongoing assault, that it wasn't just a mob action.

This is in the context, of course, where his Secretary of Defense said he knew right away it was an act of terrorism. In fact, he came to the Armed Services Committee 3 days after and said it was an act of terrorism. Yet, again, within a week he isn't saying it was an act of terrorism when he is directly asked if it was an act of terrorism.

In this recent interview with Mr. O'Reilly the President talked about the security at the consulate. In fact, there was a strong report recently done by the Senate Intelligence Committee on a bipartisan basis. In fact, one of the issues they raised deep concerns about is that the State Department should have increased its security posture more significantly in Benghazi based upon a deteriorating security situation on the ground and that the threat reporting on the prior attacks against westerners in Benghazi—and there were many cables leading up to this too that had been made public—warranted there was sufficient warning that security should have been increased at the consulate.

The President acknowledged that in his recent interview with Mr. O'Reilly, where he said:

> In the aftermath what became clear was that the security was lax, that not all the precautions that needed to be taken were taken.

That is certainly confirmed by the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee. So if that is the case, why is it that Ambassador Susan Rice was on the Sunday shows on September 16—she is sent on the shows to talk about what happened that day, and she responds in this fashion to this question directly and specifically asked by Chris Wallace in that interview:

He says:

> Terror cells in Benghazi had carried out five attacks since April, including . . . a bombing at the same consulate in June. Should U.S. security have been tighter at that consulate given the history of terror activity in Benghazi?

What is her response? Well, we obviously did have a strong security presence.

She was on several shows—ABC with Jake Tapper; she was on ''Face the Nation'' with Bob Schieffer. During the course of those interviews, she was asked about the security at the consulate, and she described the security at the consulate that day as significant and substantial. What was the basis for that? Did anyone give her information that ''security was significant, substantial and strong'' that day? Because there was absolutely no evidence of that. In fact, everything in this investigation has shown that security was absolutely lax at that consulate, unacceptably so given the prior history of intelligence at the consulate, given the prior attacks that had been made on the British and on the Red Cross, and unfortunately this really was a death trap.

So in the context of an election, why is she—and the President as well—not only pushing the video story but also saying that the consulate security was strong, it was substantial, it was significant, when there is no evidence to support that? It all goes to the contrary.

There has been a lot of discussion about the video. Ambassador Rice goes on the Sunday shows and she talks about the video. She talks about the causal effect of the video in terms of the attacks on the consulate. What she essentially says is this: This was a direct result of a heinous and offensive video which was widely disseminated and which the U.S. Government had nothing to do with and which we have made clear is reprehensible and disgusting. And we have also been very clear in saying that there is no excuse for violence, that we have condemned it in the strongest possible terms.

This ''direct result of a heinous and offensive video,'' which she said on all those Sunday shows and which the President then also talked about in the interviews: 1 week later on David Letterman; the interview, 9 days after the attack, on Univision; and the interview almost 2 weeks later on ''The View''—why are they still talking about the video?

From the beginning, I have thought the talking points were fascinating. These talking points were created for dissemination. Ambassador Susan Rice was given these talking points, she said she relied upon them, and there are serious deficiencies with these talking points.

Even so, I challenge people to find any reference to a video in these talking points. I have looked and looked, and I couldn't see the word ''video'' in these talking points anywhere. Yet we have Ambassador Susan Rice, on behalf of the administration, on September 16 on every Sunday show, talking about the video. We have the President of the United States on David Letterman 1 week later, then 9 days later, after the attack, on Univision, and almost 2 weeks later, 13 days later on ''The View'' talking about a video. Yet there isn't a reference to a video in these talking points. I have never understood. Where did the video story come from? Do you think we will ever get the answer? I think we deserve an answer to that, especially now.

Because of the recent Senate intel report, we know that the Deputy Director of the CIA, the day before Ambassador Rice first appeared on those Sunday shows to tell this story, received this email which reported that the attacks were ''not/not an escalation of protests.'' So if it is not an escalation of protests—let's look at these talking points again. These talking points do not refer to a video. We are not sure how that story got told.

Why is it that the talking points that went out say: Available information suggests that the demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against our U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi and subsequently its annex and that they were participating in violent demonstrations. Why wasn't what they learned the day before taken into account in terms of what was represented to the American people? I think a bigger question is, How is it that the Deputy Director of the CIA can receive relevant and important information and that information never gets to the President of the United States as late as 9 days later? On September 24, on ''The View,'' he is still talking about this video. Yet it turns out the video never had anything to do with this. It really raises so many questions in terms of the tangled web of this whole situation.

I have yet to talk about what was an incredible change in these talking points, which was the removal of the reference to Al Qaeda. Before they went through various modifications, the original set of talking points talked about Al Qaeda or the potential of Al Qaeda-affiliated groups being involved in these attacks. Of course, that now has been confirmed by the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee report recently revealed. But at the time, the reference to Al Qaeda was removed from these talking points. It was removed from these talking points, and Ambassador Rice was free to go on the Sunday shows on September 16, and she said Al Qaeda had been decimated. Imagine if the talking points kept the reference to Al Qaeda. Do you think she would have gone on every Sunday show and said Al Qaeda had been decimated? I would hope not because it was not true that Al Qaeda had been decimated, as evidenced by the attack on our consulate.

So we still don't know who removed the reference and what happened with these talking points. But what really troubles me is the Deputy Director of the CIA, through the Senate Intelligence Committee report, received this email on September 15 which said the attacks were not an escalation of protests. He worked on these talking points. He was part of the group who actually had feedback on the talking points that went out the door. Yet somehow this wasn't included.

The Al Qaeda reference was removed, and apparently no one, even after receiving the actual eyewitness interviews of what happened on the scene, ever thought to go to the administration—the President of the United States—and correct him: By the way, we are not sure this video really pans out, that it is a demonstration and that this is a protest in response to a video. Somehow that doesn't get up the chain of command? We have big problems if this kind of information is not getting up the chain of command. Why those representations were made when there was intel that contradicted it has never been answered.

Finally, and most of all, the President said he was going to bring the individuals who committed these attacks to justice. Yet no one has been brought to justice. The families who lost loved ones deserve to have these terrorists brought to justice. And what we have seen in some of the reports—the intelligence committee itself essentially identifies that more than 1 year after the Benghazi attacks, the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks have still not been brought to justice.

The intelligence community has identified several individuals responsible for the attacks. Some of these individuals have been identified with a strong level of confidence. So why hasn't anyone been brought to justice? Why haven't we pursued this to pick up the people who committed these terrorist attacks and to hold them accountable? The victims deserve justice, and they have not seen justice. I hope we will get those who murdered our Ambassador and three other brave Americans on September 11, 2012, and bring them to justice. It is totally unacceptable that has not yet happened.

We have seen press reports of people like Abu Khattala—reported to have established Ansar al-Sharia, an Al Qaeda-affiliated group, and identified as a prior commander of this group—identified by witnesses as being there that night during the attacks on our consulate, and yet we haven't picked him up or anyone else. In fact, he is sitting at cafes, and press in the United States are able to find him, interview him, talk to him, and yet we haven't brought him or anyone else in. There have been news reports that there may be a secret warrant for him, but he hasn't been brought in. Where is the attention to this?

I have talked about this tangled web which has been woven, which is really troubling in terms of the misimpressions and misleading nature of how this has been represented to the American people. But I hope we will all focus on bringing the people who committed these terrorist attacks to justice because the victims of these terrorist attacks deserve justice.

The terrorists who committed these acts against our consulate need to know that we are coming after them and that we are going to hold them accountable. If you commit a terrorist attack against our country, you should not be in a position to be out drinking coffee in a cafe. You need to be held accountable.

We need to send a message to other terrorists: Don't mess with the United States of America, because right now they are getting the opposite message with no one being held accountable for the terrorist attacks on our consulate on September 11, 2012.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from New Hampshire for her stirring remarks on the terrorist attacks in Benghazi and urge that we pay heed to the words she said. It is striking—the Senator from New Hampshire has said more about that terrorist attack than our Commander in Chief has ever said.

We are at a time where Tolkien's classic ''The Hobbit'' is one of the best-selling, most popular movies in the country. ''The Hobbit'' is a fantasy story. In Washington, we were visited with fantasy last week in the President's State of the Union Address. I would like to talk about the contrast, concerning foreign policy, between the fantasy presented to the American people and the cold, hard realities of the dangerous world in which we live—which is only getting more and more dangerous.

In his State of the Union Address last week, President Obama gave some revealing clues as to how he believed the United States should interact with the rest of the world.

On the whole, his remarks encourage Americans not to worry too much about international challenges. He suggested the situations in Syria and Iran are being definitely managed by American diplomats; that Al Qaeda is now a regional nuisance that can be outsourced to surrogates; that our relationship with Israel is defined by the

Palestinian peace process, which will also be resolved in short order through American diplomacy; and that our interest in Ukraine is to express support for the abstract principle that all people should peacefully participate in their own governance. In this rosy scenario, difficult challenges such as the deadly terrorist attacks on Benghazi on September 11, 2012, or the long and painful ordeal of Pastor Saeed Abedini in an Iranian prison simply do not exist.

I wish we all lived in the utopian world President Obama painted last week. But in just a week, numerous news reports have come out to suggest that picture belongs far more in the world of fantasy than reality. In the interests of being honest with the American people—which I wish our Commander in Chief had done—I would like to contrast reality with what we were told last week.

On Syria, in the State of the Union Address, the President claimed:

> American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why serious chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve—a future free of dictatorship, terror, and fear.

That is truly a rosy scenario. Yet, what is the reality? On Sunday, just 4 days after the President delivered the State of the Union Address, Secretary of State John Kerry reportedly told a congressional delegation that the administration's Syria policy is on the brink of collapse. Syria's chemical weapons are purportedly being destroyed through the intervention of Vladimir Putin in what was a major diplomatic victory for the Russian strongman. But we have learned in recent days that this process has not proceeded as promised. The Syrians have ignored their deadlines and only 4 percent of the stockpiles have been eliminated, undoubtedly because Assad knows there is no compelling reason for him to comply. As for what the Syrian people deserve, after 3 years of rudderless U.S. policy, over 130,000 are dead, millions are refugees displaced across the region, and the oldest Christian communities on the planet are threatened with extinction. Assad is entrenched and Al Qaeda is in control of the opposition. Sadly, as a result of the President's mismanagement, today we have no good options in Syria. Yet not a word of that made it into his State of the Union Address.

On Iran, the President claimed:

> It is American diplomacy, backed by pressure, that has halted the progress of Iran's nuclear program . . .

The reality is quite different. No enriched uranium has been destroyed—not a pound—and no centrifuges have been dismantled. The Iranians quickly refuted the President's claim in the State of the Union, announcing, quite publicly, that they have not halted their progress in the slightest. America's closest ally in the region, the nation of Israel, has called this a ''very, very bad deal.'' Indeed, Prime Minister Netanyahu has referred to it as a ''historic mistake.'' Yet the President proceeds on and the Senate refuses even to allow a vote on reimposing sanctions to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability. There has been no renunciation of Iran's State sponsorship of terrorism that killed Americans in Lebanon and in Saudi Arabia and in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The mullahs have gone on a hanging spree, executing some 40 people in the first two weeks of January alone. Meanwhile, billions of dollars are flowing into the country, both through relaxed sanctions and Iran's reemergence as a legitimate business partner because of this administration's misguided deal. Indeed, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani might almost be forgiven for publicly gloating that ''the Geneva deal means the surrender of the big powers in front of the great nation of Iran.'' I wish he was not speaking the truth. That reality did not emerge on the House floor last week.

On the House floor, the President claimed:

> If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.

The reality is the claim that we are negotiating with Iran from a position of strength and confidence is a blinkered view of reality because it isn't even clear our President is negotiating towards actual victory. Capitulation is not victory. President Obama announced in the State of the Union that in order to keep negotiations going, he would veto any additional sanctions Congress might pass to pressure Iran to actually stop pursuing nuclear weapons—a position that is supported not only by his current administration, but expressly by his former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has good reason to announce publicly he has no ''fear'' of Congress. When Ronald Reagan negotiated with the Soviets, he did it from a clear, strategic perspective of ''we win, they lose,'' standing for U.S. national interests. He was facing an existential threat that he defined as ''the Evil Empire.'' There was no danger or misunderstanding of what the goal was or who was going to be doing the surrendering. As a result of his leadership, the Cold War was won without firing a shot. Today, on Iran, we are tragically repeating the mistakes of the past—in particular, the mistakes of the Clinton administration—in relaxing sanctions on North Korea for the same empty promises that they would cease developing nuclear weapons only to have North Korea use the billions of dollars we sent to them—or allowed to go to them—to develop nuclear weapons. The difference is the North Korean leader is motivated by staying in power, which means some form of rational deterrence is hopefully possible. In Iran, the supreme leader has made clear his desire to destroy the nation of Israel and as a result of the billions of dollars going to Iran right now, the risk is unacceptably high that we discover the same thing that happened in North Korea happened in Iran, except that we discover it because Iran, in pursuit of Jihad, detonates a nuclear device over Tel Aviv or New York or Los Angeles. Not a word of that was acknowledged in the President's speech.

On Al Qaeda, President Obama claimed:

> While we have put Al Qaeda's core leadership on a path to defeat, the threat has evolved, as Al Qaeda affiliates and other extremists take root in different parts of the world—in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Mali, and we have to keep working with partners to disrupt and disable those networks.

The reality is that whatever path Al Qaeda is on, it does not currently appear to be towards defeat. The recent assertion by a State Department spokeswoman that Ayman al-Zawahiri is the only core Al Qaeda member left and that thus the threat has been decimated by the President is demonstrably false. For starters, Zawahiri is no mere abstract threat. He explicitly called for attacks on the United States on September 10, 2012, the day before the terrorist attack that claimed the lives of four Americans in Benghazi, including the first U.S. ambassador killed on duty since 1979. Zawahiri is actively involved in directing Al Qaeda groups that are active in Syria. But core or not core—whatever that means—the reality is that Al Qaeda has been at war with the United States for more than two decades and the attacks of September 11, 2001, are only the most spectacular of a series of attacks and attempted attacks launched at us. Trying to parse this threat to make it seem less deadly, to make it seem like less of a threat to Americans, will not make it so. We need to confront what attacked us in 2001. We cannot defeat radical Islamic terrorism when the President seems unwilling to utter the words ''radical Islamic terrorism.'' Indeed, the recent Senate Select Committee on Intelligence documented that what attacked us in Libya in 2012 is the very same thing that attacked us on September 11, 2001. We should not aim simply to disrupt or to disable Al Qaeda terrorists. We should aim to defeat them.

On Israel, in the State of the Union, the President had one mention of Israel in that speech. He said:

> American diplomacy is supporting Israelis and Palestinians as they engage in difficult but necessary talks to end the conflict there; to achieve dignity and an independent state for Palestinians, and a lasting peace and security for the State of Israel—a Jewish State that knows America will always be at their side.

The reality is sadly much different. Over the weekend, we saw a diplomatic spat play out in the press over allegations that Secretary of State Kerry is actively working behind the scenes to

encourage European countries to threaten Israel with boycotts if the Israelis don't agree to whatever framework Mr. Kerry will propose in two weeks. Rather than threats from the U.S. Secretary of State, and rather than tweets from National Security Advisor Susan Rice criticizing Israel, instead, the United States should stand unequivocally with our friend and ally, the nation of Israel. We should reaffirm Israel's unique status as a strong, democratic ally in the Middle East, a uniquely Jewish State, and that the United States appreciates the excruciatingly difficult security situation in which Israel finds itself with the threat of a nuclear Iran, and that the United States will vigorously defend Israel from attacks, from international institutions, from legal onslaughts, and from attempts to undermine Israel's economy through punitive boycotts, and that the United States is unshakably committed to preserving Israel's security, regardless of the status of the peace process.

I commend to my colleagues the recent remarks Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper gave in Israel. Those are the remarks of an ally standing strong with Israel and appreciating the incredible value that Israel provides to our national security and to peace in the world. I wish our President could speak with a fraction of the clarity and solidarity with Israel that the Canadian Prime Minister recently provided.

On Ukraine, the President claimed:

> In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have a right to express themselves freely and peacefully and to have a say in their country's future.

The reality is the day after the State of the Union, Ukraine's former President said that the country teeters on the brink of civil war. Protesters have been brutally tortured and murdered. Indeed, one opposition leader described how he was recently crucified. The Ukrainian people's constitutional rights have been trampled. This former Soviet republic has been wrenched away from a proposed trade agreement with the EU and a path towards membership in NATO and instead thrust back into Russia's sphere of influence by a corrupt and autocratic leader, depriving the United States of an important economic and security partner.

We need to tell this story. We need to look for concrete actions we can take right now to demonstrate real support for the opposition, to demonstrate real support that Ukraine is welcomed by the West, and that we will not accede to Putin's efforts to reassemble the old Soviet Union and place Ukraine under its domination.

We can start by immediately offering a free-trade agreement to Ukraine and partnerships to help them build natural gas infrastructure so they need not remain dependent upon Russia, which uses natural gas to blackmail them, and we could immediately release exports of liquid natural gas from the United States in conjunction with helping with that infrastructure.

Surely, the people gathering in the frozen snow of Maidan Square, crying out for the freedom of the West, deserve more from the leader of the free world than mere blandishments about abstract universal rights.

If you are standing in the frozen streets of Kiev, being beaten, bleeding—naked, as one opposition leader was—and yet standing proud for freedom, empty generalities from the President do you very little good.

On Benghazi, the President claimed nothing. We all remember last fall, during the debates in the Presidential election—just over 1 year ago—when the President emphatically stated no one cared more about the terrorist attack that happened in Benghazi than he did. Yet in the year and a half that has followed, the word ''Benghazi'' seems never to leave his lips. The reality is we have four Americans murdered in a preventable attack, and that is what the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded in a bipartisan manner; that this was preventable by Al Qaeda terrorists, and more than 16 months later, no one in Washington or Libya has been held accountable.

Congress and the American people, and particularly the families of the fallen, deserve the answers that only a joint select committee of Congress could get. Yet, sadly, the majority leader and Democrats in this Chamber are blocking a joint select committee. ''What difference does it make,'' former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asked. It makes all the difference in the world to ascertain the truth.

I will note, even though he said not a word about Benghazi in the State of the Union, he was forced to say something this week when he was interviewed by Bill O'Reilly. Before the Super Bowl, when Bill O'Reilly asked him about Benghazi, what is striking—and I would urge everyone to go and watch and listen to what the President said—Bill O'Reilly asked him: Did Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta tell him that night that the attacks were the works of terrorists? Mr. O'Reilly asked that question, and yet the President, over and over and over, refused to answer a simple yes or no, did Leon Panetta tell him it was the act of terrorists. He did not want to answer that question, and indeed he did not.

For those of us who have spent some of our career in a court of law, the technical term for his answer was ''nonresponsive,'' and were a judge there, he would have directed the President to answer the question that was put to him; nor did the President say one word about why the talking points were scrubbed to eradicate any mention of terrorism and the Al Qaeda affiliates involved.

We need accountability. We need accountability for those four brave Americans who lost their lives to terrorism and need to know why no one has been held accountable in the State Department, nor have any of the terrorists who committed that attack been brought to justice.

On Saeed Abedini, the American pastor brutally imprisoned in Iran, President Obama in the State of the Union Address said nothing. The reality is an American citizen has been wrongly imprisoned in Iran for more than 1 year simply for professing his Christian faith. All of us are blessed to live in a land where the Constitution guarantees us religious liberty. Yet a Christian pastor, going to Iran, professing his faith, was thrown in a pit of a jail.

There is no more compelling evidence that the Supreme Leader in Tehran represents the very same repressive Islamist regime today that he has for so many years and that his goal is not peaceful rapprochement with the West but the preservation of his own power.

The President of the United States should be standing and demanding Pastor Saeed Abedini's release, not making his captors into diplomatic partners. Indeed, it is notable, in the midst of our negotiations in Geneva, the nation of Iran transferred Pastor Saeed Abedini from one horrible prison to an even worse prison, where they keep their death row, where they send people to die, and he did so on the anniversary of Iran's taking Americans hostage—what is referred to in Iran as ''Death to America Day.'' That was not accidental. That was meant to thumb their nose at our Nation, and the President—instead of standing for an American wrongfully imprisoned for preaching his Christian faith—the President instead chose, in the State of the Union Address, to say not a word.

The President concluded his speech on foreign policy by saying:

> Finally let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats, but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understanding around the globe—to forge great cooperation, to expand new markets, to free people from fear and want. And no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

The reality is, if this past week has proven anything, that American leadership is not defined by global opportunities to do good and promote understanding. American leadership is defined by defending and promoting the values that have made our Nation great.

We do not do this by ignoring unpleasant realities, refusing to acknowledge the terrorist attack in Benghazi, sending administration officials out to claim it is not a terrorist attack but the result of an Internet video or refusing to stand for an American wrongfully imprisoned in Iran for preaching his Christian faith, and we do not do this by refusing to admit failure but by standing and facing our challenges, accepting responsibility for our actions, and speaking out with a clarion voice for the freedoms we enjoy—freedoms that should be the aspiration of every man and woman on the planet.

Leading from behind does not work. As a result of this administration's misguided foreign policy, the world has become a much more dangerous place

in the last 5 years. U.S. national security interests have been endangered dramatically. We see nations such as Russia increasing their sphere of influence, while the threats to the security of men and women throughout America grow and multiply.

Standing strongly with like-minded allies and encouraging others to seek freedom is not disinterested do-gooding; it is vital work that will promote the security and prosperity of the United States of America, something I believe is ultimately in the interest of all mankind.

I wish, when the President of the United States stood on the floor of the House of Representatives to address the Nation and to address the world, that when he spoke of foreign policy he had not embraced a foreign policy fantasy that disregards the cold, hard reality of the dangerous world we live in and the consequences of receding U.S. leadership.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to address two issues. The first is what is before us. That is the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. The second is something that should be before us; that is, the confirmation of the U.S. attorney for Minnesota. This will be the third time in a few days that I have spoken on this issue, which I will continue to do so until this gets done.

I rise in support of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. I know we are making progress on a proposal that extends Federal support for emergency unemployment compensation for 3 months and is fully offset.

I have spoken about the need to extend Federal support for unemployment insurance, and I would like to thank Senator JACK REED and Senator DEAN HELLER for their bipartisan leadership on this issue.

Unemployment insurance provides a critical lifeline. Workers pay into the program so it will be there when they are looking for work. Unemployment insurance helps families pay the mortgage or rent and put gas in the tank. Federal support for unemployment insurance is crucial for those Americans who exhaust their State-funded benefits and are still looking for work.

Throughout my time as the Senate chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I have focused on the continuing problem of long-term unemployment. Last month, I issued a Joint Economic Committee report that makes the clear economic case for extending Federal support for unemployment insurance, which keeps those Americans afloat, those Americans who are continuing to search for work.

The long-term unemployment rate now stands at 2.5 percent, nearly twice as high as when these benefits expired during the last recession.

We already know the consequences of allowing the Federal benefits to expire are not good. At the end of last year, 1.3 million workers lost all unemployment benefits, and another 3.6 million jobless workers could lose their benefits this year.

In my home State, roughly 9,200 people lost benefits at the end of last year and about 65,000 workers could lose their unemployment insurance by the end of this year.

Now is not the time for Congress to cut off extended unemployment insurance for those people who have been actively looking for work for more than 26 weeks.

These are not the people, as you know, who benefited from the uptick in the stock market over the last few years. They do not have stock portfolios. They are not checking the stock rate. They have not noticed that it has gone down a little bit recently, and they have not noticed that it went up all last year. They are just trying to put food on their table and keep a roof over their head. They are people who live in our States and who are our neighbors.

I have heard from countless Minnesotans who are sharing their stories with me about how unemployment insurance is a lifeline for their families and that ending Federal support for the long-term unemployed would be devastating.

I am sharing some of these letters because they tell the stories of hard-working Americans who are doing their best to look for work and support their families.

Linda from Little Falls wrote:

> Dear Amy,
>
> Please, please, please fight to extend the emergency unemployment past the end of the year. My husband and I are both still unemployed, by no fault of our own, and are both over 55. We are having a very difficult time finding employment, and to stop this program would be devastating for us and many others that we know. My husband was at his job for 37 years and they closed the doors, and I made more than some of the more junior people in my office, so I was let go first.

Think of that: a couple, the man working at his job for 37 years, the woman more senior at her job saying she was let go because she made more money than others in the office.

She ends by saying:

> Please help to get this extended. I feel like the people who are still left jobless are being forgotten!
>
> Thank you. . . .

Second letter, Donna from Prior Lake. She says this:

> . . . Having worked for over 30 plus years of my life, I am currently unemployed. I have applied for over 300 positions during the last 6 months. I do not expect a handout but I was really disappointed when I found out that I could no longer receive unemployment insurance after the 28th of December. . . .
>
> It's not that I am not trying to work, or that I am not looking for a position, but I am 55 years old and my full time job right now is to find a job. I am looking for temporary, full time, part-time, contract work. I would like to know that my congress people are doing the same for me. Donna.

Thirty-plus years of working. She is 55 years old. She has applied for over 300 positions. That is who we are talking about here. These are the people we are talking about when we talk about this kind of long-term extension of unemployment. It is something I hope my colleagues will keep in mind as we move forward and get this done and get this passed.

ANDREW LUGER NOMINATION

Now I would like to turn to another matter. The only thing these two have in common is they are both kind of victims of stalled-out situations of gridlock. The second one is about one person, but it is not really about one person, it is about a system of justice and it is about a decision on the part of the United States, part of our Founding Fathers, the part of our Congress that is going way back, that we would have a U.S. attorney in most States in this country, that we would have a U.S. attorney who would be charged with enforcing the Federal laws, that the Congress would have a role in deciding who that U.S. attorney would be, that the President would recommend, would appoint someone, and then the Congress has the job of simply deciding if that person is qualified or not for the job.

But it is not even just about one person or one system of government, it is also about the people who work in the U.S. attorney's office, in the case of the district of Minnesota, over 100 people, over 50 people who are prosecutors working in the office who deserve to have a full-time leader in the U.S. attorney's job.

For 2½ years, 888 days—I counted each day—Minnesota has not had a full-time U.S. attorney. It is a modern-day record. During those years, from August 2011 to August 2013, B. Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs. He was the Minnesota U.S. attorney, and as those of us involved in the long vote in this Chamber that lasted over 8 hours remember, he was also the Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. They had not had a full-time confirmed Director for 7 years. So he went in after the mess with Fast and Furious and was willing to be the Acting Director. At the same time he was the U.S. attorney for Minnesota. As you can imagine, there was a lot of work and cleanup to do at the ATF. That was where he was focused for most of his time.

Meanwhile, the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota kept going. But at some point after 2½ years, you cannot keep going on your own. Over the summer, the Senate finally confirmed B. Todd Jones as Director of the ATF, leaving the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position finally open for good. Even before the confirmation of B. Todd Jones, Senator FRANKEN and I, upon the recommendation of our bipartisan U.S. Attorney Advisory Committee, had already recommended Andy Luger, Assistant U.S.

Attorney, to fill the position. That was 197 days ago.

In November, President Obama nominated Andy Luger to become the new U.S. attorney. The Judiciary Committee approved his nomination unanimously on January 9. Our colleague from Texas, Senator CRUZ, had no objection to this nomination. We had no objections on the committee, which is saying a lot, because we have a lot of different people from different backgrounds and different political views on the committee.

Usually when people speak on nominations on the floor, it is because they are fighting to get someone through because there is an objection. This is not at all the case in the case of Andy Luger, who is trying to be the U.S. attorney for Minnesota.

What has happened in past cases with U.S. attorneys? Over the past 20 years, 4 Minnesota nominees to be U.S. attorney, appointed by Republican and Democratic Presidents alike, were confirmed within a day of when they passed out of the committee. During this timeframe, all of the nominees were confirmed within an average of 9½ days of being voted out of committee.

It has been 26 days since Mr. Luger was approved by the committee. It is time that we do the right thing by quickly confirming him to make sure that Minnesota has its highest law enforcement officer in place.

I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY for his help on this. He actually also has a U.S. attorney who is pending for the District of Iowa.

Why is the U.S. attorney important? I thought our pages would be interested in this fact, because we are going to be talking a lot about the U.S. attorney over the next few weeks if this keeps going on. The position of U.S. attorney is a law enforcement post that the Founders regarded as so vital that they created it during the very first Congress in the Judiciary Act of 1789. This is the same act that created the Attorney General and the structure of the Supreme Court and the lower courts. According to the act, each judicial district would be provided with:

> a person learned in the law to act as attorney for the United States . . . whose duty it shall be to prosecute in each district all delinquents for crimes and offenses cognizable under the authority of the United States, and all civil actions in which the United States shall be concerned . . .

The U.S. attorney is a position so necessary that President Zachary Taylor appointed Henry Moss—this is a name you may not have heard of before—to the post within 2 days of Minnesota becoming a State. So back then somehow they are able to get it done in 2 days. Now, we have been waiting 888 days. But in 2 days they were able to get a U.S. attorney in the job when Minnesota first became a State.

Since 1849, the District of Minnesota's 31 U.S. attorneys have upheld the rule of law, the Constitution, and the rights of our State's citizens and tirelessly pursued justice on their behalf. This quick action by President Taylor and the speed with which the Senate has confirmed past U.S. attorneys for Minnesota shows how much our government has historically valued this position.

These people have not been used as pawns in some kind of a fight over other issues, they have simply been confirmed. We have simply gotten it done. I think we can all agree, given what we have seen with the heroin cases that are on the rise all over the country in the last few months—this has certainly come to our attention in Minnesota. In Hennepin County alone, 60 opiate-related deaths in 1 county in our State in just 6 months of the year. So I think we can all agree that the importance of this position is no less important than it was in 1789 when this job was created.

Since the founding of the country, we have recognized the great authority placed in the hands of U.S. attorneys to uphold the rule of law, to protect our freedoms, and to exercise their power responsibly and only for just ends. A 1935 Supreme Court decision called Berger v. United States has gained iconic status for Justice Sutherland's description of a prosecutor's duty to follow the rule of law, serve justice, and play by the rules. Justice Sutherland so aptly wrote:

> The United States Attorney is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done.
>
> As such, he is in a peculiar and very definite sense the servant of the law, the twofold aim of which is that guilt shall not escape nor innocence suffer. He—

And we could say he or she for the modern day.

> —may prosecute with earnestness and vigor—indeed, he should do so. But, while he my strike hard blows, he is not at liberty to strike foul ones. It is as much his duty to refrain from improper methods calculated to produce a wrongful conviction as it is to use every legitimate means to bring about a just one.

That is the kind of statement that rings as true today as it did nearly 80 years ago. The men and women in the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office exemplify the professionalism, high ethical standards, and unwavering commitments to the rule of law and public safety that we expect of prosecutors. They work to protect public safety by focusing on offenders who harm our communities: terrorists, the ''worst of the worst'' violent criminals and drug traffickers, and major financial fraudsters.

They also work closely with local law enforcement to ensure local and Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively to prevent crime and lock up criminals.

For example, the office won a conviction in a $3.65 billion Ponzi scheme case, the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. Now this case was originated when, in fact, they had a full-time U.S. attorney. Most of the prosecution did take place when they had a full-time U.S. attorney in the office. Of course, with a major case like this, you would want a full-time U.S. attorney there to make critical decisions.

Also the office has an ongoing terrorism investigation that has led to charges against 18 people for aiding the terrorist organization al-Shabaab—8 of whom have been convicted, some receiving sentences of up to 20 years in prison.

So at some point, as that investigation continues, one wonders why the United States of America would want to have an office overseeing and prosecuting major terrorist cases without having a full-time U.S. attorney. I do wonder if this would ever happen in New York City or in the city of Chicago. I hope people keep this in mind as they look at the situation.

Other major accomplishments of the office include Operation Highlife, a major drug trafficking investigation involving more than 100 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers that resulted in 26 indictments, 25 guilty pleas, and sentences of up to 200 months in prison.

Operation Brother's Keeper, a successful investigation and prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang, took 22 dangerous criminals off the streets. This does not sound like a case that should be handled by an office that does not deserve a full-time U.S. attorney. That would be the prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang.

Or how about Operation Malverde, which received national attention, and was a prosecution of 27 defendants associated with a Mexican drug cartel, including the apprehension of the cartel's regional leader, and sentences as high as 20 years in prison.

The office also recently played a key role in shutting down a major synthetic drug seller in Duluth. This head shop was a major problem. They went after this head shop. They prosecuted the owner. The owner was recently in his house and was found to have over $700,000 in plastic bags hidden in his bathroom. They won that case.

These are just a few of the major cases that office has worked on in recent years. I will be telling you more in the days to come.

After 888 days without a full-time boss, these hard-working people deserve a leader, and Mr. Luger is the right person for the job. Again, I am not up here speaking about this because anyone in the Senate objects to Mr. Luger for the job.

It is time we vote on Mr. Luger's nomination. In the past, as we know, U.S. attorney nominations have simply gone through on voice votes, without much hurrah, within a few days after they go through the committee. Mr.

Luger is a dedicated public servant and has the breadth of experience, strength of character, and commitment to justice that makes him a well-qualified candidate to serve as Minnesota's next U.S. attorney. I have no doubt that he will uphold the principles Justice Sutherland sought in that opinion in a U.S. attorney. I urge my colleagues to support Mr. Luger's confirmation and to finally give the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office and its hard-working prosecutor the full-time U.S. attorney they deserve.

I yield the floor and I suggest of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE FARM BILL

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I am very pleased that we were able to vote on and pass a badly needed and long-overdue 5-year farm bill today and that we are finally on the verge of enacting the legislation into law with the President's signature.

With one in five jobs in Minnesota connected to agriculture, passing this bill has been a top priority of mine. I have been working on it for over 2½ years, along with a large number of my colleagues, and I have gone all around Minnesota talking to farmers and businesses. They tell me not only did they want a 5-year farm bill, but they needed a 5-year farm bill so they could plan for the future. Well, we finally have gotten it done.

There are so many important pieces to this bill, and I want to speak about a few of them today.

When I meet with farm leaders and visit farms all across Minnesota, I hear over and over about the importance of providing farmers with a strong safety net. There is a lot of uncertainty when it comes to farming. Once a farmer puts his crop into the ground, the crops are vulnerable to drought, to too much rain, to disease, and different kinds of pests and to other natural disasters. In 2012, for example, we witnessed a terrible drought that devastated the Nation's corn and soybean crops and forced ranchers to cull their livestock.

All of these safety net programs in the bill are important because they protect our farmers and ranchers, and they also protect American consumers by making sure families have a reliable, domestically produced supply of food.

The bill provides disaster assurances for livestock producers. It contains a dairy program so our dairy producers have the certainty they need. It contains a sugar program to help protect our sugar growers, American sugar growers.

Minnesota is home to a large number of beet sugar growers, and the sugar industry provides thousands of good-paying jobs, American jobs, and billions of dollars to the economy of our region. I fought to make sure we kept this vital program in place.

This bill also includes crop insurance so farmers have certainty with respect to their planting decisions.

One of the things the farm bill does, which was very important to me and to so many people, is to link the crop insurance program to conservation. Minnesota farmers are good stewards of the land and understand how critical conservation is, and so do our hunters and our anglers. With this provision in the farm bill, when our farmers receive the crop insurance benefits, they also agree to implement conservation practices that are good for our land and for our water.

In addition to a strong safety net in the conservation provisions, the bill also contains many provisions that are very important to Minnesota agriculture. For example, I pushed to include provisions to support beginning farmers. With the average age of farmers in Minnesota approaching 60, we need to invest in a new generation of farmers and ranchers. That is why the beginning farmer and rancher program has been a priority of mine. This important program will support training and education for beginning farmers, and it will help new farmers overcome the steep financial hurdles they often face when starting.

I am also very proud of the comprehensive energy title of the bill, which I helped to author. The energy sector in agriculture produces jobs and supports rural communities in Minnesota and across the country. The energy title includes programs such as the Rural Energy for America Program—or REAP—which provides farmers and rural business services with loans and grants so they can invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy to reduce their energy bills.

It also includes programs to help rural America develop advanced biofuels that will help wean the Nation off of foreign oil. It also includes programs to help move the Nation away from a foreign petroleum economy, the way products are increasingly made out of homegrown renewable biomass. Those are only some of what I fought for in the bill. The bill does all of these critically important things while also reducing the deficit by billions of dollars.

Like all bipartisan compromises, the bill is not perfect. In particular, I am not happy with the cuts to the nutrition program on which so many low-income families rely. I am somewhat relieved in the end these cuts were closer to what was in the original Senate bill than the draconian cuts the House of Representatives had called for and passed in their bill. I appreciate the tough job, though, my colleagues had on their hands to arrive at a final compromise.

At the end of the day, this is an incredibly important piece of legislation that I and many colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been working to get over the finish line. I am pleased we have finally come together to pass a bipartisan 5-year farm bill that will make needed reforms and give farmers the certainty they need to plan for the future. The bill we passed will not only support rural America but our entire Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Last week President Obama came to Congress and delivered the State of the Union Address. He admitted that under the Obama economy too many Americans are still out of work. The President didn't admit that his policies were to blame, but he did promise to act. He said: ''Wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that's what I am going to do.'' What the President promised all of us he promised the country last week.

I believe the President could start by coming clean about how his health care law is hurting jobs and harming middle-class Americans.

Just this morning, the Congressional Budget Office put out their estimate that the President's health care law will reduce the number of full-time workers by 2.3 million people by the year 2021. That includes people who will lose their jobs, people who will have their hours cut, and mostly people who will decide not to work. This is one of the perverse incentives in this terrible law. It actually encourages able-bodied people to not work. We are already faced with the lowest labor force participation rate we have seen in 35 years and this number they have come out with—over 2 million fewer jobs in our economy. When we were debating the health care in the Senate and the CBO came out with their estimate based on the way they read the law before it went into effect, they said this could negatively impact jobs and the economy to the tune of 800,000. Now we are at 2½ times that many—over 2 million fewer jobs—and as a result specifically of the health care law. We should be doing all we can to increase labor force participation. The health care law actually pushes it in the opposite direction.

The Congressional Budget Office also said this morning that the health care law will provide health insurance to 2 million fewer people this year than previous estimates had expected. One of the main reasons Democrats insisted they needed to pass this law in the first place was to cover uninsured people. Now the Congressional Budget Office doesn't even expect it to do the job the Democrats intended it to do very well.

The law is raising costs, it is hurting middle-class Americans, and not even helping the people the Democrats told us it was going to help in the first place. President Obama promised last week to act and to do something to

create jobs. What we see is this health care law is actually reducing jobs and reducing the number of people working. There are other things the President could do to help create jobs. The first thing, though, would be to work with Republicans to help repeal the health care law and come up with reforms that will actually work.

He could also look at a number of the options on the energy front that would help the private sector create jobs—no government money needed.

The President says he wants to do things that don't require legislation. Without any legislation at all, the President could approve the Keystone XL Pipeline and expand opportunity for thousands of American families.

Over the past 5 years, a small number of lawyers, consultants, bureaucrats, and environmental activists have made a living over haggling about the pipeline. Meanwhile, the President has turned his back on middle-class people who are in need of jobs, desperate need of jobs—people living in Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, other States.

TransCanada submitted its application for a permit to build the Keystone XL Pipeline more than 5 years ago. Ever since, President Obama has wasted America's time and money grasping for excuses in order for him to be able to reject it.

The State Department's latest environmental review confirms yet again that the pipeline shows no significant environmental impact, and it will support more than 42,000 jobs. Last summer, the President sneered at those jobs. He said they were just ''a blip relative to the need.'' For out-of-work Americans, those jobs are more than a blip. For them, this is more than a pipeline, it is a lifeline. It is way past time for President Obama to quit stalling and to finally do the right thing for those Americans.

They say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Yet the Obama administration has been doing the same thing over and over.

We have had a draft environmental impact statement. We have had a supplemental environmental impact statement, we have had a final environmental impact statement, then we have had a draft supplemental impact statement, and Friday we had the final supplemental environmental impact statement.

People at home listening to this would say why would it take 2 years—and it did, it took 2 years—to go from the supplemental draft environmental impact to the draft supplemental environmental impact statement. It makes no sense at all. This is the fifth report by the State Department and the conclusion is always the same. They could do this report another 5 times or another 50 times. The result is still going to be the same. It is a simple cost-benefit analysis. The cost is no significant environmental impact. The benefits are at least 42,000 jobs and a chance to reduce our dependence on overseas oil.

Now that the complaints from the far-left environmental extremists have been debunked, what do they say? According to the news reports, some will have protests and some are planning lawsuits. The Washington Post had a story this Sunday entitled ''For pipeline, the 'gut check' moment.'' It talked about some of the fanatical anti-energy protesters who refuse to accept the science. They want to pressure the President and Secretary of State Kerry to make sure these jobs never get created. This is one good quote: ''Neva Goodwin, co-director of the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University and a contributor to Kerry's past campaigns, said that she will be opposing the pipeline in another way.''

The article quotes her as saying: ''I am working with an informal network of political donors that will be pushing Kerry to do the right thing.''

Political donors and activists on the left are committed to killing this pipeline, regardless of the science, regardless of the middle-class jobs, and regardless of what is in the best interests of the country.

I find it astonishing that former Energy Secretary Steven Chu said yesterday, on this very point, what about the science, what about the cost-benefit analysis. President Obama's former Secretary of Energy said yesterday: ''The decision on whether the construction should happen was a political one, not a scientific one.'' So much for the President of the United States saying the decision would be based on science.

The President's activist base will be mobilizing and fighting against good American jobs. So what does the administration itself say? It says it wants to wait for some more opinions.

The White House Chief of Staff said Sunday that the President wants officials from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Energy Department, and other agencies to tell him what they think. I know what the former Secretary of Energy thought. He said the decision on whether the construction should happen was a political decision, not a scientific one.

You don't need to look any further. Look at the history of the project. TransCanada applied to build this pipeline more than 5 years ago. The Obama administration has set deadlines and said it would make a decision. First, it was the end of 2011; then it was after the election in 2012; and then it was at the end of 2013. That is what President Obama promised Republican Senators when he met with us last March. The administration has missed every deadline, broken every promise. It is interesting because the last time the Senate voted on the subject, 17 Democrats joined every Republican to support the pipeline.

The Obama administration is still trying to find a way to evade and to avoid having to make a decision. This really ought to be embarrassing to an administration. President Obama was elected to make decisions. The science is settled. The President should be embarrassed when his former Secretary of Energy says the decision on whether the construction should happen was a political one and not a scientific one.

Any objections have been heard; they have been answered. There are no more excuses. It is time for the President to make up his mind. Is he going to follow the science or just the politics? He should approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. He should do it now. He should do the job he was elected to do so middle-class Americans can do the jobs they desperately want to do.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 1963.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last week, Attorney General Eric Holder appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a regular oversight hearing. I appreciated the Attorney General's cooperation and willingness to appear before the Committee to discuss a variety of important matters. His testimony reminded us of the Justice Department's central role in carrying out the policy of Congress to support our Nation's law enforcement officers and first responders.

There is one vital program that provides support to the families of fallen law enforcement officers and other first responders, and that is the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program—the PSOB. I am proud to have authored legislation that has expanded and improved the PSOB in important ways so that we honor the sacrifices made by our law enforcement officers and first responders. From my Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act to the Dale Long Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act, I have fought to make sure that all of the families who have lost an officer or first responder are honored. We got those laws passed to honor the service of these dedicated first responders and we exercised considerable oversight to make sure the program was administered fairly and efficiently. We wish we didn't need the PSOB program because it is a reminder to Americans about the dangers law enforcement officers face every day. But because they do face those dangers, we need the program. I thank the Attorney General for his leadership and commitment to making this program more responsive to Congressional intent and more effective for grieving families.

Sadly, in 2013, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund reported that 111 law enforcement officers in the United States were killed in the line of duty. This preliminary data reflects an eight percent decrease from the number of officer fatalities in 2012, and amounts to the fewest line of duty deaths in more than five decades. This trend is good news, but Congress must not let up on its effort to increase officer safety. Every single line-of-duty death represents enormous tragedy for the families but also for the communities of these officers.

For decades, Congress has been steadfast in its support of law enforcement officers, and has traditionally maintained policies to increase officer safety and well-being. Until recently, Congress has acted decisively in support of those who dedicate themselves to protecting their communities. As someone who had the privilege to serve in law enforcement for 8 years, I am so proud of what we have done in the past. But now, for some reason, there are some in Congress who do not believe the support of law enforcement officers and first responders can be a Federal responsibility. I disagree. I remain committed to fighting for all of our State and local law enforcement officials.

Last fall the Senate Judiciary Committee reported two important bills to support our Nation's law enforcement officers. Both bills would help protect the lives of law enforcement officers. Both have been approved in this body for immediate passage by every single Democratic Senator. Unfortunately, there are some Republican Senators who continue to obstruct passage of both bills in the Senate. I worry that some are putting ideology ahead of the safety of our law enforcement officers.

More than a decade ago, a Republican Senator from Colorado, Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, and I joined forces—again, because both of us had a law enforcement background—and we authored the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act. We worked across the aisle to get both Republicans and Democrats to support us, and we created a grant program that has assisted State and local law enforcement agencies in purchasing more than 1 million protective vests.

In fact, Madam President, I remember a police officer who testified before the Judiciary Committee telling us how much he loved law enforcement, but what he loved even more was his family, his parents, his wife, and his children. When he talked, he said: I came within a second of never being with them again. He said: This is what saved me. He pulled up from under the desk a bulletproof vest and we could see the slugs stuck in it. He said: I was ambushed and had a cracked rib, but later that day I saw my family. Without this vest and the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act, I never would have seen my family again.

Between 2000 and 2010, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act has been reauthorized three times by unanimous consent. Bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers. These are officers who put their own lives on the line. They do not stop to say: Wait a minute, how did people vote on the bulletproof vest act? They respond when they are called.

Unfortunately, since 2012, a few Republican Senators have blocked passage of this bill and thwarted the vast majority of senators who want to see this program reauthorized so that it can continue to save the lives of those who keep our communities safe. There is no dispute that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program saves lives. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in February 2012, the Government Accountability Office noted that since 1987, bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers. I am disappointed we can't all come together to promote the safety of our Nation's law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line every day to ensure our safety. It is our duty to support them and I call on all senators to stand with them and pass this important legislation.

Madam President, I remember walking down the street in a town in Colorado and a police officer in uniform walked up to me and asked: Are you Senator LEAHY? I said: I am. He tapped his chest, and you could hear the thunk, thunk of the bulletproof vest, and he said: I want to thank you, and I want to thank Senator Campbell. That is all he said. I was choked up listening to him.

The Judiciary Committee also reported the National Blue Alert Act. This is a bipartisan bill. It passed the House of Representatives by an overwhelming majority of Republicans and Democrats. The National Blue Alert Act would create a national alert system to notify all State and Federal law enforcement agencies with critical information when an officer is injured or killed in the line of duty. I am a proud cosponsor of it. It is sponsored by Senator CARDIN and Senator GRAHAM, a key Democrat and Republican. This bill would help apprehend a fugitive suspected of seriously injuring or killing a law enforcement officer and who is fleeing through multiple jurisdictions. It defies common sense that any senator would object to this legislation, which contains no fiscal authorization and is universally supported by law enforcement leaders across the country.

In recent weeks, some Senators have expressed concern for the safety of law enforcement officers in the context of the Senate confirmation process. I do not question that these Senators are as concerned as I am about the safety of law enforcement officers, but I invite those who have expressed concern before the cameras for the well-being of law enforcement officers to come here and support the two bills I have discussed today and end the needless obstruction of this proven commonsense legislation. Do your press conferences, if you want. Say you are in favor of law enforcement. Who is going to be against law enforcement? But then prove it. Let us get these passed.

I am proud that every Democratic member has supported it, and most Republicans do. Those few who are opposed, let us vote. In the coming weeks, as the Senate moves closer to recognizing our Nation's fallen law enforcement officers during National Police Week in May, I intend to come to the floor to seek unanimous consent to pass these long-stalled bills. If Senators want to oppose them, fine, vote against them, but they ought to be willing to join me on the floor and explain those objections to the thousands of law enforcement officers and families who will soon gather in Washington to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their fellow citizens.

Our law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to keep us safe. They deserve a Congress that does more than just talk about their service. They deserve protection.

One of the saddest days I ever spent as State's attorney was going to the funeral of a police officer killed in the line of duty. It was a snowy day in Vermont. The snow was falling gently from the sky, and there were several miles of police cars—their blue lights reflected against the white snow. Such a peaceful scene—but not for the family of that police officer. I said to myself that I would do everything I could to protect them, and I appreciate those Republicans and Democrats who have joined me on this. We cannot bring back a fallen officer but we can and we must work together to protect the next one who may come under fire. I call on friends from across the aisle to join all the rest of us, and your fellow Republicans who have already joined, to protect law enforcement officers. Let us immediately reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act, and let us pass Senator CARDIN and Senator GRAHAM's National Blue Alert Act.

We have many—I know in my office—who have worked on this. I will mention Matt Virkstis, whose background is at the Vermont Law School, that some in this body are well aware of, such as our distinguished Senate Parliamentarian. But I also appreciate all those police officers—and I have no idea what their politics are—who come in to say thank you to those of us who have supported the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program. It is such an easy thing to do. It should be noncontroversial. Let us get back to the days where, when we have something noncontroversial, we just pass it. Together we can honor the service of those who keep us safe.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I see my dear friend is here, so I will not suggest the absence of a quorum. I yield the floor, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

THE DEBT AND DEFICIT

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I returned to the Senate in 2011 to tackle what I believed to be the greatest challenge facing our country, and I have devoted much of my first 3 years in this returned term on working to achieve a debt reduction agreement that would put our Nation on a path to fiscal health and fiscal responsibility.

I have been involved in discussions for endless hours and days and months with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Republicans and Democrats—with the administration and with outside groups over trying to put together a long-term deficit and debt reduction plan that will put us on the path to fiscal health, to finding a way forward to deal with our ever mounting debt.

I am committed to working with my colleagues and the administration on this issue because I believe, ultimately, the most important thing we can do for the future of our country, for future generations—the most important legacy we can leave during our term of service here—is to solve our Nation's fiscal crisis.

Recently, we have heard relatively little about this. Despite efforts which have been ongoing for the last 4 to 6 years, we have not come to a resolution; we have not come to an agreement which puts us at the beginning of a path to resolve this problem. Yet each year it mounts. Our debt dramatically increases. We continue on deficit spending.

Even though we have made a few efforts to reduce deficit spending to half of what it has been—at least for this coming year, based on the sequester and the implication of that—it is also clear that this is temporary. It is also clear that whether we reduce it in half or not, the other half still amounts to more than half a trillion dollars of excess spending, driving our debt higher and higher.

I am privileged to serve as the senior Republican Senator on the Joint Economic Committee. We spend a fair amount of time looking at the projections for the future and how they ought to shape our actions here in the Congress, as well as how we should work with the administration in terms of dealing with this issue.

The Congressional Budget Office is a nonpartisan group who deals with numbers, not with politics—at least they are not supposed to. They bring about their annual ''Budget and Economic Outlook,'' which was released today. Looking at it is shocking. Never has my conviction been stronger than today when I read this outlook which has just been released. It addresses issues important for all of us. I am going to talk about just the top 10. But if this is not a siren call to us to refocus our efforts on this issue, we are going to regret to the end of our lives not having taken action to begin the process of getting this country's fiscal health and responsibility back in order.

Again, this is the Congressional Budget Office—a nonpartisan group established by this body to deal with numbers and give us facts and projections from economists who give us the opportunity then to look at how we shape policies.

I was stunned by the CBO report, and I would like to share the shocking findings. I hope every Member of Congress will look at this. I am going to distribute it on behalf of the Joint Economic Committee so we have access to this. But it ought to send a shock wave through all of us, and it ought to provide us with the courage and the will to step up and do what I think we all know we need to do.

Finding No. 1. The national debt has exploded over the last several years. Gross Federal debt in 2014 is projected to reach $17.7 trillion, which is a figure larger than our entire economy and an increase of over $7 trillion in just the last 5 years under this President.

Point No. 2. CBO projects cumulative deficits from 2014–2023 to be $1 trillion larger than last year's projection for the same time period.

Last year was startling enough. Now we learn—after 1 year of sequestration, holding down spending, and speeches on this floor saying we are getting control of this, CBO comes along and says the cumulative deficits from 2014 to 2023 will be $1 trillion larger than they thought just last year. So while we are congratulating ourselves for holding down spending, we are told we are adding $1 trillion more than was projected and anticipated last year.

Now we are dealing with the so-called Affordable Care Act—yet to be proven to be affordable. CBO says that ObamaCare will reduce the number of full-time workers by 2.3 million people through 2021. At a time when this was sold as a plan to put Americans back to work, as something that would reduce our deficit because we would get control of out-of-control health care spending, we are told by the Congressional Budget Office that the number of full-time workers will decrease by 2.3 million. This is a significant increase from the last estimate of 800,000 during the same time period. So we have gone from an 800,000 projection not that long ago to 2.3 million.

Point No. 4. Mandatory spending—particularly our health and retirement security programs—is crowding out all other priorities. The Congressional Budget Office once again has said that as we look at our total budget, the mandatory spending continues to crowd out all other spending priorities.

This figure stood out and stunned me because it is the first time I have seen such an extraordinary jump in the mandatory spending percentage of our total spending.

On mandatory spending, CBO says interest on the debt is projected to consume 94 percent of all Federal revenues 10 years from now, squeezing out funding for all other priorities. Squeezing out? Eliminating. We are entering the season when interest groups from our State come with many creative and innovative ideas as to how they could better spend or spend more money on their particular programs.

They come in and say, ''We are here to encourage you to increase spending for medical research at the National Institutes of Health'' or, ''We are here to have you understand how important scholarship grants, Pell grants, and others are for enrollment of students in our States'' or, ''We are here to talk about the need to improve our infrastructure, to pave our roads and fill potholes and build and repair and establish new infrastructure for the movement of water, sewage treatment.'' On and on it goes. We can go right down the list of literally hundreds of requests as to how tax dollars ought to be spent to better improve our States, to better improve our health, to better improve our education, to better improve a whole range of things, including support for national security.

I have to look them in the eye and say: Every year we have a smaller pot of money percentage-wise of our budget to apply to all these discretionary spending programs which Congress has to approve every year.

I say: I am really not here to argue about whether money for the National Institutes of Health is more important than money for education grants or money for infrastructure development or any other endeavor in which the Federal Government is involved.

Every year all of these are going to be faced with less money to fund these programs. Some of them ought to receive less and some of them ought to be closed and the waste and fraud ought to be eliminated. Nevertheless, there are essential functions that need to be funded, and they won't be able to be funded adequately and will continue to shrink as the mandatory spending runs out of control.

But to think that of all the revenue—all the tax dollars that come into the Treasury 10 years from now, 94 percent will be spent on programs we have no control over and won't be available for any of the things I mentioned and dozens—if not more—of programs. It is simply unsustainable. Ninety-four percent. Six percent left to provide for our national security and national defense, our institutes of health, education, infrastructure development, manufacturing innovation, research and development—you name it.

CBO also said Social Security is in jeopardy. They project that Social Security ''will continue to run cash flow deficits every year during the next decade.'' And the disability insurance trust fund will be insolvent by 2017. That is 3 years away.

Let me repeat that. The Congressional Budget Office said that at the current rate the Social Security disability insurance trust fund will be insolvent in 3 years.

They also said mandatory spending on health care programs is exploding.

We have heard it said on this floor and we have heard it mentioned in the State of the Union Address and by the administration numerous times, that we are getting control of our exploding health care costs through the Affordable Care Act. In 2013 the Federal Government spent $861 billion on Medicare, Medicaid, and other major health care programs. This year the collective cost is expected to reach $933 billion and then nearly double by the year 2024 to $1.8 trillion. I don't call that getting control of our health care costs. Yet this mandatory spending part of our budget will continue to grow to the point where we simply have no money left for any other function of government.

All this, of course, is based on interest rates and the assumption as to what they will be. CBO says interest on our debt is set to double. Annual interest payments on the national debt are estimated to more than double over the next 10 years from 1.3 percent of our gross domestic product in 2014 to 3.3 percent of GDP in 2024. And we know from the past that estimates of what will happen with interest rates will drive that rate higher, particularly as our fiscal crisis gets more desperate.

Point No. 8. Again, the Congressional Budget Office says: We have a spending problem and not a taxing problem. Projected revenues will exceed the 40-year historical average of gross domestic product this year and outpace growth in our economy over the next 10 years.

So they say the problem isn't too little revenue. That is going to continue to pour in here as we continue to raise taxes. But you can't raise taxes fast enough or adequate enough without, one, destroying our economy or limiting our economy, but, secondly, to keep pace with the spending, which will hit its projected average of 20.5 percent this year and over the next 10 years outpace economic growth to a greater degree.

CBO notes that ''after 2024, the long-term trajectory of spending will drive up debt to nearly unprecedented levels.

Let me repeat that. This is a quote from the Congressional Budget Office: ''After 2024, the long-term trajectory of spending will drive up debt to nearly unprecedented levels.''

CBO suggests that such an upward path would ultimately be unsustainable.

Point No. 9. Labor force participation will continue to decline over the next several years. CBO projects that labor participation will drop to 62.5 percent by the end of 2017, fueled in part by the mandates in the Affordable Care Act and negative impact on job creators as a result.

Point No. 10. The Congressional Budget Office suggests that even these dire projections may be overly optimistic. CBO projects real economic growth of 3.1 percent, which is notably higher than private sector and IMF estimates of 2.4 percent to 2.8 percent. CBO says that it ''would probably trim its projection of GDP growth'' in 2014, based on late-2013 data. So the numbers we are dealing with today may be overly optimistic. As dire as this report is, it may be that we are underestimating the damage that will come from our inability to control spending and put us on a path to fiscal health.

This isn't another siren alerting Washington to the stark reality of our country desperately needing a real debt reduction agreement; this is, a five-alarm fire. Our fiscal house is engulfed in flames. The question is, When are we, who have been given the responsibility by the people we represent, going to have the courage to stand and do something about this, to put out this fire?

We cannot overlook the fact that our Nation is facing record deficits as far as the eye can see. We are careening on an unsustainable, unstable fiscal path. We need all hands on deck to address this now—not tomorrow, not after the next election. How many times have we heard, after this next election, we need to dig down and roll up our sleeves and take on this challenge. We need to do this now because the threat is now.

A credible, long-term plan to reduce our debt and put our country back on a path of fiscal health and economic growth and opportunity is the only way we can preserve the America we enjoy today or have enjoyed in the past. It is the only way to preserve that for future generations. So I think we have a generational responsibility that is as important as any we have faced before.

Many say our legacy rests on what we do here. Whether that is true, we certainly will be measured by what we do or what we don't do relative to this particular crisis. Again, this is not a Republican conservative standing and saying: This is how I see things. I am simply reciting how the entity we turn to, the Congressional Budget Office—a neutral body which just does the math and then draws conclusions from it—actually, we draw the conclusions; they put the numbers down. This is what the Congressional Budget Office has told us. These are stunning numbers, much more than any of us anticipated. I think there has been a little lull of us thinking: Well, we have things under control. We had sequester; that was kind of messy, but it did save some money. Now we have a budget. We are going forward and back to regular order.

What is regular order? Regular order is continuing to spend more than a one-half trillion dollars more than we bring in, in revenue. Raising taxes, according to CBO, is not going to solve the problem; that just hinders economic growth.

So those of us on both sides of this body who have worked to address these issues now, not later; those of us who have worked with the administration—and I was part of a small group working with the administration over a 7-month period of time with the President directly and with some of his top advisers to try to put something in place, as modest as it was or as it seemed to end up being—and we were not even able to complete that. That burden, that responsibility, that legacy rests on our shoulders. That duty rests on our shoulders, to acknowledge these facts, acknowledge these numbers, and to understand what impact it is going to have on the future of this country, our children and grandchildren, everybody's children and grandchildren, and perhaps even our generation.

So I will be distributing this report from Republicans on the Joint Economic Committee. I am hoping our report sends out yet another alarm, and we will not simply rest on the fact that we have made a baby step here in terms of getting some control over our spending. But as we turn around—akin to a little grass fire over here that we put out across the street while the five-alarmer is burning away, blazing away, and we are saying we will deal with it later. We can't deal with it later. We must deal with it now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from Hawaii for up to 20 minutes.

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

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND INNOVATION ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I am on the floor with my colleague Senator SCHATZ from Hawaii to talk about our recent introduction of a piece of legislation entitled ''The College Affordability and Innovation Act of 2014,'' which we introduced along with our good friends Senator MURRAY of Washington and Senator SANDERS of Vermont.

By way of framing the conversation we will have today, I wish to speak about one particular college that maybe paints a picture of the crisis we are in today with respect to the mounting cost that confronts kids and families when they want to get a college education and the variety of outcomes—the frankly surprising and often shocking variety of outcomes—that students are getting when they show up at the doors of institutions of education, particularly institutions of for-profit education. Corinthian College is a school in California—not a small one but a pretty big college. It has about 100 campuses in 25 different States. Let me give some statistics about Corinthian College. After about a year, over half of the students who enroll drop out. When they are finished with their education, whether it be to a degree or not, about one-third of all students who go to Corinthian default on their student loans. If 56 percent isn't a bad enough number in terms of 1-year dropout rates, after 4 years, only 6 percent of all the kids who walk in

through the doors of Corinthian College get a degree—6 percent of those kids.

Affordability isn't an argument in favor of this school either. For a legal assistant degree, they charge $28,000, but down the street at a community college a person can get that same degree for $2,500. They have a 35-percent default rate, a 6-percent 4-year graduation rate, and degrees that can cost 14 times as much as comparable local schools.

Guess what. The Federal Government rewards this school with $1.6 billion in Federal aid every year and $500 million in Pell grant money every year. So this example, which frankly can be repeated over and over, especially in the for-profit world, speaks to the challenge we have.

We have done a very credible job over the course of the last few years in keeping down the interest rate we charge students who want to take out loans to go to school. No one has worked harder on this issue inside this body and outside this body than the Presiding Officer. But we also have to have a concurrent conversation about the sticker price of college because it can't be enough that we are facilitating student borrowing; we actually have to try to engage in a real effort, using Federal leverage, for the first time perhaps in our history of Federal higher education policy, to push the cost of tuition down in the first place. That is what the College Affordability and Innovation Act seeks to do.

As Senator SCHATZ will talk about, there aren't a lot of issues that are much more important to the middle class than the cost of higher education. We both know that. We have partnered on this piece of legislation in part because not only are we not that far away from the time in our lives when we were in college, but we are paying back our student loans and saving for our kids' education, so we get how much of an annual budget can be taken up in paying for both prior and saving for future college. So we attack this problem in two ways—and I will just briefly speak about the first way and then I think the Senator from Hawaii can speak a little bit about the second method.

First, we think it is time for a little bit more innovation when it comes to the way in which college is structured. There is no magic to the fact that today one has to sit in a classroom for 4 years, taking a requisite amount of credits, in order to get a degree. There is a lot of interesting innovation happening out there where a small subset of schools are saying: Wait a second. Maybe there is a different way to do it.

For instance, maybe we should award a degree based on the competencies a student gets, regardless of whether the student needs 2 years or 3 years or 4 years to get that degree or, for instance, maybe we should give students who show up at their freshman year of school with prior learning more credit for that, whether they got that experience studying at a high school or in the work force or in the military. Some students don't have to start as a freshman; some students can start as a sophomore or a junior.

Maybe it is a renewed effort to consolidate graduate programs with undergraduate programs. I think President Obama is right; one doesn't need 7 years to become a lawyer in this country. It doesn't make a lot of sense that one has to essentially spend 10 to 15 years in education and training to become a doctor. We can consolidate graduate and undergraduate programs.

But whatever we do, we have to admit that one of the easiest ways to reduce the cost of a degree is to reduce the time it takes to get a degree. So the first part of our bill focuses on giving some grants to a small number of schools to build out the right way to do competency-based degree programming or initiatives to give greater credit for prior learning or consolidations of graduate and undergraduate degrees.

We introduced this piece of legislation because we think it is time to start having a real conversation about what the Federal Government can do to control and lower the price of college education. It is breaking the bank for families. We can do something about it. If we didn't have any tools at our disposal, maybe this wouldn't be a worthwhile conversation, but we give out $140 billion in Federal aid every year, and it is about time we start demanding some accountability for that money, whether it is accountability for cost or accountability for quality. It doesn't make sense for taxpayers to be sending $1.6 billion a year to a school with a 6-percent graduation rate, a 38-percent loan default rate, and prices that are simply not competitive in the landscape of college education.

I am pleased to be on the floor with my colleague Senator SCHATZ, and I am happy to turn the floor over to him.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut for his partnership on this legislation. He has been a real friend and a true partner. We are happy to have the support of Senator MURRAY from Washington as well as Senator SANDERS. They have been working on this issue for a long time.

This is the middle class issue of our time. It doesn't just belong to college-aged students; it belongs to all of us. Senator MURPHY spoke about how important it is for those of us who have young children and are beginning the process of trying to save for our children's college education, but it also belongs to the grandparents' generation. So many people are thinking about whether they can help their kids to ameliorate their existing student loans or their grandkids to be able to afford college.

As Senator MURPHY mentioned, we spend almost $150 billion in some form or fashion on Federal financial aid for institutions of higher learning, and that is good. That is a matter of national strategy. That is about the American dream. That is about the premise that the President talked about in his State of the Union Address, which is that if people work hard and play by the rules, they can move up the economic ladder. Higher education is one of the best ways to do that. It always has been in the United States of America. But here is the problem. The Senator from Connecticut talked about an individual example, but let me give the aggregate data.

Over the last 10 years, we have spent 20 percent more and we have gotten 25 percent less. We are spending 20 percent more and we are getting 25 percent less. That means that although our investment in higher education and theoretically in college affordability has increased, the net cost for students has gone up by 25 percent. We now have more than $1 trillion in student loan debt. It is the second largest source of debt, to mortgage interest, and it has now outpaced credit card debt.

This is a real crisis not just on the consumer level but as a matter of economic strategy for our Nation, because to the degree and extent that young people or people who want retraining or people who want to get a culinary degree or become a master carpenter or who want to become an architect or a doctor start to evaluate higher education and decide it is not a good value anymore, that doesn't just impact their individual family or their individual community but it impacts our national economic strategy.

College is no longer affordable to many people, and that is despite the fact that we are spending more in raw dollars and in inflation-adjusted dollars than ever before.

Senator MURPHY talked about the innovation portion of this legislation. We also have an accountability portion of this legislation. Here is the basic premise: As an institution of higher education, if you are a for-profit, if you are a not-for-profit, or even if you are a public institution, it is not the Federal Government's job to determine what your mission may be. And certainly if you are a private for-profit, we are not here to dictate your organization's mission. But a for-profit institution has no special right to Federal funding. If you are going to receive billions of dollars in Federal subsidies, we think it is reasonable, as we endeavor to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, that we tie some reasonable public policy strings to those dollars.

All we are saying is that we want institutions of higher learning—and especially their leadership—to wake up every morning and not think first about profits, not think first about how they are going to market to find more customers, but to think about access and affordability. And what we are saying is that different institutions may have different missions. A community college has a different mission than a

training institute, and a 4-year institution has a different mission than a graduate institution. That is all fine, and that is why we have established in this legislation an independent commission, comprised of experts, to determine what matrix of incentives and possible penalties would be appropriate for each institution.

But here is the bottom line: We are spending more and getting less, and we are spending $150 billion. This system is not working, and we are pleased to have the support of several of our colleagues. We are going to be enlisting the support of many others.

I am looking forward to continuing the conversation with the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. I thank Senator SCHATZ.

Here is another statistic to think about: It was not so long ago that we ranked first in the Nation with respect to 25-year-olds to 35-year-olds with college degrees, and that was not only a source of immense pride for this country but really the genesis of our economic greatness—that we turned out more college-educated young people than any other country in the world. In a very short period of time we slipped from 1st to not 2nd or 3rd or 4th but to 12th. We are now 12th in the world with respect to the number of 25- to 35-year-olds with college degrees.

Part of the reason for that is that a lot of other countries have caught up to the United States. But the crisis in this country is no longer just a crisis of access. That was the buzzword for a long time, that we needed to increase access to college. We now have a crisis of completion in which millions of students are starting school and not finishing for a variety of reasons but largely because of the astronomical cost.

Today the majority of students are not graduating in 6 years. So the issue about affordability is not just about attracting more kids into the doors of college—because I will tell you, as I am sure Senator SCHATZ does, I talk to a lot of kids who graduate high school and do not apply to schools in my State because they are scared off by the cost and they do not believe they are going to be able to put together the family resources to pay for it—but we also are losing a generation of workers because it is taking young people now 6, 7, 8 years to complete a degree, and often many of them are never completing that degree while still taking on loan after loan after loan and getting stuck in the worst possible situation whereby they have thousands of dollars in debt and no certificate to bring into the workforce.

So our effort is an effort to address cost because we care about access, but it is also an effort to address cost because we care about completion, and that is one of the big problems we have in our system today.

Mr. SCHATZ. I think the Senator is exactly right about that one. Let me give you some data. In 2011 only 38 percent of undergraduate students in a 4-year institution graduated on time. So when you think about the cost of college, you think about the per-year cost. But if it is taking 6 or 7 years, then the per-year cost is not as important as how realistic it is for you to finish on time. Just to be clear, those data could be skewed by the fact that there are part-time students and all the rest of it. That is not what we are talking about here. It is simply hard to finish on time.

But there is hope on the horizon. For instance, the University of Hawaii has undertaken a program called 15 to Finish. The basic idea is that students, especially in their freshman year, need to know that they need those 15 credits. They need to get help from their counselors so that by the time they are in their sophomore year, they are well on their way to completing their major of choice in the 4-year period of time.

The challenge now is that given that legislatures have cut funding to institutions of higher learning—and as a result you have fewer counselors and fewer people to assist in the student services office—oftentimes you do not get real counseling with respect to what you need until it is too late, and then you find that you are on a 5- or 6-year plan. Your family may not have made the financial arrangement that puts you in a position to be on the 5-year plan.

From a revenue standpoint, if your mission as an institution—for-profit or not-for-profit—is just to fill those seats and to generate those dollars, then that does not matter to you. But the challenge we have right now is that the institutions—the publicly traded ones—have pressures to generate profits. But even the not-for-profits and even the public institutions—the Universities of Hawaii and the Universities of Connecticut—have had their funding reduced by the legislatures. So their CFOs are trying to figure out new revenue streams, and as long as they can keep enrollment up, that enables them to go back to their legislature and say: We are in the black.

What we are saying is that is not good enough. We are not asking you to be in the black. We certainly understand the need to be fiscally responsible. We certainly understand the need to generate tuition revenue. But here is the thing: The point of higher education is for students to be able to move up that economic ladder, and to the extent that not only is it not accomplishing that goal, but it is actually doing the opposite for some of our students, they end up with a mountain of debt and either no degree or a degree that they find does not make them employable in the marketplace. That is a national shame. That is why we have to address this issue.

The good news is we believe we are spending a sufficient amount of money on the Federal level so we can effectuate these changes just by saying: If you want to receive Federal dollars for your institution of higher learning, then we are asking you to focus on access and affordability.

I want to give one last piece of data because it actually shocked me, even as much as I have been working on this issue. The for-profit institutions comprise about 12 percent of the students and 30 percent of the Federal dollars. Madam President, 12 percent of the students and 30 percent of the Federal dollars.

So while there are institutions that are for-profit that are doing great work and there are not-for-profits and public institutions that have to do a lot better, let's call it like it is.

One of the major challenges here is we have to wrap our arms around undue profits and publicly traded companies that are generating profits and spending Federal dollars on marketing to students and not providing very much in the way of value.

Mr. MURPHY. Let's be clear as to what we are talking about here. We believe we are talking about a pretty light hand of accountability in the sense that we are really going after the true outliers. The Senator talked about the work happening at the University of Hawaii or the University of Connecticut. We do not imagine that any flagship university is going to run afoul of these accountability standards. I, frankly, do not believe many public universities at all are going to run afoul of these standards. We are really talking about the handful of outliers that have just absolutely abysmal retention rates, graduation rates, default rates, or tuition increase rates.

We are also talking about, we think, a pretty nuanced process to try to bring those schools around before they lose eligibility for funding. Our bill says that if you are not meeting these standards, you have a pretty long period of time in which you would be on probation with no practical effects, in which you could set upon an action plan to improve your affordability or outcomes. Then if, after that period of time, you still were not hitting your benchmarks, then you lose 10 percent of your Federal aid, then 20 percent, and then finally, in the fourth or fifth years, you would become ineligible. That is plenty of time for a university to correct. But if a school that is starting out with a 6-percent graduation rate cannot improve that over 5 years, why on Earth would we continue to send $1 billion to that school when it could be used for students who are attending schools that care a lot more about quality education?

Mr. SCHATZ. I think the Senator is exactly right. We had the Senator from Indiana talking about debt and deficits and making sure we spend every Federal dollar intelligently. Right now, we are simply not spending this money in the most efficient and efficacious way possible. That is what this legislation is about.

Senator MURPHY and I talked about how it might have been a little more

politically satisfying in the short run to put hard caps on college tuition and precipitous goals that would have been very easy for us to articulate. But the fact is, given that you have different institutions with different missions and you have great work being done at the community college level, at the certificate level, and at the 4-year and at the graduate level, we wanted to account for the different missions, and we wanted to make sure we did not create the kind of incentive program that, for instance, would prevent an institution from wanting to take a kid in who is from a lower income area and maybe, statistically speaking, is more likely to default on his or her loan.

We really want, as a matter of policy, to focus on access. So it is access; it is affordability; it is the consistency with the mission. But here we are spending $150 billion—more than we ever have—on this national priority, and our results are worse than ever. So the status quo cannot stand, and I am really looking forward to working with my colleague on this important issue.

Mr. MURPHY. As we wrap up our time on the floor, when my great-grandfather came to this country, he knew that without a college education he could get a job pretty easily that would be able to put food on the table, have decent health care for his family, even provide him with a little bit of a pension that would take care of him. His son, my grandfather, followed him into that same profession, working for a ball bearing factory in New Britain, CT.

While those jobs still exist, they are getting rarer and rarer. For the next generation to succeed, we know they need access to a college degree. They are not getting that access to completion because we have been woefully inadequate in using the tools at our disposal at the Federal level to try to put pressure on colleges to deliver on both affordability and outcome.

We hope the introduction of the College Affordability and Innovation Act will allow us to open a new front in the debate on higher education to promote the idea of reducing the sticker price of college.

I thank my colleague for joining me, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for about 15 minutes, perhaps as many as 17 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I come to the floor today for the 57th consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge my colleagues to wake up to what carbon pollution is doing to our atmosphere and oceans.

I have described Congress as surrounded by a barricade of lies. Today I will be more specific. There is not just lying going on about climate change; there is a whole carefully built apparatus of lies. This apparatus is big and artfully constructed, phony-baloney organizations designed to look and sound as if they are real, messages honed by public relations experts to sound as if they are truthful, payroll scientists whom polluters can trot out when they need them, and the whole thing big and complicated enough that when you see its parts, you could be fooled into thinking it is not all the same beast. But it is, just like the mythological Hydra—many heads, same beast. So this speech is going to be about that beast.

A recent research article published by Dr. Robert Brulle, a professor of sociology and environmental science at Drexel University, describes the beast.

He joins a tradition of scholarship in this area, including work by Naomi Oreskes, Aaron McCright, and Riley Dunlap, each of whom has studied the forces behind climate denial; and David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, who explored chemical and lead industry campaigns to deceive Americans about the dangers of those products.

The intricate, interconnected propaganda web and funding network of this climate denial beast encompasses over 100 organizations, including industry trade associations, conservative think tanks, and plain old phony front groups for polluter interests. It has even co-opted media outlets, a phenomenon I chronicled in an earlier speech about the Wall Street Journal editorial page becoming a tool of polluter propaganda.

So let's take a look at this climate denial beast, and how polluter money and dark money flows through its veins. This chart from Dr. Brulle's report shows the complex interconnection of the beast's major players. The green diamonds are the big funders, the Koch-affiliated foundations, the Scaife-affiliated foundations, the American Petroleum Institute, and so on.

The blue circles are the who's-who of climate denial groups: the Heartland Institute—they are the group that compared folks concerned about climate change to the Unabomber, to give you a sense of what sort of people they are—the American Enterprise Institute, right here, the Hoover Institution, the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the Mercatus Center, to name just a few.

The purpose of this network, to quote the report, is ''a deliberate and organized effort to misdirect the public discussion and distort the public's understanding of climate.''

To misdirect and distort. The coordinated tactics of this network, the report shows, and I will quote again, ''span a wide range of activities, including political lobbying, contributions to political candidates, and a large number of communication and media efforts that aim at undermining climate science.''

That is the beast. Big money flows through it, more than half a billion dollars. The Drexel University report chronicles that from 2003 to 2010, 140 foundations made grants totaling $558 million to 91 organizations that actively oppose climate action. It looks like a big beast to build just to propagate climate denial. But if you look at carbon emissions from fossil fuels, which in 2011 EPA estimated to be over 5.6 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide—so take 5.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide and then multiple that by the social cost of carbon, the economic and health costs that the polluters cause and inflict on the rest of society, which OMB recently set at $37 per metric of CO_2—5.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide emitted, $37 per metric ton of CO_2 on the social cost of carbon. Just 1 year's emissions will cost roughly 200 billion—with a B—dollars. So the stakes are pretty high for the polluters. If they were to pay for the harm they are causing, half a billion dollars through the beast, over 7 years, to get away with $200 billion of harm every year is a bargain.

More than that, a lot of this machinery was already built. The beast did not spring up at once full grown, it grew over time—in industry-fueled campaigns to obscure the dangers of cigarette smoke, of acid rain, of ozone depletion. Who knows. There are probably parts of it that go back to the benefits of requiring seat belts and airbags in cars.

Looking back on the effects of these industry-funded campaigns of denial, we see that real people were hurt. But the denial machinery stalled action and made the wrongdoers money. It worked. So now the climate denial machine, the beast, is calling plays from the same playbook and even using many of the same front organizations.

So who is behind this base? Unfortunately for the proponents of transparency, a large portion of the funding is not traceable. Much of the money fueling the beast is laundered through organizations which exist to conceal donor identity. Some of the organizations examined by Dr. Brulle get over 90 percent of their money from hidden sources. Indeed, more than one-third of these organizations get over 90 percent of their money from hidden sources. The biggest identity laundering shop is Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund. Indeed, it is by far the biggest source of funding in this web. These twin entities reported giving a combined $78 million to climate denier groups between 2003 and 2010, and they refused to identify their funders.

According to the Drexel report, the Donors Trust and Donors Capital funding operation does double duty. It is the ''central component'' and ''predominant funder'' of the denier apparatus, and at the same time it is the ''black box'' that conceals the identity of contributors.

Interestingly, anonymous funding through Donors Trust and Donors Capital fund has grown in tandem with disclosed funding from fossil fuel polluters declining, anonymous dollars up,

disclosed dollars down. As we see here, Donors Trust and Donors Capital donations to the beast went from 3 percent of all foundation funding in 2003 to more than 23 percent in 2010.

At the same time, for example, the Koch brothers' affiliated foundations declined from 9 percent of all foundation funding in 2006 down to 2 percent by 2010. The same is true for other polluter-backed foundations. The ExxonMobil Foundations wound down its disclosed funding of organizations in the climate denier network and basically zeroed out by 2007.

It makes perfect sense. Why would the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil come under fire for obviously funding climate denial when Donors Trust and Donors Capital creates a mechanism for polluters to secretly fund the base?

Plus, the phony-baloney front organizations within the beast can pretend they are not funded by polluter money. Everybody wins in this identity-laundering charade except the public, obviously, whom this elaborate construction is designed to fool.

The product of the denial apparatus is a complex ruse to delegitimize the science that supports curbing carbon emissions, foisted on the American people with all of the financing and fantasy of a Hollywood blockbuster production. Here is Dr. Brulle describing what you see when you look behind the actors who appear in the media spotlight. I will quote.

> The roots of climate-change denial go deeper . . . Just as in a theatrical show, there are stars in the spotlight. In the drama of climate change, these are often prominent contrarian scientists or conservative politicians. . . . However, they are only the most visible and transparent parts of a larger production. Supporting this effort are directors, script writers, and, most certainly, a series of producers, in the form of conservative foundations.

Frankly, this apparatus is a disgrace. When the inevitable happens, and the impact of climate change really starts to hit home, people will want to know—Americans will want to know, people around the world will want to know why, why we did not take proper steps in time. It is not as if there is not enough scientific evidence for us to act. Why not? This denial operation, the beast, will then go down as one of our great American scandals, like Watergate or Teapot Dome, a deliberate, complex scheme of lies and propaganda that caused real harm to the American people and to our country, all so that a small group of people could make more money a little longer.

The fact that one of our great political parties is in on the scheme will be to its lasting shame. There is an old hymn that says, ''Turn back O man, forswear thy foolish ways.'' It is time for our denier colleagues to turn back and forswear their foolish ways. If they do not, there will be a day of reckoning and a harsh price to pay.

Every day, more and more Americans realize the truth, and they increasingly want this Congress to wake up. They know climate change is real. As the President said in his State of the Union Address:

> The debate is settled. Climate change is a fact.

Sir Winston Churchill once said this:

> Owing to past neglect, in the face of the plainest warnings, we have now entered upon a period of danger. . . . The era of procrastination, of half-measures, soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences. . . . We cannot avoid this period; we are in it now.

Well, we are now in a period of consequences. We have got to break the back of the beast and break the barricade of blandishments and lies that the beast has built around Congress. This campaign of denial, this beast, is as poisonous to our democracy as carbon pollution is to our atmosphere and oceans. With money and lobbyists and threats, it has infiltrated itself in an unseemly influence in our government. For the sake of our democracy, for the sake of our future, for the sake of our honor, it is time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICIES

Mr. HATCH. I wish to take a few minutes to talk about our Nation's international trade policies. Specifically, I wish to discuss efforts to renew trade promotion authority, or what we call TPA. The most recent authorization of TPA expired nearly 7 years ago. Since that time, Republicans have, by and large, expressed support for renewing it.

In August 2010, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk testified that the Obama administration needed TPA to conclude ongoing trade negotiations. However, after that time, little was done to move the ball forward on renewing TPA. In September 2011, Minority Leader MCCONNELL and I offered an amendment on the Senate floor to renew trade promotion authority for President Obama.

Unfortunately, despite strong support from the Republican caucus, a number of Democratic Senators actively opposed our efforts, and it received virtually no Democratic support. As a result, our efforts failed.

In March 2013, then-Acting USTR Marantis again expressed the administration's support for renewing TPA and pledged to work with Congress to get it done.

In June 2013, United States Trade Representative Michael Froman, during testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, formally requested on behalf of President Obama that Congress renew TPA.

Throughout most of 2013, I worked with Chairman BAUCUS and Chairman CAMP of House Ways and Means to craft a bipartisan bill to renew TPA, one that could pass through both Houses and the Senate. We introduced our bill in January.

Last week, in his State of the Union Address, President Obama asked Congress to pass TPA legislation so his administration could complete negotiations on two very ambitious and important trade agreements. While I thought President Obama could have spoken more forcefully on this matter, his call for TPA renewal was clear and unambiguous. Yet so far the call appears to be going unheeded—or should I say among Democrats in the Senate.

Why is TPA so important, trade promotion authority? I think some additional context is necessary.

The administration is currently in the midst of negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, an Asia-Pacific trade agreement that is currently being negotiated between the United States and 12 other countries, including some of the world's largest economies, such as Japan, Canada, and Mexico.

The Asia-Pacific region represents more than 40 percent of the world's trade and, as a group, TPP countries represent the largest goods and services export market for our country, the United States of America.

On the other side of the world, the United States is negotiating a bilateral trade agreement with the 28 countries of the European Union. This is called TTIP. The United States and the EU generate over half of the world's economic output. Total goods trade alone, however, between the United States and the EU amounts to over $1 trillion a year. Investment flows represent another $300 billion a year on top of that.

Together, these two trade agreements have the potential to greatly expand access for U.S. products in the foreign markets around the world. Most importantly, they would help to grow our economy and create jobs at home.

These two separate trade agreements and negotiations represent what is the most ambitious trade agenda in our Nation's history. While everyone knows that I am a pretty outspoken critic of the Obama administration, I believe the administration deserves credit on this front. But if these negotiations are going to succeed, Congress must approve TPA.

Because of the unique structure of our government, our country needs TPA. Our trading partners will not put their best deal on the table unless they know the United States can deliver on what it promised.

TPA empowers our trade negotiators to conclude agreements and provides a path for passage in Congress. That is why every President since FDR has sought trade promotion authority. No economically significant trade agreement has ever been negotiated by any administration and approved by Congress without it.

Put simply, if Congress does not renew TPA, the TPP negotiations and the TTIP negotiations with the European Union will almost certainly fail. That is why it is so disconcerting to me to see how some of my colleagues across the aisle have responded to the

President's call for TPA renewal. TPA is one of the few issues where both parties can and should be able to work together to achieve a common goal.

I know that I, along with my Republican colleagues, stand ready and willing to work with the administration to approve TPA as soon as possible. I think I have a reputation of working across the aisle and bringing people together. This is one I want to bring people together on—and I shouldn't even have to argue about it, but I do.

I believe the bipartisan bill Chairman BAUCUS and I recently introduced to renew TPA would receive strong bipartisan support in the Senate if it were allowed to come up for a vote. Indeed, I am confident that the vast majority of my colleagues would join me in supporting the bill, both Democrats and Republicans.

The problem is Republicans are not in the majority in the Senate. It is the Democrats who control the agenda. Unfortunately, the President's call to renew TPA does not appear to be a priority for some of the Democrats, certainly the leadership of the Democrats.

The question is, Will Senate Democrats work with the President on this issue? I don't know the answer to that question, but I have to say that things don't look very good to me. Instead of robust support for the President and his trade agenda, the response we have seen from some Democrats has ranged from awkward silence on TPA to outright hostility. Needless to say, I am extremely disappointed by this.

The issue is fairly simple. If we want to grow our economy through trade, Congress must approve TPA and do so soon. The President can play a unique and key role. By forcefully advocating for TPA renewal, he can help turn some of the skeptics in his party around.

Recently, the Financial Times published a powerful editorial which outlined the need for TPA and the role the President must play for TPA to succeed.

According to the editorial:

> Twenty years ago, President Bill Clinton pulled out all the stops to push through approval of the controversial North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada. He was able to squeak through a narrow victory by deft lobbying of lawmakers and a willingness to make a strong case for globalization to the American public. Mr. Obama is lagging behind his predecessor on both counts. The case for TTIP and TPP are both strong. The time for Mr. Obama to make these arguments has arrived. He has every incentive to succeed. Failure to secure [TPA] would be a grievous blow to his presidency.

I understand there are some powerful critical forces that leave some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to oppose international trade. However, let's be clear: If we fail to approve TPA, we will be doing our Nation and our economy a great disservice. International trade is good for our country. It is one of the few tools Congress has to grow our economy that does not add to the Federal deficit. As I mentioned, Senator BAUCUS and I, along with Chairman CAMP, have negotiated and introduced a bipartisan, bicameral TPA bill. It is, in my opinion, the only TPA bill that stands a chance of getting passed in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have a choice. They can either work with the Republicans to pass our bill and empower our country to complete these important trade agreements, or they can throw up more roadblocks and cast more uncertainty on the President's trade agenda.

As I stated, Republicans stand ready to work with President Obama on these issues and to help these trade negotiations to succeed. For the sake of our country and our economy, I sincerely hope my Democratic colleagues and friends in the Senate are willing to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss the recent report by the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, which contains updated estimates of the insurance coverage provisions of the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare.

It was just on Sunday the President told Bill O'Reilly of Fox News—in front of all America on Super Bowl Sunday—that his health care bill is working. Today, the Congressional Budget Office has changed that tune. We learned from the report that ObamaCare will now cost us $2 trillion. People may recall President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than $1 trillion. We also learned that we are expected to lose—expected to lose—2.5 million full-time jobs over the next 10 years. Finally, the CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

Let me go over that again. President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than $1 trillion. Now the CBO says it will be $2 trillion. We are expected to lose 2.5 million full-time jobs over next 10 years. Finally, CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

If this is working, what does ''broken'' mean to this President?

As I am reading this report and accompanying reaction, the most recent updates sound hauntingly familiar. In fact, I believe this is something that I and my colleagues spoke about every day during the debate on health care reform. We questioned at that time whether the CBO estimates accurately reflected the impact of ObamaCare on the American people, which leads to why I am on the floor as of this evening. This is about accountability, folks.

During the debate, we questioned whether the scoring done by the CBO was fraught with gimmicks or an unrealistic belief that Medicare would achieve significant savings in the future.

I have serious concerns with the accuracy of the scoring done on ObamaCare and its portrayal of the impact of this legislation versus the stated benefits for the American people.

We cannot keep doing this. There are people's lives at stake, people's lives that we are dealing with. The CBO projections during the health care reform debate seemed to significantly underestimate the negative impact of ObamaCare. Because of those projections, supporters were able to jam it through—one vote, everybody knows about that vote—and now the American people have to pick up the tab on the CBO's errors.

I am calling for hearings in the Finance Committee, upon which I sit, to demand CBO come before the committee and explain to the Congress and the American people why and how its scores, which led to the passage of ObamaCare, did not tell the whole story. This is about accountability for past actions, and we must ask the question, the difficult question, an unfortunate question: Was this political? Were the books cooked?

CBO needs to take the responsibility for the differences between their projections and the most recent updates just released as of this morning. We must have accurate estimates on the costs and benefits of the legislation so we can do our jobs. This shouldn't be about politics or gaming the system. This is about people's lives, and it is our responsibility to get that right. Let the hearings begin. Let the CBO provide answers. The CBO must answer this Congress and America.

I yield back the remainder of my time, 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. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that 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.

PROTECTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, on December 22, 2004, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the beginning of a second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. As we enter the final year of this international campaign we should remind ourselves of the importance of protecting indigenous populations and take stock of what has

been achieved and what more needs to be done.

I have always believed that as we advance and defend our national interests around the globe we must also fulfill our moral obligations. As chairman or ranking member of the subcommittee that funds the Department of State and foreign operations for over two decades, I have had a unique vantage point from which to watch globalization evolve and test our Nation's commitment to its ideals. As the world's population swells, technology advances, and competition for energy and natural resources intensifies, the rights and needs of indigenous populations are threatened by governments and corporations seeking to exploit the ground on which they have built their lives and preserved their cultures and the wealth beneath it.

This has been the reality for too many indigenous cultures, and it is no surprise that they are among the most vulnerable and disenfranchised populations on Earth. These groups have distinct ways of life and histories, tied to land they have inhabited and protected for thousands of years. But their established roots rarely afford them representation in governments that hide behind laws and regulations proclaiming equal treatment for indigenous populations who have virtually no role in the political process.

Recognizing that indigenous peoples have unique rights and needs that the rest of humanity has a responsibility to protect, several years ago I undertook to create the position of advisor for indigenous peoples' issues at the U.S. Agency for International Development. I am pleased that USAID recently established this office to implement and coordinate a comprehensive, U.S. Government strategy on indigenous peoples, with specific goals, guidelines, benchmarks, and impact assessments, including support for indigenous peoples' organizations.

The selection of Brian Keane to fill this role is an early indicator that it will be addressed proactively. Brian, who has devoted his professional life to these issues, will work to ensure that U.S. Government policies and programs around the world are carried out in a manner that respects the rights of indigenous peoples and responds to their needs. Brian's work in indigenous communities all across the globe, and his advocacy on behalf of indigenous peoples to inform international policy making, has prepared him for his task.

This position must not be merely a symbolic post. From the Amazon rainforest to the Kalahari Desert, indigenous peoples have for centuries faced existential threats due to racism, greed, misguided policies of forced assimilation, and indifference. However, for the surviving groups, the length of their struggle belies the acuteness of the threat. In Brazil, the Guarani people have been driven from their land and are plagued by alcoholism, poverty, and a suicide rate many times the national average, replaced by expanding sugarcane farms.

Anthropologists explain that the loss of land by indigenous groups often leads to social disintegration and economic dependence on the state, as we know only too well from our own experience. We see it in places like Botswana, where the San people, traditionally nomads, have been uprooted from their ancestral lands to make way for diamond mines, forced into settlements, and exposed to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Their way of life, which the Botswana Government should be protecting, instead is being destroyed.

The circumstances of each indigenous culture, whose members total as many as 400 million people worldwide, differs from continent to continent but they face similar threats. To defend their rights, protect their land, and preserve their cohesiveness, a key policy change is needed. We must commit to honoring the principle of free, prior, and informed consent.

For too long, governments, often including our own, have paid lip service to consulting native populations as a substitute for obtaining their consent for actions that directly affect them. More often than not, such consultations have been cursory or conducted in a manner that divides members of indigenous communities against each other. I am pleased that in 2010 President Obama formally declared our Nation's support for the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, reversing the position that the United States had held since the declaration's adoption in 2007.

While that was a positive step, combatting discrimination against indigenous peoples requires more than policy statements, it requires action. That is why I want to highlight the ongoing threat to these populations and call attention to the new position of advisor for indigenous peoples' issues.

In today's globalized world, ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples is everyone's responsibility. Respect for their rights is not only necessary for their continued survival as distinct cultures but also to help ensure the well-being of the entire planet. Whether we are talking about biodiversity protection, climate change or sustainable development, indigenous peoples have much to offer. Their ancestral knowledge, developed over millennia, has been vital to preserving what is left of the world's critical ecosystems and can play a key role in finding solutions to challenges that humanity is currently facing.

I look forward to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly that will take place at the United Nations in September of this year. Its main objective is to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples and to pursue the objectives of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The World Conference provides an important chance to give real meaning to the principles expressed in the declaration and is a historic opportunity for the United States to lead the international community by putting forward a concrete plan of action aimed at ensuring that the collective rights of indigenous peoples, including the right to free, prior and informed consent, are recognized and respected.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I wish to speak about the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. I am joined on the floor today by my friend Senator BAUCUS, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, to stress the program's importance.

Today CHIP provides health coverage to over 37,000 children in West Virginia and over 8 million children across the United States in working families who cannot afford private health insurance. These kids deserve a healthy start in life. They are our future leaders and decisionmakers. They deserve the opportunities this program provides.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for speaking today on this important issue. I have always admired the Senator's hard work and dedication to provide health coverage not just to the children of West Virginia but children across the United States. He has been a real inspiration to me and many of our colleagues.

Back in 2007 and 2009, Senator ROCKEFELLER and I worked together with fellow Democrats and Republicans to reauthorize CHIP. The legislation brought legislators together from both sides of the aisle because CHIP was not about politics, it was about helping kids. Even 10 years prior to that, the original legislation that created the Children's Health Insurance Program passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. CHIP has always been very popular. Bottom line is this program works. It works for children and it works for America.

Unfortunately, while this program has been authorized through the year 2019, the funding expires next year. I believe it is critical for the Senate to continue to fund CHIP beyond 2015 in order to continue to provide essential health coverage to our lower income children and pregnant women. I regret I will not be here to carry on the work of helping these families.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I agree with Senator BAUCUS. Without the funds to run this program, millions of children will lose health care coverage. Before CHIP was established in 1997, 23 percent of low-income children were uninsured. Today, according to the Urban Institute, that number has dropped to 12.8 percent. I believe that number should be zero; no child should be without access to the coverage they need to grow up healthy and happy. Thanks to this program and other sources of coverage, we are on our way to achieving

full coverage: more than 9 out of 10 American children now are insured.

Studies have shown that children enrolled in CHIP have demonstrated improvements in their ability to pay attention in class, school attendance, reading scores, and participation in school and childhood activities.

Our efforts are working but we must do more. We must continue to work to enroll kids who are eligible but not yet covered. We must ensure that funding for this essential lifeline for families does not expire. I, too, regret I will no longer be in the Senate in 2015 to continue this work. That is why I hope that we can solve the problem this year, and I am very glad my good friend, the senior Senator from Montana, and I could come to the floor today to deliver this important message.

VOTE EXPLANATIONS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, due to my flight being canceled, I regret having missed a vote on February 3, 2014. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, due to an unanticipated family emergency, I was unable to cast a vote on February 3, 2014, relative to rollcall vote No. 20 to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

2014 OLYMPIANS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the great accomplishments of the many New Hampshire athletes who will be representing the United States this month in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. These athletes have all exhibited incredible dedication to their respective sports and have proven their remarkable abilities in competitions among their peers. A selection to the U.S. Olympic team is a tremendous honor and a fitting reward for their many years of hard work.

In New Hampshire, growing up on the snow is a way of life. With access to the unparalleled beauty and terrain of the White Mountains, thousands of miles of trails, and nearly 1,000 lakes, Granite Staters are at home on the snow, on the ice, and in the air.

New Hampshire is proud to acknowledge our State's Olympians and is excited to show the world their talents during the Sochi games.

Nick Alexander of Lebanon, NH, will be competing in ski jumping. As the 2013 U.S. National Champion on the K90 ski jump, we are excited to see Nick build on his impressive showings at the Continental Cup and National Large Hill Championships as he competes for Team USA.

Sean Doherty of Center Conway, NH, will be competing in the biathlon. We hope to see Sean, a first-time Olympian, continue his accomplishments from the International Biathalon Union Junior World Championships last year and excel at this year's Olympics.

Nick Fairall of Andover, NH, will be competing in ski jumping. As a first-time representative of Team USA, we have been impressed with Nick's performances in World Cup events and his victory at the National Large Hill Championships. We are looking forward to watching him compete on the Olympic stage

Julia Ford, of Holderness, NH will be competing in alpine skiing. A first-time member of Team USA, we hope to see Julia perform as she did in the U.S. Championships and North American Cup races. As the 2011 NorAM downhill Super G and super combined champion and 2012 NorAm overall and downhill champion, we are eager to cheer Julia on in Sochi.

Kris Freeman of Thornton, NH, will be competing in cross-country skiing. As a well-decorated Nordic skier and representative of Team USA for the fourth time, I hope that Kris will be able to build upon his past experiences and excel at this year's Winter Olympics. We are proud to have Kris representing New Hampshire once again.

Chas Guldemond of Laconia, NH, will be competing in snowboarding. A first-time member of Team USA, Chas has built an impressive resume in slopestyle competitions, and we hope that his success will continue in his Olympic debut.

Julia Krass of Hanover, NH, will be competing in freeskiing. A first-time participant in the Olympics, we are excited to watch 16-year-old Julia compete in the inaugural ski slopestyle event.

Bode Miller of Franconia, NH, will be competing in alpine skiing. As the most decorated US male skier in World Cup history and five-time representative of Team USA, Granite Staters are excited to see Bode compete again and hope to see him repeat his impressive, three-medal performance from the 2010, Vancouver Olympics.

Leanne Smith of North Conway, NH, will be competing in alpine skiing. As a representative of Team USA for the second time, we hope that the combination of her previous Olympic experience and her success in recent World Cup events translates into victory this year.

DJ Montigny of Dover, NH, will be coaching three women on the freeskiing team. A first time coach at the Olympics, DJ was named Freeskiing International Coach of the Year in 2013. We look forward to DJ helping lead Team USA athletes to victory in Sochi.

Many additional Olympians have been educated, coached, trained, or even competed in New Hampshire. These athletes with Granite State ties include Kacey Bellamy, Team USA, ice hockey; Sophie Caldwell, Team USA, cross-country skiing; David Chodounsky, Team USA, alpine skiing; Hannah Dreissigacker, Team USA, biathlon; Susan Dunklee, Team USA, biathlon; Nolan Kasper, Team USA, alpine skiing; Hannah Kearney, Team USA, freestyle skiing; James Van Riemsdyk, Team USA, ice hockey; Ida Sargent, Team USA, cross-country skiing; Mikaela Shiffrin, Team USA, alpine skiing; Katey Stone, Team USA, Head Coach, ice hockey; Sara Studebaker, Team USA, biathlon; and Andrew Weibrecht, Team USA, alpine skiing.

It is my honor to congratulate these New Hampshire athletes. I wish each of them and all of Team USA the best of luck as they seek to bring home the gold at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

PITTSBURGH OPERA'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera on their 75th anniversary. Since its founding by five dedicated women in 1939, the Pittsburgh Opera has consistently worked to foster new generations of artists and fans by making opera accessible to a diverse audience. The stated mission of the Pittsburgh Opera is ''to culturally enrich Pittsburgh and the tri-state area, and to draw national and international attention to the region''. Roughly 31,000 people attend one of their five opera productions each year.

Over time, the Pittsburgh Opera established its own orchestra, has become a leader in the use of supertitles, and forming the Resident Artists Program to train young artists and increase awareness of opera, developing community programming throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. In so doing, the company has served not only Pittsburgh and the tristate area, but has become a respected national organization, attracting such luminaries as Luciano Pavarotti, Beverly Sills and Joan Sutherland.

The Pittsburgh Opera has also been an invaluable steward for the future of opera and Pittsburgh's arts culture through its focus on environmental sustainability and fiscal management. In 2008, the company moved to new headquarters in the historic George Westinghouse Air Brake Factory, a cultural landmark that became the oldest LEED-certified building in Pittsburgh in 2011, making the Pittsburgh Opera the first opera company in the United States to receive LEED certification in the operations and maintenance category.

Similarly, in 1997, general director Mark Weinstein sought, through financial management and long-range strategic planning, to ensure a sound future for the Pittsburgh Opera, increasing the company's assets and establishing a gold standard for financial management in the industry. This planning, as well as the establishment of the Artistic Excellence Project to raise funds for engaging elite singers and directors, has ensured that the Pittsburgh Opera will continue to serve as a cultural centerpiece of Pittsburgh and a respected leader in the greater opera community.

Again, I want to congratulate the Pittsburgh Opera on the impressive achievement of their 75th anniversary. I wish them the best and look forward to their continued enrichment of the arts community both in Pittsburgh and nationwide.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera, the seventh oldest opera company in the United States. The Pittsburgh Opera is currently engaged in its 75th season, and I would like to congratulate them on this momentous anniversary. The company started in 1939 when five ambitious women were determined to bring opera to their community. Within a year, these women had assembled musicians, singers, sets, costumes, and lighting, and produced the opera company's first performance, Offenbach's ''The Tales of Hoffman'' at Carnegie Music Hall. Before long, the Pittsburgh Opera Society, under the leadership of general director Dr. Richard Karp, had become a fully professional organization.

The Pittsburgh Opera is not only recognized as an asset to southwestern Pennsylvania, but it is known throughout the international opera community for the fine skill and artistry of its productions. It has welcomed numerous celebrity vocalists over the years, and the company's notoriety only continues to grow and attract more talent. I believe that the Pittsburgh Opera has been undeniably successful in fulfilling its stated mission ''to culturally enrich Pittsburgh and the tri-state area, and to draw national and international attention to the region,'' and I think that the 31,000 Pittsburghers and visitors who attend the opera's productions annually would agree.

The Pittsburgh Opera is also dedicated to fostering the development of future opera talent. The company has established and nurtured a resident artist program that ranks among the top five in the country and has the distinction of being the only program in the United States that trains singers as well as stage directors. These artists present two fully staged productions of their own and also develop a variety of general music programs to perform at public schools, community centers, and libraries.

Six years ago, after nearly 70 years without its own center, the Pittsburgh Opera acquired and renovated the original home of the George A. Westinghouse Air Brake Co. in Pittsburgh's historic Strip District and transformed it into a state-of-the-art home for the development and production of opera. This structure is the oldest LEED-certified building in Pittsburg, and it is a fitting home for an opera company with such a rich history and a promising future.

Again, I want to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera on its 75th anniversary. I wish them nothing but success in the next 75 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FREEMASONS CONFERENCE

• Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I wish to join grand master Gerald E. Piepiora and the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland in welcoming the 2014 Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, which will be convening in Baltimore from Sunday, February 15, to Tuesday, February 18. This annual meeting is the largest gathering of grand masters in the world and the first time they have come to Baltimore. This delegation of grand masters represents 2 million Freemasons from all 50 States; Washington, DC; Puerto Rico; the Provinces of Canada; and the United Mexican States. In addition, a delegation of grand masters representing Freemasons from around the world also will be attending the conference.

Throughout their history, Freemasons—the oldest and largest fraternity in the world—have dedicated their lives to cultivating good moral character both within themselves and in their communities. The Masonic fraternity is dedicated to caring for those less fortunate and to giving back to the community, contributing well over three quarters of a billion dollars annually to philanthropic causes in North America alone.

Maryland Masons have carried on this tradition since 1787 by serving their communities with local scholarship programs, student assistance, volunteerism, educational support, and other charitable activities. Maryland Masons make important contributions to the quality of life of Marylanders at every stage of life, including the Maryland Child Identification Program that provides free identification and protection against the problem of missing children; free childhood language disorder clinics; transportation to regional Shriners Hospitals for children with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate; and retirement housing and continuing care for Masons and their families.

I urge my colleagues to join me in welcoming this distinguished group of international guests to Maryland and in wishing the masons of Maryland continued success in their pursuit of fraternity, brotherly love, relief, and truth.•

REMEMBERING WALTER J. ''JIMMIE'' FEW

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we often note in our record the passing of government and business leaders of renown, and that is appropriate. But it is also fitting to pause to reflect on some of those millions of American citizens who reflect in their lives the highest and best ideals of their faith and of America.

Jimmie Few of Mobile, AL, was one such person. I first got to know him when, in 1991, we took part in a mission to Russia as part of a United Methodist Church delegation. This was shortly after the fall of communism. We spent over a week in the small city of Vyksa, 5 hours east of Moscow. We roomed together in the home of a Russian family. This was the first chance the people of Vyksa had to actually meet and get to know Americans. Frequently, one of the Russians would, with surprise, say, ''You look just like us!''

Jimmie was a very large man and naturally took charge. When an agreement was concluded, Jimmie would seal it with a firm—very firm—handshake. He loved the Russians. Indeed, after this he made some 19 more trips, assisting with orphanages, schools, and Bible schools as well as advising Russians on economic matters. Jimmie was a very experienced small businessman. He bought an orphanage a needed van on one occasion and fixed a road to the orphanage in another.

This kind of humanitarian, religious mission is not unusual for Americans. Thousands of such trips are occurring now involving hundreds of thousands of Americans who make trips to meet with millions around the globe. They don't focus on the rich and powerful; they focus on those in need, the poor and the children. No nation in the history of the world has ever matched such selfless giving. It reflects well on the United States, surely creating greater understanding among peoples, and it is in harmony, certainly, with the spirit of Jesus, which has inspired so many.

While Jimmy's business success and health suffered in recent years, his good life of service to his Lord and to others exemplifies the best in humanity.•

REMEMBERING COLONEL WILLIAM EDWARD CALLENDER, SR.

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today, I would like to pay tribute to COL William Edward ''Bill'' Callender, Sr., U.S. Army, Retired. Bill was a friend, a national hero proven in combat, a man who loved his family, and a man who committed himself to service to others. To an exceptional degree, he loved his country and most especially, he loved and honored those who served her in uniform.

The scripture says, in describing faith as more than intellectual assent, but action, that when Abraham was called, he ''went.'' When Bill's Nation called him, he went—even into great danger. And, to a most unusual degree, throughout the remainder of his life, he continued to hear that call and he went—in service to others in a host of ways and especially to veterans.

I believe Bill Callender was one of Alabama's most valuable citizens. Vivian Cannon, of the Mobile Press Register, wrote at the time of his receipt of the Distinguished Flying Cross, given for his actions on that harrowing day in Vietnam when he flew his chopper into a very hot landing gone to insert and later that day to extract American soldiers who were under heavy fire—a very fine piece on these events. Her article quotes a letter he wrote to his wife shortly after the events that included this line: ''By the grace of God, we came out OK.'' Such courageous actions cannot be bought with money. They arise from the character of the hero, from love of country and from loyalty to comrades.

It is part of the American sense of duty. Former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates talks about it in his new book, ''Duty.'' When the President and we in Congress send our magnificent soldiers into harm's way to achieve a military objective deemed important, there is also a duty owed them and their dependents of the highest order. It is a bond that must never be broken.

Perhaps Bill never forgot that experience in Vietnam and others like it that were up close and personal to him. There were those badly wounded he flew out for life saving care, those killed in action, and those young, anxious faces he looked into when he flew them into areas of great danger where lives would be lost and where, by the grace of God, Bill had been spared.

Thereafter, he began a lifetime of service to them and America. And serve he did—with joy and enthusiasm, wisdom and judgment, and responsibility.

By nature, he was supportive and affirming. He was just a ''good guy'' and ''humble,'' says Wallace Davis of Volunteers of America. I admired him greatly. He was a leader in the best sense of the word. He gave good advice and insight. I valued his judgment. He led by example.

When my senior military advisor, COL Pete Landrum, came to the Mobile area, we asked Bill to arrange meetings for veterans and sought his input on key issues. He was the go-to guy. In fact, few, if any, veterans activities in the area happened without his leadership and contribution.

Serving on the important Battleship Commission, his tireless advocacy for the new Veterans Cemetery, working with the Veterans Administration and Congress and others, and his vigorous support for the Honor Flight Program just reflect some of his work. He truly gave himself for many good causes.

Bill leaves behind his wonderful wife, Jacqueline Bachar Callender; his 3 daughters, Ginger (Jay) Hawkins, Cyndi Callender and Tammy (Jeff) Hadley; 12 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, and many great friends who are feeling his loss but can take comfort in the knowledge that we have had the privilege of being in the presence of a remarkable man who lived a wonderful life, consistent with the great heritage of America.●

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396 ON FEBRUARY 7, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—PM 29

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 to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2014.

The situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and fatal attacks against international peacekeeping forces.

Since the inauguration of President Alassane Ouattara in May 2011, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has made progress in advancing democratic freedoms and economic development. While the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make progress towards peace and prosperity, the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 4, 2014*.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:16 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. 357. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, to make other improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1791. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 5:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2642. An act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 357. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, to make other improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 1791. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1982. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1996. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, February 4, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

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–4520. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pesticides; Satisfaction of Data Requirements; Procedures to Ensure Protection of Data Submitters' Rights'' (FRL No. 9904–32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4521. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cyantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9388–7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4522. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''[alpha]-Alkyl-[omega]-Hydroxypoly (Oxypropylene) and/or Poly (Oxyethylene) Polymers Where the Alkyl Chain Contains a Minimum of Six Carbons etc.; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9394–2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4523. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9904–27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–4524. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds'' (RIN1557–AD79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4525. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds'' (RIN1557–AD44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4526. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Removal of Transferred OTS Regulations Regarding Recordkeeping and Confirmation Requirements for Securities Transactions Effected by State Savings Associations and Other Amendments'' (RIN3064–AE06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4527. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interest In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds'' (RIN3064–AD05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4528. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds'' (RIN3064–AD85) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–4529. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection System Maintenance Reliability Standard'' (RIN1902–AE74) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–4530. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Rule R307–107; General Requirements; Breakdowns'' (FRL No. 9902–49–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4531. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code—Permit: New and Modified Sources'' (FRL No. 9904–24–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4532. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances'' (FRL No. 9399–1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4533. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Utah: Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Greenhouse Gas Permitting Authority and Tailoring Rule'' (FRL No. 9903–27–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4534. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Attainment Plan for the Philadelphia-Wilmington, Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard'' (FRL No. 9905–88–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4535. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Approval of Texas Motor Vehicle Rule Revisions'' (FRL No. 9906–03–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–4536. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 5000A Transition Relief for Individuals with Certain Government-Sponsored Limited-Benefit Health Coverage'' (Notice 2014–10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4537. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Benefit Plans is Extended to February 2, 2015'' (Announcement 2014–4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4538. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—February 2014'' (Rev. Rul. 2014–6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4539. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Time under Section 301.9100–3 to Elect Portability of Deceased Spousal Unused Exclusion Amount'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4540. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determining the Amount of Taxes Paid for Purposes of the Foreign Tax Credit'' ((RIN1545–BK41) (TD

9634)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4541. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance for Determining Stock Ownership'' ((RIN1545–BL01) (TD 9654)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4542. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological and Ecclesiastical Ethnological Material from Bulgaria'' (RIN1515–AD95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4543. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Review of Medicare Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2011''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–4544. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, 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 (OSS–2014–0067); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4545. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–182); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4546. A communication from the 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 13–183); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4547. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations: Changes to Authorized Officials and the UK Defense Trade Treaty Exemption; Correction of Errors in Lebanon Policy and Violations; and Publishing Recent Changes to Parts 120, 127, and 128 in Final Form'' (RIN1400–AD49, 1400–AC37, and 1400–AC81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4548. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2014–0011—2014–0013); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–4549. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4550. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4551. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4552. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA); to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4553. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Generic Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4554. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Animal Drug User Fee Act (ADUFA); to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4555. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Evaluation Findings—Performance Improvement 2013–2014 Report''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4556. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits'' (29 CFR Part 4022) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4557. A communication from the Program Manager, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Institutes of Health Loan Repayment Program'' (RIN0905–AA43) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4558. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Current Good Manufacturing Practice for Medicated Feeds'' (Docket No. FDA–2013–N–0002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–4559. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Advisory Committee; Pharmacy Compounding Advisory Committee'' (Docket No. FDA–2013–N–1687) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 270. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

S. Res. 333. A resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Richard G. Frank, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

*Tamara Wenda Ashford, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

*R. Gil Kerlikowske, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security.

*L. Paige Marvel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Max Sieben Baucus, of Montana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

Nominee: Max S. Baucus.

Post: Beijing, China.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: 0.
2. Spouse: 0.
3. Children and Spouses: 0.
4. Parents: 0.
5. Grandparents: 0.
6. Brothers and Spouses: 0.
7. Sisters and Spouses: 0.

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*George James Tsunis, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Norway.

Nominee: George James Tsunis.

Post: Oslo, Norway.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date and donee:

1. Self: $−5,000, 12/311/12, Mendez, Robert (D); $50,000, 10/30/12, Majority PAC; $50,000, 10/17/12, Majority PAC; $25,000, 10/02/12, House Majority PAC; $25,000, 09/28/12, House Majority PAC; $12,500, 09/28/12, Majority PAC; $12,500, 09/04/12, Majority PAC; $−2,500, 08/16/12, Roberti, Dan (D); $25,000, 07/30/12, New Dir. for America; $50,000, 07/02/12, New Dir. for America; $25,000, 06/06/12, New Dir. for America; $2,500, 06105/12, Tester, Jon (D); $25,000, 05/16/12, New Dir. for America; $2,500, 04/20/12, Nelson, Bill (D); $2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); $2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); $2,500, 03/18/12, Berman, Howard L (D); $2,500, 03/13/12, Jeffries, Hakeem (D); $−2,500, 03/09/12, Snowe, Olympia (R); $30,800, 02/29/12, DNC

Services Corp (D); $2,500, 02/22/12, Hochul, Kathleen (D); $2,300, 02/03/12, Andrews, Robert E (D); $2,500, 02/03/12, Pelosi, Nancy (D); $2,500, 02/03/12, Pelosi, Nancy (D); $2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); $2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (13); $1000, 01/21/12, NorPAC; $462, 12/30/11, Democratic Party of Virginia; $252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Wisconsin; $714, 12/16/11, Democratic Exec Cmte of Fl; $462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Colorado; $462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Nevada; $462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NC; $546, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of PA; $672, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Ohio; $2,500, 09/30/11, Obama, Barack (D); $2,500, 09/30/11, Obama, Barack (D); $30,800, 09/30/11, DNC Services Corp (D); $2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); $2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); $2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,500, 06/031/11, Menedez, Robert (D); $2,500, 06/03/11, Menedez, Robert (D); $5,000, 03/31/11, DCCC; $400, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,100, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,500, 03/13/13, Reid, Harry (D); $5,000, 03/01/11, Forward Together PAC; $2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); $2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); $2,400, 12/13/10, Kerry, John (D); $2,400, 12/13/10, Kerry, John (D); $10,000, 10/07/10, Democratic Party of IL; $−2,300, 07/17/10, Specter, Arlen (D); $9,100, 03/31/10, DSCC; $1,000, 03/29/10, Democratic Cmte of NY State; $−2,100, 03/10/10, Bayh, Evan (D); $431, 02/16/10, Thompson, Glen (R); $30,400, 10/30/09, DCCC; $2,400, 09/29/09, Diaz-Balart, Lincoln (R); $2,400, 09/28/09, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,400, 09/28/09, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,400, 09/17/09, Reid, Harry (D); $2,400, 08/11/09, Titus, Dina (D); $5,000, 08/10/09, Lycoming County Dem Cmte; $2,400, 06/30/09, Cantor, Eric (R); $2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbarnes, John (D); $2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbames, John (D); $600, 06/22/09, Thomspon, Glen (R); $2,400, 06/22/09, McMahon, Michael E (D); $2,400, 06/04/09, Acherman, Gary (D); $2,200, 06/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); $2,400, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); $2,200, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); $2,400, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); $2,200, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); $2,400, 04/30/09, Reid, Harry (D); $30,400, 03/31/09, DSCC; $2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); $2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); $2,400, 03/25/13, Giannoulias, Alexander (D); $2,400, 03/25/13, Glannoulias, Alexander (D); $2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D); $2,400, 01/29/09, Space, Zachary T (D).

2. Spouse: Olga Tsunis: $−5,000, 12/31/12, Menendez, Robert (D); $−2,500, 08/16/12, Roberti, Dan (D); $21,600, 06/21/12, DNC Services Corp; $2,500, 06/08/12, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,500, 06/08/12, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,500, 06/05/12, Vilsack, Christie (D); $2,500, 06/05/12, Vilsack, Christie (D); $2,500, 05/04/12, Lugar, Richard G (R); $2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); $2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); $2,500, 03/09/12, Berman, Howard L (D); $−2,500, 03/09/13, Snowe, Olympia (R); $2,300, 02/03/12, Andrews, Robert E (D); $2,500, 02/03/12, Nancy Pelosi (D); $2,500, 02/03/12, Nancy Pelosi (D); $2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); $2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); $462, 12/30/11, Democratic Party of VA; $2,500, 12/22/11, Grimm, Michael (R); $2,500, 12/22/11, Grimm, Michael (R); $252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of WI; $714, 12/16/11, Democratic Exec Cmte of FL; $462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of CO; $252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NV; $462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NC; $672, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of OH; $546, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of PA; $2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); $2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); $30,800, 09/28/11, DNC Services Corp (D); $2,500, 09/28/11, Obama, Barack (D); $2,500, 09/28/11, Obama, Barack (D); $2,500, 09/27/11, Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R); $2,500, 06/30/11, Republican National Cmte (R); $2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); $2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); $2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); $2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $400, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,100, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); $5,000, 03/01/11, Forward Together Pac; $2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); $2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); $2,300, 07/17/10, Specter, Arlen (13); $30,400, 03/31/10, DCCC; $9,100, 03/31/10, DCCC; $2,400, 10/29/09, Shelby, Richard C (R); $2,400, 10/29/09, Shelby, Richard C (R); $−2,400, 10/23/09, Feingold, Russ (D); $2,400, 10/23/09, Feingold, Russ (D); $4,800, 10/15/09, Feingold, Russ (D); $2,400, 09/23/09, Bilkirakis, Gus (R); $2,400, 09/23/09, Bilkirakis, Gus (R); $2,400, 09/17/09, Reid, Harry (D); $2,400, 08/14/09, Meeks, Gregory W (D); $2,400, 08/14/09, Meeks, Gregory W (D); $2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); $2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); $2,400, 06/30/09, Casey, Bob (D); $2,400, 06/30/09, Casey, Bob (D); $30,400, 06/17/09, DSCC; $2,200, 08/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); $2,400, 06/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); $2,200, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); $2,400, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); $2,200, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); $2,400, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); $2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); $2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); $2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); $2,400, 03/25/09, Giannoulias, Alexander (D); $2,400, 03/25/09, Giannoulias, Alexander (D); $2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D); $2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D).

3. Children and Spouses: James George Tsunis (6 years), N/A; Eleni Tea Tsunis (3 years), N/A; Yanna Maria Tsunis (2 years), N/A.

4. Parents: Eleni Tsunis: $2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); $2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); James Tsunis (Deceased).

5. Grandparents: (Deceased).

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Anastasia Tsunis: $2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); $2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); $1,603, 09/28/09, Giannoulias, Alexander (D).

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*Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Hungary.

Nominee: Colleen Bell.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to Hungary.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: −$2,300, 2/13/2009, Ken Salazar via Salazar for Senate (REFUND); $5,000, 3/22/2009, PAC for a Change; $2,300, 9/16/2009, Bono Mack, Mary via Mary Bono Mack Committee; $2,400, 10/21/2009, Reid, Harry via Friends for Harry Reid; $2,400, 10/21/2009, Reid, Harry via Friends for Harry Reid; $10,000, 11/30/2009, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; $1,000, 12/31/2009, Bennet, Michael via Bennet for Colorado; $15,200, 4/22/2010, California Victory 2010—Donation recipient DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; $250, 6/5/2010, Waltz, John via John Waltz for Congress; $15,200, 7/16/2010, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; $2,000, 10/6/2010, Giannoulias, Alexander via Alexi for Illinois; $35,800, 4/11/2011, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; $2,500, 5/9/2011, Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse for Senate; $2,500, 5/9/2011, Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse for Senate; $1,000, 8/8/2011, Feinstein, Dianne via Feinstein for Senate; $1,000, 9/6/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; $5,000, 11/1/2011, CORYPAC, Inc; $1,500, 11/10/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; $2,500, 11/10/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; $2,500, 12/9/2011, Cantwell, Maria via Friends of Maria; $2,500, 12/9/2011, Cantwell, Maria via Friends of Maria; $1,000, 1/10/2012, Wasserman Schultz, Debbie via Debbie Wasserman Schultz for Congress; $35,800, 1/26/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; −$5,000, 1/31/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012 (REFUND); $2,500, 3/8/2012, Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy for Congress; $1,000, 3/9/2012, Women on the Road to the Senate: 12 and Counting—Los Angeles Donation recipient—Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; $2,500, 3/16/2012, Nelson, Bill via Bell Nelson for US Senate; $2,500, 3/16/2012, Nelson, Bill via Bell Nelson for US Senate; $250, 3/20/2012, Brownley, Julia via Julia Brownley for Congress; $5,000, 6/19/2012, Menendez, Robert via Menendez Senate; $1,000, 6/20/2012, Brownley, Julia via Julia Brownley for Congress; $2,500, 6/27/2012, Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy for Congress; −$2,500, 6/29/2012, Menendez, Robert via Menendez for Senate (REFUND); $2,500, 9/28/2012, Off The Sidelines PAC; $1,000, 10/23/2012, Carmona, Richard via Carmona of Arizona; $1,000, 10/31/2012, Heitkamp, Heidi via Heidi for Senate; $1,000, 10/31/2012, McCaskill, Claire via McCaskill for Missouri; $2,500, 2/5/2013, Senator Jeanne Shaheen; $5,000, 3/26/2013, PAC for a Change; $5,000, 3/26/2013, Cory Booker for Senate; $2,600, 5/2/2013, Friends of Mark Warner.

2. Spouse: Bradley Bell: $2,300, 12/4/08, Boxer, Barbara via Friends of Barbara Boxer; $2,300 12/4/08, Boxer, Barbara via Friends of Barbara Boxer; $1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America; $1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America; −$1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America (REFUND); $1,000, 7/5/2013, Cory Booker for Senate; $35,800, 4/11/11, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee.

3. Children and Spouses: None.

4. Parents: Sheila Bradley: $200, 2/21/2009, Charles Wheelan For Congress.

5. Grandparents: None.

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Shannon Bradley: $500, 1/25/12, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipient Obama for America.

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*Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland.

Nominee: Robert Cushman Barber.

Post: Reykjavik. Iceland.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, donee, date, and amount:

1. Self

A. Individual Federal Candidates: Berkley, Shelley via Berkley For Senate, 10/04/2012, $250; Cardin, Benjamin L via Ben Cardin For Senate 12/19/2011, $300; Carnahan, Robin via Robin C. for Senate, 03/15/2010, $200; Clark, Katherine via Clark for Congress, 03/07/2013, $200; Coakley, Martha via Martha Coakley For Senate Committee, 09/03/2009, $2,400; 12/22/2009, $500; Conway, John William (Jack) via Conway For Senate, 04/26/2010, $250; 06/25/2010, $200; Critz, Mark via Mark Critz For Congress Committee, 05/12/2010, $500; Duckworth,

Tammy L. via Duckworth For Congress, 10/29/2012, $500; Ellsworth, Brad via Brad Ellsworth for Senate, 08/19/2010, $200; Franken, Al—Franken for Senate, 02/06/2011, $200; Giannoulias, Alexi via Alexi for Illinois, 01/15/2010, $100; Gillibrand, Kirsten Elizabeth via Gillibrand For Senate, 06/02/2010, $250; 09/21/2010, $250; 06/29/2011, $500; Harkin, Thomas Richard via Citizens For Harkin, 07/25/2011, $250; Hodes, Paul W via Hodes For Senate, 02/08/2010, $1,000; 03/01/2010, $200; 09/30/2010, $500; Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine For Virginia, 06/30/2011, $1,000; 03/15/2012, $500; 10/05/2012, $500; Keating, William Richard via The Bill Keating Committee, 10/21/2010, $500; 09/13/2012, $500; Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy For Congress, 05/11/2012, $1,000; 09/17/2012, $500; Kerrey, J Robert via Nebraskans For Kerrey, 06/12/2012, $500; Khazei, Alan via Citizens For Alan Khazei, 03/03/2010, $500; Kuster, Ann McLane via Kuster For Congress, Inc., 09/29/2009, $250; 12/14/2009, $250; 05/17/2010, $250; 08/18/2010, $250; 10/21/2010, $250; 06/23/2011, $500; 09/30/2011, $200; 03/31/2013, $200; Lewis, John R. via John Lewis For Congress, 05/23/2012, $300; Lincoln, Blanche L via Friends Of Blanche Lincoln, 09/29/2010, $500; Markey, Edward John via The Markey Committee, 02/25/2013, $1,000; 02/28/2013, $1,000; McGovern, Jim via Re-Elect McGovern Committee, 03/04/2013, $250; Murphy, Patrick J. via Patrick Murphy For Congress 11/19/2009, $500; 06/16/2010, $500; Murphy, Scott M via Scott Murphy For Congress, 04/16/2009, $250; 06/03/2010, $250; Obama, Barack via Obama For America, 05/23/2011, $2,000; 08/02/2011, $250; 09/12/2011, $219; 09/12/2011, $781; 01/20/2012, $1,000; 03/03/2012, $494; Owens, William via Bill Owens For Congress, 10/20/2009, $500; 09/24/2010, $200; Ross, Michael via Michael Ross Exploratory Committee, 12/20/2011, $200; Seals, Dan via Seals for Congress, 10/20/2010, $200; Shea-Porter, Carol via Carol Shea-Porter For Congress, 03/30/2009, $500; 09/10/2009, $1,500; 03/04/2010, $300; 03/04/2010, $700; 06/25/2010, $500; 09/30/2010, $500; 06/27/2011, $1,000; 06/30/2011, $1,000; 03/26/2012, $200; 03/26/2012, $300; 07/07/2012, $500; 03/31/2013, $500; Sowers, Tommy via Tommy Sowers For Congress, 09/17/2010, $250; Tierney, John F via John Tierney For Congress, 09/10/2012, $500; Tsongas, Nicola S via The Niki Tsongas Committee, 08/14/2012, $300; 09/30/2011, $100; Udall, Tom via Udall For Us All, 02/05/2013, $500; Vilsack, Christie Via Christie Vilsack For Iowa, 12/13/2011, $500; Warren, Elizabeth via Elizabeth For MA Inc, 09/02/2011, $1,000; 09/20/2011, $239; 03/18/2012, $1,000; 06/25/2012, $250; 09/02/2012, $1,000; Warren, Setti via Warren for Senate, 10/27/2011, $100; Wasserman Schultz, Debbie via Debbie Wasserman Schultz For Congress, 03/28/2012, $1,000; Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse For Senate, 02/22/2011, $500; 11/03/2011, $500; 10/15/2012, $300; B. Federal Party Committees: Democratic National Committee Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee, 06/17/2009, $5,0000; 5/07/2009, $1,000; 08/02/2009, $25; 03/30/2010, $3,000; 12/02/2010, $250; 03/31/2012, $1,006; 10/25/2012, $2,500; Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, 01/18/2010, $150; Massachusetts Democratic State Committee, 05/15/2009, $250; 01/18/2010, $150; 04/07/2010, $500; 04/14/2010, $250; 07/23/2010, $1,000; 09/02/2012, $1,000; 10/30/2012, $1,000; 05/17/2013, $250; New York Protection Fund, 04/09/2009, $250; C. Multi-candidate Committees, Obama Victory Fund, 05/23/2011, $2,000; 08/02/2011, $250; 09/12/2011, $1,000; 11/06/2011, $100; 01/20/2012, $1,000; 03/03/2012, $1,500; 10/25/2012, $2,500; New Hampshire Victory Fund, 09/30/2010, $1,000; Massachusetts Future Fund, 09/02/2012, $1,000; D. Other: Emily's List, 09/23/2010, $250.

2. Spouse: Bonnie A. Neilan: none.

3. Children and Spouses: Nicholas O'Neill Barber: none. Benjamin Neilan Barber: none. Alexander Cushman Barber: none.

4. Parents: Kathleen C. Barber—deceased. Robert K. Barber—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Mary P. Barber—deceased. Frank A. Barber—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Peter K. Barber: Coakley, Martha via Martha Coakley for Senate Committee, 12/22/2009, $500; Murphy, Patrick via Patrick Murphy for Congress, 11/24/2009, $250; Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 08/31/2012, $250; Shea-Porter, Carol via Carol Shea-Porter for Congress, 09/07/2009, $2,400; 09/18/2012, $500; Warren, Elizabeth via Elizabeth for MA, Inc., 11/11/2011, $250. Marygrace D. Barber (spouse): none. Frank O. Barber: none. Jacqueline Barber (spouse): none.

7. Sisters and Spouses Kathleen O'Neill: Delbene, Susan K via Delbene for Congress, 08/26/2010, $250; Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 08/25/2012, $500; 10/11/2012, $250; 10/26/2012, $250. Thomas Leschine (spouse): none. Jennifer B. Phillips: Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 03/01/2012, $5. Jerry L. Phillips (spouse): none.

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*Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the UN Human Rights Council.

*Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

*Frank A. Rose, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Verification and Compliance).

*Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

*Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service.

*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 Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 1987. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1988. A bill to allow States to waive regulations promulgated under the Clean Air Act relating to electric generating units under certain circumstances; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. COATS):

S. 1989. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 1990. A bill to prohibit aliens who are not lawfully present in the United States from being eligible for postsecondary education benefits that are not available to all citizens and nationals of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1991. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals a deduction for amounts contributed to disaster savings accounts to help defray the cost of preparing their homes to withstand a disaster and to repair or replace property damaged or destroyed in a disaster; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1992. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic foster care services in Medicaid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1993. A bill to protect individuals who are eligible for increased pension under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the basis of need of regular aid and attendance from dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 1994. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the availability of breastfeeding support, supplies, and counseling under the TRICARE program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1995. A bill to protect consumers by mitigating the vulnerability of personally identifiable information to theft through a security breach, providing notice and remedies to consumers in the wake of such a breach, holding companies accountable for preventable breaches, facilitating the sharing of post-breach technical information between companies, and enhancing criminal and civil penalties and other protections against the unauthorized collection or use of personally identifiable information; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. HELLER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 1996. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. Res. 343. A resolution establishing a Select Committee of the Senate to make a full and thorough investigation of the unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including programs affecting Americans, to make findings based upon the investigation, and to make recommendations based on the investigation and findings; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 344. A resolution congratulating the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Volleyball Championship; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Tennessee

(Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 127

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 127, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 162

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 162, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act of 2004.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 430

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance treatment of certain small business concerns for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences, and for other purposes.

S. 577

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) 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. 583

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 583, a bill to implement equal protection under the 14th article of amendment to the Constitution for the right to life of each born and preborn human person.

S. 723

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 723, a bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to revise the medical and evaluation criteria for determining disability in a person diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's Disease.

S. 769

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 769, a bill to designate as wilderness certain Federal portions of the red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin Deserts in the State of Utah for the benefit of present and future generations of people in the United States.

S. 888

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 888, a bill to provide end user exemptions from certain provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

S. 1069

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1069, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1442

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1442, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the minimum low-income housing tax credit rate for unsubsidized buildings and to provide a minimum 4 percent credit rate for existing buildings.

S. 1448

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1448, a bill to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydropower by the Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to support early learning.

S. 1770

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1770, a bill to provide for Federal civil liability for trade secret misappropriation in certain circumstances.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1933

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1933, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 1948

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1948, a bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program.

S. 1950

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico

(Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 21

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 21, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that construction of the Keystone XL pipeline and the Federal approvals required for the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline are in the national interest of the United States.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 1987. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill that would provide critical authority to the Department of Veterans Affairs to use enhanced-use leases to engage in public-private partnerships in order to provide supportive housing for homeless veterans at the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Medical Campus in California.

Homelessness is a tragedy, and I am deeply concerned that it plagues many of our Nation's brave and honorable veterans. I would like to make you aware, that Los Angeles has the largest concentration of homeless veterans in the United States, currently estimated to be 6,300. What is even more unacceptable is that two buildings on the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Campus that can potentially provide supportive housing for a portion of these veterans are currently vacant due to a lack of Federal funding.

There is good news, though. The community of Los Angeles has expressed great interest in leveraging private resources and forging a partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs to make progress in using these facilities to provide housing and hope for homeless veterans in the area. However, giving this authority to the Secretary of Veteran Affairs requires legislative action, and so I am happy to present to you today the solution that is required.

You should be aware that the solution I am proposing is a finely crafted fix to a previous action Congress took in 2007 to safeguard the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Campus. I moved in 2007 to prohibit the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to lease or sale any property on the West Los Angeles Campus, due to concerns that these authorities would likely be abused at the detriment to Los Angeles' veterans. Specifically, broad authorities were being used for commercial development displacing prop on the West Los Angeles Veteran Affairs Department, and risked reducing or eliminating the important services this campus provides to veterans. Today is a new day, and my bill will allow a very tightly limited authority to enter into enhanced-use leases at two specific vacant buildings on the campus to be used for the sole purpose of providing supportive housing for veterans who are homeless.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this modification of lease authority in order to make real progress using private dollars to deliver on our promise to California's veterans who have bravely served in the defense of the entire United States. I look forward to working with my colleagues on enacting this authority as soon as feasible.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 343—ESTABLISHING A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE TO MAKE A FULL AND THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES OF APPARENTLY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY INTELLIGENCE-COLLECTION PROGRAMS, OPERATIONS, AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PROGRAMS AFFECTING AMERICANS, TO MAKE FINDINGS BASED UPON THE INVESTIGATION, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE INVESTIGATION AND FINDINGS

Mr. MCCAIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

Whereas since June 2013, publications have revealed details about certain National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

Whereas such publications appear to be based in substantial part on unauthorized disclosures of classified information concerning intelligence collection;

Whereas the unauthorized disclosure of classified information is a felony under Federal law;

Whereas the National Security Agency relies on Federal agency contractors to carry out important aspects of its national security mission;

Whereas the extent of reliance on contract positions may unwisely increase the number of individuals with potential access to classified information and may increase the risk of unauthorized disclosures;

Whereas such unauthorized disclosures may cause damage to United States national security interests, intelligence sources and methods, and relationships with key allies;

Whereas senior officials in the intelligence community may have misled Congress or otherwise obfuscated the nature, extent, or use of certain intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities of the National Security Agency, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

Whereas the provision of incomplete or inaccurate information by officials of the intelligence community has inhibited effective congressional oversight of certain intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities of the National Security Agency, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans, and undermined congressional and public support of these programs;

Whereas intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities of the National Security Agency have been valuable to combating terrorism and ensuring the security of the homeland;

Whereas some such programs, operations, and activities that are the subject matter of the unauthorized disclosures may not have been authorized, or may have exceeded that which was authorized, by law, or may not have been permitted under the Constitution of the United States; and

Whereas a Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies was established by the President and issued a final report entitled ''Liberty and Security in a Changing World'' on December 12, 2013: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION.

There is established a select committee of the Senate to be known as the Select Committee on the Investigation of leaks concerning certain activities of the National Security Agency (hereinafter in this Resolution referred to as the ''Select Committee'').

SEC. 2. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES.

(a) GENERAL DUTIES.—The Select Committee is authorized and directed—

(1) to make a full and thorough investigation of the unauthorized disclosures that have occurred since June 2013 of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

(2) to make findings based upon the investigation carried out under paragraph (1);

(3) to submit to Congress and the President recommendations based on the investigation

carried out under paragraph (1) and the findings made under paragraph (2); and

(4) to take any actions necessary and appropriate to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

(b) PARTICULAR DUTIES.—Without abridging in any way the authority conferred upon the Select Committee in subsection (a), the Senate further expressly authorizes and directs the Select Committee to make a complete investigation and make findings and recommendations related to the following:

(1) The unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans that have occurred since June 2013, including—

(A) the circumstances under which unauthorized disclosure occurred;

(B) the extent of the damage done to United States national security interests, intelligence sources and methods, and relationships with key allies; and

(C) how such damage may be mitigated.

(2) Contracting by the National Security Agency, in particular—

(A) the extent of reliance by the Agency on contract employees to carry out important aspects of the national security mission of the Agency;

(B) the extent to which contractors with access to classified information were properly vetted;

(C) the sufficiency of internal controls to ensure only properly cleared contractors with a need to know had access to classified information;

(D) whether adequate remedial measures have been put in place to address identified deficiencies in the foregoing areas; and

(E) whether any oversight or legislation is needed to reform any issues identified by the use of Federal contractors in the intelligence agencies.

(3) The nature and scope of National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans, that were the subject matter of the unauthorized disclosure, including—

(A) the extent of domestic surveillance authorized by law;

(B) the legal authority that served as the basis for the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities that are the subject matter of those disclosures;

(C) the extent to which such programs, operations, and activities that were the subject matter of such unauthorized disclosures may have gone beyond what was authorized by law or permitted under the Constitution of the United States;

(D) the extent and sufficiency of oversight of such programs, operations, and activities by Congress and the Executive Branch; and

(E) the need for greater transparency and more effective congressional oversight of intelligence community activities.

(4) Whether existing laws of the United States are adequate, either in their provisions or manner of enforcement, to safeguard the rights and privacies of citizens of the United States.

(5) The terrorist activities that were disrupted, in whole or in part, with the aid of information obtained through the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities that were the subject matter of those disclosures and whether this information could have been promptly obtained by other means.

(6) The findings and recommendations of the Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies established by the President, including—

(A) the feasibility, costs, and benefits of such findings and recommendations; and

(B) the legislative action that would be required to implement those findings and recommendations.

(7) The need for specific legislative authority to govern the operations of the intelligence collection activities and practices of the National Security Agency, including recommendations and proposals for legislation.

SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the Select Committee shall be composed of 14 members as follows:

(1) The chairman and vice chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

(3) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(4) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(5) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

(6) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(7) One Senator selected by the majority leader of the Senate.

(8) One Senator selected by the minority leader of the Senate.

(b) ALTERNATIVE MEMBERSHIP.—If the chairman, vice chairman, or ranking member of a committee referred to in paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) declines to serve on the Select Committee, then the majority leader of the Senate in the case of a chairman, or the minority leader of the Senate in the case of a vice chairman or ranking member, shall designate a member from that committee to serve on the Select Committee.

(c) DATE.—The appointments of the members of the Select Committee shall be made not later than 30 days after the date of adoption of this Resolution.

(d) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the Select Committee shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(e) CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.—

(1) CHAIRMAN.—The members of the Select Committee who are members of the majority party of the Senate shall elect a chairman for the Select Committee by majority vote.

(2) VICE CHAIRMAN.—The members of the Select Committee who are members of the minority party of the Senate shall elect a vice chairman by majority vote.

(f) SERVICE.—Service of a Senator as a member, chairman, or vice chairman of the Select Committee shall not be taken into account for the purposes of paragraph (4) of rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

SEC. 4. RULES.

(a) GOVERNANCE UNDER STANDING RULES OF SENATE.—Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Resolution, the investigation and hearings conducted by the Select Committee shall be governed by the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) ADDITIONAL RULES AND PROCEDURES.—The Select Committee may adopt additional rules or procedures if the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee agree, or if the Select Committee by majority vote so decides, that such additional rules or procedures are necessary or advisable to enable the Select Committee to conduct the investigation and hearings authorized by this Resolution. Any such additional rules and procedures—

(1) shall not be inconsistent with this Resolution or the Standing Rules of the Senate; and

(2) shall become effective upon publication in the Congressional Record.

SEC. 5. AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Select Committee may exercise all of the powers and responsibilities of a committee under rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) POWERS.—The Select Committee may, for the purpose of carrying out this Resolution—

(1) hold hearings;

(2) administer oaths;

(3) sit and act at any time or place during the sessions, recess, and adjournment periods of the Senate;

(4) authorize and require, by issuance of subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the preservation and production of books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, documents, tapes, and any other materials in whatever form the Select Committee considers advisable;

(5) take testimony, orally, by sworn statement, by sworn written interrogatory, or by deposition, and authorize staff members to do the same; and

(6) issue letters rogatory and requests, through appropriate channels, for any other means of international assistance.

(c) AUTHORIZATION, ISSUANCE, AND ENFORCEMENT OF SUBPOENAS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—Subpoenas authorized and issued under this section—

(A) may be done with the joint concurrence of the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee;

(B) shall bear the signature of the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee or the designee of such chairman or vice chairman; and

(C) shall be served by any person or class of persons designated by the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee for that purpose anywhere within or without the borders of the United States to the full extent provided by law.

(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The Select Committee may make to the Senate by report or Resolution any recommendation, including a recommendation for criminal or civil enforcement, that the Select Committee considers appropriate with respect to—

(1) the failure or refusal of any person to appear at a hearing or deposition or to produce or preserve documents or materials described in subsection (b)(4) in obedience to a subpoena or order of the Select Committee;

(2) the failure or refusal of any person to answer questions truthfully and completely during the person's appearance as a witness at a hearing or deposition of the Select Committee; or

(3) the failure or refusal of any person to comply with any subpoena or order issued under the authority of subsection (c).

(e) ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The Select Committee shall have, to the fullest extent permitted by law, access to any such information or materials obtained by any other department or agency of the United States or by anybody investigating the matters described in section 3.

(f) AUTHORITY OF OTHER COMMITTEES.—Nothing contained in this section shall affect or impair the exercise of any other standing committee of the Senate of any power, or the discharge by such committee of any duty, conferred or imposed upon it by the Standing Rules of the Senate or by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 812, chapter 753).

(g) QUORUM.—

(1) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—A majority of the members of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of reporting a matter or recommendation to the Senate.

(2) TESTIMONY.—One member of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony.

(3) OTHER BUSINESS.—A majority of the members of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting any other business of the Select Committee.

(h) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—Each member of the Select Committee shall have an appropriate security clearance.

(i) VIOLATIONS OF LAW.—

(1) REPORTS OF VIOLATION OF LAW.—If the chairman and vice chairman of the Select Committee, or a majority of the Select Committee determine that there is reasonable cause to believe that a violation of law may have occurred, the chairman and vice chairman by letter, or the Select Committee by resolution, are authorized to report such violation to the proper Federal, State, or local authorities. Any such letter or report may recite the basis for the determination of reasonable cause.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to authorize the release of documents or testimony.

(j) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Select Committee shall have authority to make recommendations for appropriate new legislation or the amendment of any existing statute which the Select Committee considers necessary or desirable to carry out this Resolution.

SEC. 6. REPORTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the appointment of members to the Select Committee, the Select Committee shall submit to the Senate and the President a final report on the results of the investigations and studies conducted pursuant to this Resolution, together with any recommendations for Congress and the President based on the investigation and findings of the Select Committee.

(b) INTERIM REPORTS.—The Select Committee may submit to the Senate such interim reports as the Select Committee considers appropriate.

(c) FORM OF REPORTS.—Each report submitted under this section shall be submitted in unclassified form to the greatest extent possible, and may include a classified annex if necessary.

SEC. 7. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

(a) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Select Committee may employ in accordance with paragraph (2) a staff composed of such clerical, investigatory, legal, technical, and other personnel as the Select Committee, or the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee, considers necessary or appropriate.

(2) APPOINTMENT OF STAFF.—The staff of the Select Committee shall consist of such personnel as the chairman and the vice chairman shall jointly appoint. Such staff may be removed jointly by the chairman and the vice chairman, and shall work under the joint general supervision and direction of the chairman and the vice chairman.

(b) COMPENSATION.—The chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee shall jointly fix the compensation of all personnel of the staff of the Select Committee.

(c) REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—The Select Committee may reimburse the members of its staff for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by such staff members in the performance of their functions for the Select Committee.

(d) SERVICES OF SENATE STAFF.—The Select Committee may use, with the prior consent of the chair of any other committee of the Senate or the chair of any subcommittee of any committee of the Senate, the facilities of any other committee of the Senate, or the services of any members of the staff of such committee or subcommittee, whenever the Select Committee or the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee considers that such action is necessary or appropriate to enable the Select Committee to carry out its responsibilities, duties, or functions under this Resolution.

(e) DETAIL OF EMPLOYEES.—The Select Committee may use on a reimbursable basis, with the prior consent of the head of the department or agency of Government concerned and the approval of the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, the services of personnel of such department or agency.

(f) TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Select Committee may procure the temporary or intermittent services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof.

(g) PAYMENT OF EXPENSES.—There shall be paid out of the applicable accounts of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for the expenses of the Select Committee. Such payments shall be made by vouchers signed by the Chair of the Select Committee and approved in the manner directed by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate. Amounts made available under this subsection shall be expended in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this Resolution:

(1) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—The term ''classified information'' has the meaning given that term in section 804 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3164)).

(2) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term ''intelligence community'' has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003).

SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE; TERMINATION.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Resolution shall take effect on the date of the adoption of this Resolution.

(b) TERMINATION.—The Select Committee shall terminate 60 days after the submittal of the report required by section 6(a).

(c) DISPOSITION OF RECORDS.—Upon termination of the Select Committee, the records of the Select Committee shall become the records of any committee designated by the majority leader of the Senate with the concurrence of the minority leader of the Senate.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, since June of 2013, there have been steady and persistent unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information regarding the activities and practices of the National Security Agency, NSA. These disclosures have caused grave damage to the United States. They have harmed our relations with friends and allies and harmed our ability to combat threats to the United States. They have also undermined public support for U.S. intelligence programs by casting doubt on the candor of key officials, the permissibility of the NSA's activities, the efficacy of the government's oversight, and whether legitimate privacy interests are properly taken into account in connection with important surveillance activities.

Last month, the President proposed some changes to how our Nation conducts certain intelligence collection activities. But the President's proposals left many crucial questions unanswered. Now is the time for Congress to improve how it executes its constitutional oversight duties—to examine certain intelligence collection activities and practices and ensure that we are fulfilling our obligation to protect both the security of our Nation and the freedom of our citizens.

The vital issues at stake here are complex, broad, and cut across many areas of jurisdiction of established congressional committees, including national security, intelligence, technology, commerce, foreign affairs, and privacy. For these reasons, today I am introducing legislation calling for the establishment of a Senate Select Committee to investigate how these leaks occurred and to make findings and recommendations for legislation to address these issues which are vital to American national security.

SENATE RESOLUTION 344—CONGRATULATING THE PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2013 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 344

Whereas on December 21, 2013, the Penn State University Nittany Lions won the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association (''NCAA'') Women's Volleyball Championship in Seattle, Washington with a hard-fought victory over the University of Wisconsin Badgers in a thrilling four-set match;

Whereas the Penn State University Nittany Lions have won 5 of the last 7 NCAA women's volleyball championships and 6 overall, matching the Stanford University Cardinal for the most NCAA Division I women's volleyball championships by a single program;

Whereas the Penn State University Nittany Lions concluded the 2013 season with a record of 34 wins and only 2 losses, and a 16th Big Ten Conference title;

Whereas 4 Nittany Lions players were selected for the 2013 NCAA All-Tournament team and junior setter Micha Hancock was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player;

Whereas head coach Russ Rose was named the 2013 National Coach of the Year and has been at the helm of the Nittany Lions women's volleyball team for 34 seasons, never winning less than 22 games in a season; and

Whereas this season, Coach Rose and his staff depended on 4 seniors to lead by example on the court and in the classroom, as best illustrated by Ariel Scott and Maggie Harding, who were each awarded prestigious academic honors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship;

(2) commends the Penn State University women's volleyball team players, coaches, and staff for their hard work and dedication; and

(3) recognizes the Penn State University students, alumni, and loyal fans who supported the Nittany Lions on their way to capturing a record-tying sixth National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2714. Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

SA 2715. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra.

SA 2716. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, supra.

SA 2717. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, supra.

SA 2718. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2717 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2714. Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Extension of emergency unemployment compensation program.
Sec. 3. Temporary extension of extended benefit provisions.
Sec. 4. Extension of funding for reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities.
Sec. 5. Additional extended unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.
Sec. 6. Flexibility for unemployment program agreements.
Sec. 7. Ending unemployment payments to jobless millionaires and billionaires.
Sec. 8. Funding stabilization.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''January 1, 2014'' and inserting ''April 1, 2014''.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting ''and'' at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

''(K) the amendment made by section 2(a) of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014;''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–240).

SEC. 3. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111–5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking ''December 31, 2013'' each place it appears and inserting ''March 31, 2014''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''June 30, 2014'' and inserting ''September 30, 2014''.

(b) EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''June 30, 2014'' and inserting ''September 30, 2014''.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''March 31, 2014''; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''March 31, 2014''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–240).

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''through fiscal year 2014'' and inserting ''through the first quarter of fiscal year 2015''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–240).

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''June 30, 2013'' and inserting ''September 30, 2013''; and

(2) by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''March 31, 2014''.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board $62,500 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 6. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before December 1, 2013, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 29, 2013.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this Act if the State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. 7. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments of unemployment compensation (including such compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970 and the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than $1,000,000.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual's adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than $1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the states to verify the residency, employment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining an individual's eligibility under this Act.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8. FUNDING STABILIZATION.

(a) FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—The table in subclause (II) of section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016	90%	110%
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%''.

(b) FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER ERISA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The table in subclause (II) of section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 is amended to read as follows:

''If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016	90%	110%
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Clause (ii) of section 101(f)(2)(D) of such Act is amended by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2019''.

(B) STATEMENTS.—The Secretary of Labor shall modify the statements required under subclauses (I) and (II) of section 101(f)(2)(D)(i) of such Act to conform to the amendments made by this section.

(c) STABILIZATION NOT TO APPLY FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN ACCELERATED BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION RULES.—

(1) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—The second sentence of paragraph (2) of section 436(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''of such plan'' and inserting ''of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv))''.

(2) EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—The second sentence of subparagraph (B) of section 206(g)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1056(g)(3)(B)) is amended by striking ''of such plan'' and inserting ''of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv))''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(B) COLLECTIVELY BARGAINED PLANS.—In the case of a plan maintained pursuant to 1 or more collective bargaining agreements, the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2015.

(4) PROVISIONS RELATING TO PLAN AMENDMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If this paragraph applies to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract, such plan or contract shall be treated as being operated in accordance with the terms of the plan during the period described in subparagraph (B)(ii).

(B) AMENDMENTS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—This paragraph shall apply to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract which is made—

(I) pursuant to the amendments made by this subsection, or pursuant to any regulation issued by the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of Labor under any provision as so amended, and

(II) on or before the last day of the first plan year beginning on or after January 1, 2016, or such later date as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

(ii) CONDITIONS.—This subsection shall not apply to any amendment unless, during the period—

(I) beginning on the date that the amendments made by this subsection or the regulation described in clause (i)(I) takes effect (or in the case of a plan or contract amendment not required by such amendments or such regulation, the effective date specified by the plan), and

(II) ending on the date described in clause (i)(II) (or, if earlier, the date the plan or contract amendment is adopted),

the plan or contract is operated as if such plan or contract amendment were in effect, and such plan or contract amendment applies retroactively for such period.

(C) ANTI-CUTBACK RELIEF.—A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 411(d)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 solely by reason of a plan amendment to which this paragraph applies.

(d) MODIFICATION OF FUNDING TARGET DETERMINATION PERIODS.—

(1) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—Clause (i) of section 430(h)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''the first day of the plan year'' and inserting ''the valuation date for the plan year''.

(2) EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—Clause (i) of section 303(h)(2)(B) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1083(h)(2)(B)(i)) is amended by striking ''the first day of the plan year'' and inserting ''the valuation date for the plan year''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) shall apply with respect to plan years beginning after December 31, 2012.

(2) ELECTIONS.—A plan sponsor may elect not to have the amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) apply to any plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, either (as specified in the election)—

(A) for all purposes for which such amendments apply, or

(B) solely for purposes of determining the adjusted funding target attainment percentage under sections 436 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and 206(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 for such plan year.

A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of such Act and section 411(d)(6) of such Code solely by reason of an election under this paragraph.

SA 2715. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 7 days after enactment.

SA 2716. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 8 days after enactment.

SA 2717. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''8 days'' and insert ''9 days''.

SA 2718. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2717 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike ''9 days'' and insert ''10 days''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct an oversight hearing to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Indian Law and Order Commission Report: A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer.''

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224–2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Negotiations on Iran's Nuclear Program''.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 3 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. STABENOW. 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 February 4, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10:15 a.m. in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Privacy in the Digital Age: Preventing Data Breaches and Combating Cybercrime.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTING OVERSIGHT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Fraud and Abuse in Army Recruiting Contracts.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND WILDLIFE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate office building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examination of the Safety and Security of Drinking Water Supplies Following the Central West Virginia Drinking Water Crisis.''

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

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Susan Collins:									
Canada	Dollar		336.00						336.00
Total			336.00						336.00

Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977

SENATOR BARBARA A. MIKULSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Jan. 23, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Carl Levin:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		103.00						103.00
United States	Dollar				11,505.70				11,505.70
Peter K. Levine:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		61.00						61.00
United States	Dollar				11,505.70				11,505.70
William G.P. Monahan:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		86.00		11,505.70				11,591.70
Senator John McCain:									
Canada	Dollar		543.80						543.80
Christian D. Brose:									
Canada	Dollar		702.12				258.00		960.12
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
Senator Tim Kaine:									
Canada	Dollar		662.14						662.14
Mary Ann Naylor:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
Karen Courington:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
* Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar						6,882.75		6,882.75
Senator John McCain:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		430.84						430.84
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Christian D. Brose:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		380.25				47.00		427.25
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		347.45						347.45
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80
* Delegation Expenses:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal						3,126.26		3,126.26
Libya	Dinar						1,054.00		1,054.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham						946.41		946.41
United Kingdom	Pound						900.00		900.00
Senator Tim Kaine:									
Bahrain	Dinar		584.97						584.97
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20
Mary Ann Naylor:									
Bahrain	Dinar		560.33						560.33
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar						1,169.86		1,169.96
Senator John McCain:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia				668.08				668.08
United States	Dollar				7,996.60				7,996.60
Christian D. Brose:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		776.60						776.60
United States	Dollar				8,270.60				8,270.60
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		699.44						669.44
United States	Dollar				8,270.60				8,270.60
* Delegation Expenses:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						3,071.92		3,071.92
Total			8,355.41		109,739.70		17,456.20		135,551.31

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR CARL LEVIN,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Jan. 24, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKSFOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Joseph Mendelson III:									
United States	Dollar				10,206.60				10,206.60
Poland	Zloty		1,366.37						1,366.37
Bettina Poirier:									
Poland	Zloty		791.53						791.53
Total			2,157.90		10,206.60				12,364.50

SENATOR BARBARA BOXER,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 30, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Jason Park:									
Singapore	Dollar		1,299.13						1,299.13
United States	Dollar				12,581.30				12,581.30
Shane Warren:									
Singapore	Dollar		2,184.71						2,184.71
United States	Dollar				14,691.40				14,691.40
Total			3,483.84		27,272.70				30,756.54

SENATOR MAX BAUCUS,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Barrasso:									
Canada	Dollar		639.48						639.48
Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar						1,044.89		1,044.89
Senator John Barrasso:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		357.70						357.70
Bahrain	Dinar		191.18						191.18
United States	Dollar				10,747.10				10,747.10
Charles Ziegler:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		357.70						357.70

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United States	Dollar				10,268.10				10,268.10
*Delegation Expenses:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham						512.83		512.83
Bahrain	Dinar						110.00		110.00
Senator Bob Corker:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		351.67						351.67
Oman	Riyal		266.44						266.44
Bahrain	Dinar		253.03						253.03
United States	Dollar				11,228.20				11,228.20
Michael Gallagher:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		361.67						361.67
Oman	Riyal		309.81						309.81
Bahrain	Dinar		1,356.88						1,356.88
United States	Dollar				10,862.20				10,862.20
*Delegation Expenses:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal						1,016.35		1,016.35
Oman	Riyal						2,433.92		2,433.92
Bahrain	Dinar						1,761.90		1,761.90
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
Germany	Euro		305.00						305.00
Belgium	Euro		545.00						545.00
United States	Dollars				12,023.00				12,023.00
David Bonine:									
Germany	Euro		305.00						305.00
Belgium	Euro		545.00						545.00
United States	Dollars				12,023.00				12,023.00
*Delegation Expenses:									
Germany	Euro						2,027.59		2,027.59
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		358.68						358.68
United States	Dollar				8,719.40				8,719.40
Jessica Elledge:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		455.00						455.00
United States	Dollar				9,907.30				9,907.30
*Delegation Expenses:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia						2,047.94		2,047.94
Senator Marco Rubio:									
United Kingdom	Euro		1,186.00						1,186.00
United States	Dollar				12,189.80				12,189.80
Jaime Fly:									
United Kingdom	Euro		1,373.54						1,373.54
United States	Dollar				12,168.80				12,168.80
*Delegation Expenses:									
United Kingdom	Euro						46.44		46.44
Michael Henry:									
Bahrain	Dinar		560.32						560.32
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20
*Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar						584.83		584.83
Damian Murphy:									
India	Rupee		890.00						890.00
Sri Lanka	Rupee		942.80						942.80
United States	Dollar				3,742.30				3,742.30
*Delegation Expenses:									
India	Rupee						188.00		188.00
Michael Phelan:									
Kenya	Shilling		764.00						764.00
Tanzania	Shilling		552.11						552.11
Germany	Euro		332.94						332.94
United States	Dollar				7,303.20				7,303.20
Michael Schiffer:									
China	Renminmbi		385.00						385.00
Vietnam	Dong		279.22						279.22
United States	Dollar				5,527.10				5,527.10
*Delegation Expenses:									
China	Renminmbi				393.89				393.89
Christopher Socha:									
Georgia	Lari		1,190.38						1,190.38
United States	Dollar				3,890.30				3,890.30
*Delegation Expenses:									
Georgia	Lari						128.64		128.64
Dana Stroul:									
Bahrain	Dinar		1,366.75						1,366.75
United States	Dollar				2,379.40				2,379.40
Caroline Vik:									
Bahrain	Dinar		1,180.00						1,180.00
United States	Dollar				2,047.20				2,047.20
*Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar						704.76		704.76
Ana Unruh-Cohen:									
Poland	Zloty		1,391.37						1,391.37
United States	Dollar				3,627.20				3,627.20
Jesse Young:									
Poland	Zloty		1,231.37						1,231.37
United States	Dollar				3,716.80				3,716.80
Total			20,585.04		151,469.60		13,001.98		185,056.62

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, Jan. 28, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1, TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Brian Walsh			738.00						738.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1, TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
	Dollar				12,168.00				12,168.00
Total			738.00		12,168.00				12,906.00

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPEFOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Kyle Parker:									
Poland	Zloty		2,993.42						2,993.42
United States	Dollar				1,389.90				1,389.90
Erika Schlager:									
Poland	Zloty		3,724.00						3,724.00
United States	Dollar				1,354.60				1,354.60
Austria	Euro		2,281.00						2,281.00
United States	Dollar				3,237.00				3,237.00
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,686.67						1,686.67
Switzerland	Franc		465.00						465.00
United States	Dollar				3,357.60				3,357.60
Janice Helwig:									
Poland	Zloty		3,725.81						3,725.81
United States	Dollar				2,950.20				2,950.20
Tajikistan	Somoni		1486.00						1,486.00
Kazakhstan	Tenge		327.00						327.00
United States	Dollar				11,341.50				11,341.50
Mischa Thompson:									
Poland	Zloty		1,339.65						1,339.65
Germany	Euro		1,597.66						1,597.66
United States	Dollar				4,262.00				4,262.00
Morocco	Dirham		524.00						524.00
Monaco	Euro		854.28						854.28
United States	Dollar				6,713.80				6,713.80
Marlene Kaufmann:									
Monaco	Euro		1,281.42						1,281.42
United States	Dollar				1,056.00				1,056.00
Fred Turner:									
India	Rupee		1,064.00						1,064.00
United States	Dollar				10,310.37				10,310.37
Orest Deychakiwsky:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		2,125.67						2,125.67
United States	Dollar				2,067.30				2,067.30
Allison Hollabaugh:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,833.40						1,833.40
United States	Dollar				2,991.80				2,991.80
Total			27,308.98		51,032.07				78,341.05

SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Jan. 8, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), REPUBLICAN LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Ted Cruz:									
South Africa	Rand		2,009.01						2,009.01
Total			2,009.01						2,009.01

SENATOR MITCH McCONNELL,
Republican Leader, Jan. 14, 2014.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, with the concurrence of the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 629; that there be 60 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote, without intervening action or debate on the nomination, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the record; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

CONGRATULATING PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 344 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 344) congratulating the Penn State University women's

volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association women's volleyball championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 344) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1996

Mr. DONNELLY. I understand that S. 1996, introduced earlier today by Senator HAGAN, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1996) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

Mr. DONNELLY. I now ask for its second reading but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, 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 S. 1845, the Unemployment Insurance Extension Act, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; and that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to S. 1845 be 9:45 a.m. and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to the Reed amendment No. 2714 and S. 1845 be 10:45 a.m. on Thursday; finally, that the cloture vote on the Reed amendment be at 11 a.m. on Thursday.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DONNELLY. The Senate will not be in session tomorrow to accommodate issues conferences for each caucus. There will be up to two rollcall votes at 11 a.m. on Thursday. We also expect to consider the nomination of Senator BAUCUS to become Ambassador to China.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014, AT 9:30 A.M.

Mr. DONNELLY. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:58 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 7, 2009 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

*MICHAEL G. CARROLL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

*Nominee has committed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING PACIFIC CONSERVATORY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts (PCPA) located at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, California.

During its 50 years, PCPA has become a nexus of artistic talent on the Central Coast. Over the course of that time it has nurtured thousands of students and provided an oasis for patrons of the arts.

Founded in 1964 by Donovan Marley, the newly formed company quickly gained local support, and in 1965 Santa Maria voters approved $1 million in funding to build the Performing Arts Center building on the Allan Hancock college campus. It was eventually named the Marian Theatre, after Allan Hancock's wife, Marian Hancock. In the summer of 1974, an outdoor theater was constructed in just 58 days to host outdoor summer performances in Solvang, CA. Decades later, these venues continue to put on incredible performances for Central Coast residents.

The heritage of PCPA, however, is not just in landmark buildings, but in the cultural legacy that it has provided for generations. In fact, many of the nation's greatest actors had their beginnings at PCPA and its alumni include Academy Award winners Robin Williams, Kathy Bates, and Mercedes Ruehl.

Many of us on the Central Coast remember our first experience at a PCPA performance, and I know that it will continue to delight us with its excellence for years to come. I applaud the PCPA for its years of dedication to bringing the performing arts to the Central Coast with an unmatched level of quality, passion, and talent. Congratulations on fifty years of excellence.

RECOGNIZING MR. WALTER TOOLE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize my good friend Mr. Walter Toole for his receipt of the 2013 Danniel J. Petro Bright Future of West Orange award. This award is given ''in recognition of entrepreneurial tenacity and steadfast determination that facilitate opportunity through investment in community and lifelong relationships that keep our future bright.''

Walter and his wife, Patricia, purchased the historic Bray Hardware store in 1983. Over the past 30 years, the Toole family has expanded their business and opened numerous stores across Central Florida. The company concentrates its business locally, and its remarkable growth continues to strengthen the local economy and provide employment for hardworking Floridians. I am a long-time customer of Toole's Ace Hardware, and have experienced first-hand the exceptional service that characterizes the Toole family stores.

I am pleased to congratulate Walter on receiving the 2013 Bright Future of West Orange award, and I thank him for his dedication to the Central Florida community.

CONGRATULATING THE GLMV CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2014 MEMBER RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor a select group of business leaders who make our communities strong. Illinois's Tenth District has a long tradition of business innovation and excellence, and year after year more business add to that legacy.

Each year, the Green Oaks, Libertyville, Mundelein and Vernon Hills (GLMV) Chamber of Commerce recognizes a few exceptional individuals for achieving success in the business world and for practicing good citizenship in and for the community.

It is my great honor to congratulate the recipients of the GLMV 2014 Member Recognition Dinner Awards:

Entrepreneur of the Year: Alexa and Seth Holzwarth of LexiWynn; Restaurateur of the Year: Scott Fine of Fine's; Community Service Award: Dr. Robert Rosenberg of Advocate Condell Medical Center; Civic Leadership Award: Sedrik Newbern of Phoenix Insurance; Member of the Year: Brian Logsdon of Corner Bakery Cafe; Volunteer of the Year: Lars Rasmussen of World Financial Group. Distinguished Service Award: Don Peterson of Marketing and Sales Services.

These noteworthy award recipients embody the hardworking, forward-thinking and community-oriented spirit that makes the Tenth District of Illinois such a special place.

Their leadership and success exemplify a model for their fellow businesses, and I congratulate them on receiving these distinctions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank the GLMV Chamber of Commerce for everything it does. Local businesses are the foundation of our communities, and the GLMV Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to keeping those foundations strong.

THE PASSING OF DR. THOMAS LUMSDEN

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, my district lost a cherished member of our medical community when Dr. Thomas Lumsden passed away on January 17, 2014. ''Dr. Tom's'' life of service touched thousands of families in Northeast Georgia, and he will be dearly missed.

Dr. Tom was born in Nacoochee Valley on May 20, 1925. His strong work ethic was evident from an early age, as he graduated the valedictorian of Nacoochee High School in 1942. Five years later, he married India Dyer Lumsden while studying at the Emory University School of Medicine, from which he graduated in 1949. After completing an internship at Atlanta's Grady Hospital, he served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps at Regensburg, Germany for two years. Dr. Tom then worked as the assistant resident in general surgery at Atlanta's VA Hospital from 1952 to 1953 before returning to Northeast Georgia.

Dr. Tom established his family practice in Helen in 1953, and became an organizing partner of the Habersham Medical Group in Clarkesville two years later. Focused on surgery and obstetrics, and Dr. Tom delivered more than 4,000 babies over the course of nearly four decades on staff at Habersham County Medical Center. Remarkably, for more than 30 young families, Dr. Tom had delivered mother or father—or both—and delivered their children years later. He continued his service even after retiring from his practice in 1993, working part time as a medical staff member at the Lee Arrendale State Prison.

In addition to his practice, Dr. Tom served as president of the Habersham County Medical Society, president of the Ninth District Medical Society, chairman of the Medical Association of Georgia's Rural Health Committee, and on the American Medical Association's Council on Rural Health. He became a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Practice in 1972 and was named Physician of the Year by the Medical Association of Georgia. He was a charter member and Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Dr. Tom's civic involvement extended well beyond the medical community. He served as Mayor of Helen, Councilman for the city of Clarkesville, and Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troup 5. Dr. Tom and his family joined First Presbyterian Church of Clarkesville in 1955, and over the years he served that body as an Elder, Sunday school teacher, and pastoral search committee member. He helped form the first EMS service in Clarkesville and trained first responders in the Clarkesville Fire Department. An avid historian, Dr. Tom was an authority on local history and archeology. He even published a book, ''Nacoochee Valley, Its Times and Its Places,''

in 1989. He amassed a large collection of local artifacts during his life, which became the heart of the Sautee-Nacoochee Valley History Museum at the Sautee Nacoochee-Arts and Community Center.

In light of how many lives he touched during his decades of selfless service, Dr. Tom will certainly be missed in Northeast Georgia. My prayers and thoughts are with India and the rest of Dr. Tom's family as they mourn their loss.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF NELLEANN RUTH HAMM BELL

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Northwest Florida's beloved Nelleann ''Nell'' Ruth Hamm Bell who passed away on January 31, 2014. Mrs. Bell was a loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a leader in the community. Northwest Florida mourns her loss.

Mrs. Bell was born in Birmingham, Alabama, where she lived before moving with her family to Pensacola, Florida. She and her husband, Dr. Reed Bell, both attended Pensacola High School and graduated in 1947. They later married and started a family. Mrs. Bell supported her husband and help raised their six children, as Dr. Bell served as the Medical Director of the Sacred Heart Children's Hospital.

In the late 1970s, Mrs. Bell became heavily involved in politics and civil society. She founded the Pensacola chapter of the Florida Federation of Women for Responsible Legislation, and thanks to her dedicated leadership, she became the organization's president. In this capacity, she worked with other organizations, such as the Eagle Forum, to promote pro-family legislation. Mrs. Bell was also deeply committed to improving the lives of people in her local community, and she made an immense impact on countless individuals through her founding of Our Mother's Home, a maternity home for unwed mothers. In addition to her leadership and service, Mrs. Bell was a woman of tremendous faith who was fully committed to serving the Lord.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of Mrs. Nell Bell. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers and sincerest condolences to her six children, Rev. William R. Bell, Jr.; Mitzi Peters; Terry Bush; Former Florida Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Bell; Lance Bell; and Brian Bell; 20 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; family and friends. Mrs. Bell will be truly missed, and her contributions to Northwest Florida will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO JACK WYATT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to our country, state and community are exceptional. We have been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make their communities, and country, a better place to live and work. Jack Wyatt is one of these individuals. Jack's many accomplishments are wide ranging, as he has made his mark as a successful businessman, a decorated member of the military and an active supporter of the community. On February 4, 2014, Jack will be honored by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors for all he has done.

Jack is the true definition of an American patriot and hero. A 35 year veteran, Jack represented his country proudly, serving in four theaters of war during his long career. He has truly seen it all, being shot down, and eventually rescued, while in Vietnam. It is no surprise that he holds commendations from five former United State's Presidents. Jack has since retired as a Captain in the Navy Reserve, though his advice and expertise remain highly sought after. In the early 1990's Jack turned down an Admiralship in Washington D.C., as it meant that he would have to move from his beloved city of Corona, California, out east to the Pentagon.

From 2000 to 2001, Jack was assigned to lead a special project by the Navy's Chief of Information, Thomas Jurkowski, in conjunction with his tasking by the Secretary of the Navy, Richard Danzig, and Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The project, ''Vision 21,'' was created to develop a ''lessons learned'' program following Operation Desert Storm and Operation Allied Force. Due to the success of the program, Jack and many members of his team were awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. More recently, Jack became an advisor to the United States Secretary of the Navy on strategy planning, international affairs, and policy, and also served as Public Affairs Advisor to the Commander of the Naval Reserve Force of Western Region, San Diego.

Not only has Jack served his country proudly, he has also contributed to his community's economic and developmental growth. After retiring from active duty, Jack began a long career, spanning 28 years, with Southern California Edison. His focus in management and public policy development garnered the company increased success. Jack went on to become Regional Director for the Inland Empire from 1985 to 1999, and his responsibility covered three counties and 56 cities, with an annual revenue base of $3.5 billion dollars.

With his influence and knowledge of the industry, Jack took a leap of faith and started his own company, Strategic Connections, Inc. (SCI) in 1999. This organization of professionals and specialists advises executives and public officials on a wide array of utility issues including service, leadership and strategy. With Jack's guidance, the company has grown to be a leader in the industry within Southern California.

I have come to know Jack well through many years working together on a variety of projects in California. I can personally attest to his incredible work-ethic, professionalism, and positive attitude. In light of all Jack has done for Southern California and our country, it is only fitting that he be honored by the Board of Supervisors for his more than 30 years of dedicated commitment to our community. Jack's honorable service and tireless passion for public service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our country, state and community. I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many individuals are grateful for his service and salute him on this great milestone.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for votes on Monday, February 3, 2014, due to Flights #4634 and #4065 being cancelled out of Charleston International Airport, and Flight #1750 being subsequently cancelled out of Charlotte International Airport. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: H.R. 1791: Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act: Yes. H.R. 357: GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013: Yes.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS OF PALMA YANNI

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Palma Yanni, who has been named Lady of the Year by UNICO, the nation's largest Italian-American service organization. Palma Yanni was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania to Casper and Rose Torchia Adamo. She was raised in Scranton and graduated from Scranton Technical High School. She is a former member of St. Anthony's Church in Scranton, and is now a member of St. Peter's Cathedral. Prior to raising her own family, she worked at JC Penney and the Holly Shop in downtown Scranton. While her children were in school, she was an active member of the PTA and served as President.

Through her work with local service organizations, Palma has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to community service. She has been an active member of the Scranton Chapter of UNICO's Ladies Auxiliary for the past 30 years, holding offices of Corresponding Secretary and President and is a member of the Board of Directors, where she has chaired and assisted in many Auxiliary events.

In 2003, when women began to join, Palma began working with the Scranton Chapter of UNICO. She was elected Second Vice President in 2009 and in 2011 became the first woman to serve as President of the Scranton chapter of UNICO—the largest chapter in the country. She also serves on the Board of Directors and was elected Chair of the Board in 2012. Palma was also named President of Ladies Auxiliary of the North Scranton Knights of Columbus, is a member of St. Joseph's Center Auxiliary and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, and volunteers with ''Family to Family'' and St. Peter's Cathedral.

Although she has just recently earned national recognition, Palma Yanni has been a pillar of the Scranton service community for decades. She remains an active member in the Scranton UNICO chapter, volunteering and

working on all local functions and events. I am proud to congratulate Palma Yanni on being named UNICO's Lady of the Year, and thank her for her decades of leadership and selfless dedication to serving others.

RECOGNIZING NICK J. MANCE

HON. WILLIAM L. ENYART

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. ENYART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedicated community service of Mr. Nick J. Mance as he marks his 20th anniversary as a Trustee for Southwestern Illinois College.

Mr. Mance was elected to then Belleville Area College's Board of Trustees in 1993 and has been continuously re-elected since that time. His fellow Board members chose him to serve as the Board's Chair in 2001 and have re-elected him to this post each year since. In addition to his many duties as Board Chair, Mr. Mance works enthusiastically with the administration, faculty, and staff on the Facilities and Finance and the Planning and Policy Committees and the Strategic Planning Council, and has served on all of the Board's standing committees. Also, he has served as the Illinois Community College Trustee Association's Regional Chair and is an ex-officio member of the Southwestern Illinois College Foundation Board of Directors.

Mr. Mance is a certified public accountant and a partner in The Mance Leahy Group accounting firm in Columbia, Illinois. He helped found the company in 1991 with his partner, one employee and only one client. After 22 years in business, the firm has numerous employees and more than 1,000 clients.

As a Cahokia, Illinois resident, business owner, taxpayer, husband, father of three, grandfather of three, and past Chair of the Cahokia School District No. 187 Board, Mr. Mance chose to pursue a seat on the Southwestern Illinois College Board because he believed he could help ensure access to quality education for area residents, contribute to the success of the community college, and contribute to the success and growth of the Southwestern Illinois region.

Mr. Mance has consistently and actively helped SWIC maintain its longstanding accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, and achieve model-institution recognition from the HLC for its Academic Quality Improvement Program initiatives and achievements by insisting on the highest academic standards and state-of-the-art classroom technology.

During his longstanding service to the Board of Trustees, Mr. Mance has been a proponent of capital development projects, including the construction of the Information Sciences Building, Liberal Arts Complex, and Schmidt Art Center at the Belleville Campus, and extensive expansions and renovations at the Red Bud and Sam Wolf Granite City campuses. Mr. Mance was one of the driving forces behind renaming the institution Southwestern Illinois College in 2000 to better reflect the college's 2,100-square-mile district; and renaming the Granite City Campus, the Sam Wolf Granite City Campus, in 2007 in honor of fellow SWIC Trustee and longtime legislator Sam Wolf.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Mr. Nick J. Mance for his 20 years of service as a Trustee of Southwestern Illinois College and to wish him the very best in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 12, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 1513. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 32, I was unable to vote on rollcall No. 32 due to inclement weather which prevented me from traveling from Williamsport, PA to Washington, DC. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING MUSIC EDUCATOR KENT KNAPPENBERGER

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Westfield Academy and Central School educator, Kent Knappenberger on receiving the Music Educator Grammy Award. Mr. Knappenberger, a middle school and high school music teacher in Westfield, New York, was recently announced as the inaugural winner of this prestigious award.

Mr. Knappenberger, who holds a Master's Degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, accepted the award on January 25th in Los Angeles, California at the Special Merit Awards Ceremony & Nominees Reception with his wife, Nannette, and children in attendance. Kent was selected from over 30,000 initial nominations from all 50 States.

The Music Educator Award was created this year to bring attention to the lasting impact that teachers can have on their students both in and out of the classroom. Mr. Knappenberger is a world-class example of an educator whose 25 years of experience has had profoundly positive impacts on students' lives. In fact, Kent was nominated for this Grammy Award a total of three times—twice by former students and once by a former student's mother. This is a fitting example of the impact he has on the local community and his students' lives.

I once again congratulate Kent Knappenberger on receiving this Grammy Award and wish him continued success at Westfield Academy for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING ILLINOIS' 11TH DISTRICT FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize two intelligent and distinguished students from my district for receiving one of the most competitive merit-based grants in the world.

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is a prestigious international exchange program that serves to cultivate knowledge and understanding between citizens of the United States and those across the globe.

Since its creation in 1946, the program has funded graduate study, research and teaching endeavors for over a quarter of a million people in 155 countries.

After a rigorous selection process based on academic achievements and leadership potential, Ms. Natalie Cain, a native of Darien studying at the University of Miami, and Mr. Matthew Ropp, a native of Oswego studying at Northern Illinois University, were selected for this prestigious program, where they will continue their studies in the fields of public health and English, respectively.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the achievements of these two individuals and I wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING POLICE OFFICER JASON WELLS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize police officer Jason Wells of Pearland, Texas. On October 24, 2013 Officer Wells was involved in a severe off-duty motorcycle accident. This accident left Officer Wells with several broken bones, and his left leg had to be amputated below the knee. Officer Wells is a single father to two young children, and previously protected our Nation honorably as a Marine.

Officer Wells still has a long road to recovery ahead of him. I'm pleased to be part of a community that has rallied to support him by hosting benefits for this hero. The proceeds will help fund Officer Wells' rehabilitation and the prosthetic limb he needs to get back on patrol. Every day in communities across America, police officers risk their lives to keep us safe. On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize Officer Wells. Our community is proud of Officer Wells for his service to protect Pearland, Texas and our nation. We wish him the best in his recovery.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS ALLOWABLE USE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1791, the ''Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act'', but I have serious concerns about this legislation and its overlap with the policies appropriately established in the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA).

Of course, we all agree that it is important for states, territories, tribes, and high-risk urban areas to be prepared for possible acts of terrorism. And we also agree that medical preparedness and related activities are an important part of this.

However, I worry that this bill may result in duplicative and uncoordinated efforts across the government.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the lead federal entity on the public health and medical response to public health emergencies and incidents, including bioterrorist attacks. Specifically, this bill conflicts with HHS's authority under PAHPA. Legislation reauthorizing the PAHPA authorities at HHS was passed on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis by the House and Senate and signed into law just last March.

HHS already undertakes a number of activities related to enhancing medical preparedness and medical surge capacity in States and cities. The Department also maintains a stockpile of countermeasures and other pharmaceutical supplies for terrorist attacks and other public health emergencies—which is managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I believe the use of DHS grant funds for medical preparedness activities authorized in H.R. 1791 without any consultation requirement or acknowledgement of HHS's role in public health and medical response efforts is short-sighted. It has the potential to undermine HHS's leadership and expertise on this important issue and impede a unified federal response to terrorist attacks.

If my colleagues believe that there should be enhanced support of medical preparedness activities, I hope that we can work together to find a way to ensure coordination of efforts and preserve HHS's important role.

CELEBRATING MS. JACKIE PEER, RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING STEP AWARD

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Jackie Peer, recipient of the 2014 STEP Award from the Manufacturing Institute. I am pleased to recognize her contributions to Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc., her industry, her community in Eastern Washington, and our nation.

Seeking to inspire the next generation of female talent, the STEP Award recognizes women in science, technology, engineering, and production roles who have made significant achievements in manufacturing.

Manufacturing is revitalizing our economy and making America strong. Investments in manufacturing, engineering, and science multiply across the economy, creating jobs and growth in other sectors. While today's manufacturing industry, is competitive, high tech, safe, and working hard to encourage women into the field, manufacturers still have difficulties finding the skilled workers they need. Part of this skills gap is due to the lack of women in the industry. While women make up 50 percent of the U.S. workforce, they make up only 24 percent of the manufacturing workforce. Passionate about developing the next generation of workers for the electric power industry, Ms. Peer is also working to encourage other women to enter the science, technology, and engineering industries.

Ms. Peer joined Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. (SEL) in 1996 as an application engineer. During her career at SEL, she has managed the research and design of distribution relays and controls as well as time and communications products—significant and essential products used by electric utilities around the world. The developments and offerings achieved under Ms. Peer's leadership have resulted in reliability improvements to the electric power grid and have helped drive the growth of SEL's U.S.-based manufacturing.

Ms. Peer has also led technical marketing and regional sales and services teams within the company. Her passion for workforce development led to her current role as the director of SEL. University, a department within SEL dedicated to training the next generation of power system engineers. She also recently started a group called Women in Engineering to help women at SEL foster collaboration, create dialogue around everyday topics and challenges and to provide mentorship and support.

Ms. Peer is a senior member of the Society of Women Engineers as well as a member of IEEE, IEEE Women in Engineering (WiE), IEEE Women in Power (WiP), the American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE), and the American Marketing Association. She holds a bachelor's of science in electrical engineering from Washington State University.

So today, I rise to acknowledge and thank Ms. Jackie Peer for her years of dedication and hard work. I also want to congratulate her for setting an example of professional excellence and advocacy of women in manufacturing, as well as her commitment to Eastern Washington.

JOHN P. STANTON

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a life of faithful service and dedication.

John Patrick Stanton was the youngest of four children born to Irish immigrant parents in Philadelphia in 1928. After his graduation from high school, he entered the U.S. Navy serving in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

Upon returning, he went to LaSalle University on the GI Bill and eventually married his wife of 63 years, Harriet—together they were parents to 12 children and 46 grandchildren.

Aside from a large and loving family, Mr. Stanton leaves behind a legacy of compassion in the way of the Pro-Life Coalition of Southeastern Pennsylvania and other pro-life groups.

Mr. Stanton was a tireless advocate for the unborn and a recognizable site each week ministering to young mothers at women's clinics in the city. Through his commitment to his faith and his calling, he saved the lives of countless families and brought many others into religion.

For his witness, Mr. Stanton was recognized with a number of awards and honors, and eventually would earn a master's degree in religious education from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary—ensuring that his teaching would continue.

John P. Stanton passed away peacefully on January 31, 2014 at the age of 86. While he is gone, his service to his country, his community, his family and his faith will remain.

CELEBRATING TEX AVERY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the artistry and influence of Tex Avery. A leading innovator of a distinctly American form of popular culture, Avery created iconic cartoon characters adored the world over by young and old alike and pioneered a new and lasting approach to animated storytelling.

Avery, born in Taylor, TX in 1908, was a man of many gifts: animator, cartoonist, voice artist, director. A central figure during the Golden Age of Hollywood Animation (1935–55), his work was marked by speed, sarcasm, and irony. Collaborating with top shelf artists like Chuck Jones and legendary voice actors like Mel Blanc, Avery created Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Droopy, and developed Porky Pig and Chilly Willy. Youngsters loved their cartoons' action and slapstick; grownups loved the sly dialogue and clever commentary.

Avery's artistry reflected the joy of a nation leading the world yet restlessly seeking new ways to express itself. He wasn't afraid to innovate and regularly pushed the boundaries of the cartoon form. His characters would speak directly to the audience, object to the plot of the adventure they were starring in, or leap out of the end credits. Yet Avery understood that cartoons had to be more than just animated hijinx featuring colorful characters. A lifelong perfectionist, he would add or cut frames out of the final negative of a cartoon short if he felt a gag's timing was not precise.

Avery's importance to animation cannot be overstated. He saw things differently, changed them, and pushed the art of cartoons forward. His impact is as permanent as the characters he created are beloved.

Tex Avery's tremendous legacy will be honored February 22, 2014 by the Taylor, TX Conservation and Heritage Society with a memorial being placed in Heritage Square. I join all who appreciate fearless innovators in celebrating his enormous contributions to animation and American culture.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 33, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 357. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

IN CELEBRATION OF JOHN BLANKENSHIP'S RETIREMENT

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to celebrate the retirement of John Lee Blankenship. For the past 43 years, Mr. Blankenship has made it his life's work to protect and serve the citizens of Brazoria County. In February 1971, John Blankenship enrolled in the Angleton Police Department Academy because several of his friends were officers. Six months later, John graduated from the Academy and joined the ranks of the Angleton Police Department. John's sense of duty did not stop with the Angleton PD; he also joined and became a member of the Angleton Volunteer Fire Department.

As years went by, John's dedication enabled him to move up the ranks to become Criminal Investigator for the Brazoria County District Attorney's office in 1984. Nine years later, John was again promoted, this time to Chief Investigator. Throughout his career, John had received numerous recognitions for his achievements in law enforcement. In 1983, he was awarded the Investigator of the Year Award by Brazoria County Sheriffs Department. In 2001, John was named an Officer of the Year Finalist by the 100 Club of Brazoria County. Most recently, in 2013, John was awarded the Chuck Dennis Memorial Award, Prosecutor Investigator by the Texas District and County Attorney's Association.

While retirement may take some getting used to, John and his wife of 44 years, Maggie, have plans to take an Alaskan Cruise, as well as a road trip in his motorhome to various destinations throughout the United States. It is my great hope that you will enjoy retirement with your darling wife, two beautiful children, Mindy and Chara, and their families including your four wonderful grandchildren. Thank you, John, for your 43 years of service. Your commitment and dedication to God, family, the citizens of Brazoria County, and the great State of Texas has been unparalleled and for that we recognize you today on the floor of the 113th Congress.

VIEWS ON FARM BILL SECTION 12313

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House agreed to the conference report on H.R. 2642, the Farm Bill. Section 12313 of this legislation addresses an issue that should not go unnoticed, and I would like to make its intent clear.

In the 112th Congress, the House passed H.R. 2541, the Silviculture Regulatory Consistency Act, introduced by Representative HERRERA BEUTLER. The stated intent of this legislation was to return Clean Water Act permitting of silvicultural operations around forest roads to the same standards that applied before recent court decisions created uncertainty about which standards should be used. Before court actions, a Clean Water Act permit was not required for nursery operations, site preparation, reforestation and subsequent cultural treatment, thinning, prescribed burning, pest and fire control, harvesting operations, surface drainage, or road use, construction, and maintenance. Permits were only required for activities that involved rock crushing, gravel washing, log sawing and log storage. That standard has worked for many years, and I support continuing that standard.

However, as originally written, H.R. 2541 could have created legal ambiguity on what should be covered with a Clean Water Act permit. I introduced an amendment to H.R. 2541 in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee clarifying that activities exempt from permitting are limited to the silvicultural activities specified in the bill, and not all silvicultural activities. The language I sponsored and set forth as an amendment of this bill is generally the same as that in Section 12313 of the Farm Bill. Thankfully, the Farm Bill addresses this issue without ambiguity. Put simply, those activities which required a Clean Water Act permit in the past should continue to do so. Those which did not should continue to be exempt.

I appreciate Representative HERRERA BEUTLER's efforts on this issue and I am pleased that this issue has been addressed without ambiguity.

HONORING PORT RICHMOND ON PATROL "PROP" ON THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the Port Richmond On Patrol, better known as "PROP," as it celebrates 25 years as a town watch and civic organization in the City of Philadelphia.

In 1988, in the wake of the Sean Daily murder that rocked the close knit blue collar neighborhood of Port Richmond when a 17 year old local teenager was beaten and killed by another group of teens, a handful of neighbors sprung into action to keep their neighborhood safe.

Three women were instrumental in the birth of PROP: Phyllis Hackimer, Helene LaBenz, and Jackie Saier. These women were involved from the very beginning, working to keep their neighborhood and their kids safe and secure the streets of Port Richmond. PROP Townwatch started out at Phyllis' kitchen table with coffee and pound cake. The first meeting drew hundreds of people wanting to be the eyes and ears of Port Richmond in the 24th Police District.

Through the years, PROP patrolled the streets of Port Richmond every Friday and Saturday night, both in personal vehicles and even on foot patrol, and then initiated the "Eyes and Ears on Your Block" program that invited neighbors to look around and hear what's happening on their block and street and encouraged them to report suspicious behavior.

Hackimer and LaBenz have shared a stoop on Port Richmond's 3600 Gaul Street for decades and raised their kids alongside one another as next door neighbors and friends. Saier, who lives at Almond and Westmoreland Streets, is a walking encyclopedia of Port Richmond history and family ancestry and can usually be found on her porch watching over A&W playground.

PROP has always put the betterment, safety, and security of Port Richmond as their goal and mission statement and have consistently worked hand and hand with the Captain and Police Officers of the 24th Police District.

PROP was also one of the first town watches in the City of Philadelphia to embrace and participate in the National Night Out Program, which they still help organize every August in a citywide event. Furthermore, PROP is a proud ally of Operation Town Watch, an organization dedicated to the development and promotion of organized law enforcement-affiliated crime and drug prevention programs. Members include: Neighborhood, Crime, Community, Town and Block Watch Groups; law enforcement agencies; state and regional crime prevention associations; and a variety of businesses, civic groups and concerned individuals working to make their communities safer places in which to live and work.

HONORING JEFFREY CHEATHAM

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember Jeffrey Cheatham, who died on October 3, 2013, at the age of 51. His mother and my friend, Patricia McVay, tells me that his life was full of adventure and love, and he will be missed by many. As I thought about how challenging this time is for Jeff's family and friends, a few thoughts struck me.

First, I couldn't help but think of the parable of the talents, and how that story reminds us that we ought to make the most out of what we are given each and every day. The parable describes a master who traveled away and left his money with his servants. Upon his return, he discovers that two of his servants invested and doubled the value of their portions, while one servant hid the money and protected it. The master rewarded the two who made the most of their time and his wealth, and punished the one who didn't take advantage of the opportunity. The bigger picture here is simple—we all have limited time, and we have to make the most out of what we are given.

I think Jeff's approach to life and those around him is a good example of that. From what I've been told, Jeff lived a life that was truly in service to others, and he made the most out of his time. His good attitude, jokes

and infectious smile were known to many, and I was told several stories of how he took a friend's parents to chemo then treated them to a lunch after, or how, when he was in school, he gave lunch money to a classmate, or even just how his smile could really light up a room. The gift of life is significant, and there can be an even greater gift in truly living and making the most of your time—as Malcom Forbes' tombstone says: "While alive, he lived."

Second, Jeff's passing should also serve as a reminder of the many challenges and difficulties faced by those who choose to put on the military uniform. Coming from a military family and serving four years in the Air Force, Jeff was no stranger to those challenges, and as such, we should honor and remember the sacrifices he and all our service members make.

I have no doubt that Jeff leaves behind many fond memories with his friends and family, especially his three children, Jenna, Kylie, and Phillip. I join his family in being saddened by this loss, but I'm comforted in knowing that there are many people out there who got to experience Jeff's kindness, and who will miss him dearly.

FEMA FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, my Rhode Island communities have been battered. They have been battered by the financial crisis and a slowly recovering economy, and they have been battered by Mother Nature, from the floods of 2010 to Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Now, as we finally emerge from the worst economy since the Great Depression, our citizens who managed to hold on to their homes through economic hardship and uncertainty are facing yet another challenge—sharp rate increases to their flood insurance policies.

We need to pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act today, and send it on to the President for his signature. Our communities cannot wait any longer for relief from steep rate increases. Rhode Island families have told me they are facing flood insurance rates upwards of $35,000, and they are scared of losing their homes. This is simply unconscionable.

This legislation passed the Senate last Thursday with a strong bipartisan vote of 67–32; 182 bipartisan Members in the House are cosponsors of the House companion legislation. There is no reason for the Republican House Leadership to deny us a vote on this critical relief.

Implementing a delay in rate increases will give FEMA the time it needs to complete an affordability study and develop recommendations to assist homeowners who cannot afford their premiums. Without it, thousands of our middle-class homeowners will continue to suffer from the uncertainty of not knowing whether the cost of flood insurance will make homeownership unaffordable.

I urge my colleagues to support consideration of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, and provide immediate relief for our families and communities.

HONORING DRAPER INC.

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Draper Inc. in Spiceland on being named America's Healthiest Workplace by Healthiest Employers, a leader in corporate wellness and health analytics.

This company, in my home district, was ranked first place among 100 national finalists. The prestigious award included a year-long selection process and involved companies of all sizes and industries.

Draper established a safety and wellness committee to raise awareness of the stressors that drive unhealthy habits. That committee has increased its capacity to giving Draper employees the tools to succeed. The committee members volunteer their time to plan, organize, and run wellness events.

Draper is an example of a company rallying around physical activity and healthy living to improve an entire community's quality of life.

As members of Congress, we need to continue to promote and encourage health and overall wellness in our communities. In turn, our wellness initiatives will encourage a healthier American people.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the deceivingly titled "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act." Let's be clear, federal policy—including the Affordable Care Act—already prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars to fund abortions, except in the cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

The bill on the floor today would dramatically restrict the freedom of women to use their own money to purchase health insurance that covers reproductive health services including abortion. Under the bill, women and families would be denied access to tax credits to purchase any health plan in the health insurance Marketplaces that includes abortion services even if they use their own money to pay for coverage for those services. Additionally, the bill would deny small business owners tax credits if they offer coverage that includes abortion to their employees even though large employers can still offer such tax exempt coverage. Under this bill, millions of American women would be denied access to comprehensive reproductive health care—whether they purchase insurance in the Marketplaces or receive it through their employers.

Madam Speaker, a woman's right to choose her own health care is fundamental and today's bill is a direct attack on that right. This bill was a mistake the first time it was proposed, and it remains a mistake today. I urge my colleagues to reject this assault on women and instead I urge House Republicans to focus on extending unemployment insurance for millions of Americans who are out of work through no fault of their own.

HONORING ROSY CHU

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Rosy Chu for her extraordinary career in television and community affairs on the occasion of her retirement. Ms. Chu is retiring after more than forty-two years of dedicated service with KTVU FOX 2 and KICU TV36, where she has served as Director of Community Affairs and Public Service since 1989.

A proud San Francisco native, Ms. Chu graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Communication Arts. She was one of the first women of Asian descent to work in the television industry, and was the first Asian American woman to host and produce a regularly scheduled talk show in the San Francisco Bay Area. She began her career with KTVU FOX 2 in 1971 as a secretary in the art department before moving on to a number of producer roles. From 1985 to 1988, Ms. Chu was the Producer of "2 at Noon," which was the first newscast outside The Ten O'Clock News on KTVU FOX 2. She became the Director of Community Affairs and Public Service in 1989.

During her tenure at KTVU FOX 2, Ms. Chu has served as an ambassador for the station and has been a tremendous asset to the community. She has assisted non-profit agencies, service organizations and community interest groups in obtaining access to media to roll out key messages on social needs and issues. Ms. Chu reached a broad constituency through hosting and producing "Bay Area People," a long-running and award winning public affairs program featuring educational and community issues. Ms. Chu has also traveled throughout California, China and Australia, allowing her to meet with diverse members of communities to host and produce a number of documentaries.

Ms. Chu is keenly committed to community leadership. She joined Asians in Mass Media and the National Asian American Telecommunications early in the start of her career. Ms. Chu served on the founding Board of Directors for the San Francisco Chapter of the Asian American Journalist Association, in addition to being the first Asian American on the Board of Governor's for the San Francisco Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. In 2005, Ms. Chu was inducted into the exclusive Silver Circle Club of the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences, Northern California Chapter.

She has also earned myriad accolades, including eight nominations and one award from the Northern California Emmy Awards. She has been recognized by numerous community groups and national organizations including: the Take a Bigger Role Life Savers Video Excellence Award; the National Association of Broadcaster's Children's Television Award; the New York Film and Video Festival Awards;

California School Boards Foundation Documentary Media Award; the California Teachers' Association Media Excellence Awards and American Women in Radio and Television.

In 2010, Ms. Chu was recognized by the Asian American Journalist Association's Honor Roll of Asian American Pioneers in Journalism as one of the first Asian American public affairs producer-hosts and managers in United States television. She was awarded the "2012 Powerful Women of the Bay" by the Black Women Organized for Political Action.

Throughout her prolific career, Ms. Chu has been praised for her commitment and contributions to the community and to KTVU FOX 2 and KICU TV36. She has worked tirelessly in building community outreach and enhancing the lives of the community she serves through advocacy and raising awareness on critical social issues.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Ms. Rosy Chu, I salute you. I thank you for a lifetime of service and congratulate you on your many achievements. I wish you and your loved ones all the very best as you transition to this exciting new chapter of life.

HONORING ROUND ROCK, TX, POLICE CHIEF TIM RYLE

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Round Rock, TX, Police Chief Tim Ryle. With his retirement approaching, he will soon close out his incredible service to my hometown and begin the next chapter of his life.

A native Texan, Ryle carries on the family tradition of law enforcement service into its third generation. He began his career in Round Rock in 1983 and steadily rose through the ranks before being named Chief in October 2011. During his 31-year career, he's seen the Round Rock Police Department grow from a small town police force into a skilled and mobile law enforcement agency capable of providing safety to this rapidly growing city.

Ryle understood effective police work at its most basic level. A unifying force for area law enforcement leaders, he brought together the region's chiefs, sheriffs, along with the County and District Attorneys, for regular meetings to coordinate strategies and share best practices. Ryle was among the first chiefs in the nation to implement mandatory physical fitness standards for all officers. Another lasting legacy was his devoted work to fund a public safety training facility. All these achievements have made a real difference in the lives of residents.

Chief Ryle led his department with dedication, honesty, and integrity. Due in large part to his leadership, Round Rock is now one of the safest cities in the country. Locals could always sleep well knowing their safety was Ryle's first priority.

Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference in the world; Chief Tim Ryle doesn't have that problem. I join the grateful citizens of Round Rock to wish him only the best in the years ahead.

EFFORT UNDERWAY BY THE STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MAY RESTRICT ACCESS TO LEGAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose efforts currently underway by the Standards Review Committee of the American Bar Association (ABA) that may unintentionally restrict access to legal education for students of color and negatively affect minority serving institutions.

Five years ago, a broad based, national coalition of groups that included all of the national bar associations of color helped craft the current ABA accreditation standard regarding bar passage. That standard balanced the need for quality assurances with the goal of maintaining access to law school for students of color. It required law schools to demonstrate that three out of their last five graduating classes got an ultimate pass rate of at least 75% or an average of 75% over five years.

Since then, as part of the ABA Council of Legal Education's application for re-recognition, the Department of Education as the accrediting agency for law schools, the Department reviewed this standard, did not find any problems with it, and renewed the Council's accrediting authority.

Now the Council's Standards Review Committee is proposing to change this standard to rigidly require schools to demonstrate that every one of its graduating classes achieved an ultimate pass rate of 75 percent in every year, regardless of the pass rates in the jurisdictions where the school's graduates sit for the exam, or else the school would face an immediate sanctions hearing, which is the first step in revoking a school's accreditation.

The SRC has acknowledged that it hasn't done a study and does not know the effects of its proposal. Instead of undertaking the work needed to justify raising its bar accreditation requirement, it has taken a shortcut. This shortcut will potentially limit enrollment for students of color, and affect many minority serving institutions, including law schools affiliated with historically black colleges and universities.

A wide-ranging coalition—over forty letters express opposition to this standard. Included among the groups opposing the change are the Society of American Law Teachers, Clinical Legal Education Association, ABA Council of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, Historically Black College and University Law School Deans, deans of other schools, the National Bar Association, Hispanic National Bar Association, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, National Native American Bar Association, and the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific, and Progressive Caucuses.

People care about this issue because the Standards Review Committee proposal would create a perverse incentive for law schools to limit enrollment solely to students with high standardized test scores. When law schools face accreditation review, their only way to remedy perceived deficiencies is to reduce the chance that students will not pass the bar. The ranks of lawyers reflect a different reality. Many students enter law school with adequate but not stellar standardized test scores and prove through hard work an ability to succeed, graduate, pass the bar, find a job, and contribute meaningfully to the legal profession.

Another issue is not immediately evident, but equally damaging. The National Bar Association has posted in its SRC comments on the proposal, a study worth reading. The study shows that students of color tend to sit for the bar exam in state jurisdictions where the bar exam is harder, and bar passage rates are lower. Schools that graduate these students will fare worse under the proposal than schools with a higher percentage of students that remain in state and tend to have a higher percentage of Caucasian students. I note here that law schools affiliated with historically black colleges and universities have produced some of the most important African American leadership throughout the history of this nation. The proposal's potential effects warrant in-depth study to ensure they are fully understood.

This is one of the issues, raised by many of those who have written to the Standards Review Committee—that the committee is making policy without data. The Council of Legal Education controls the only available data on the ultimate pass rates of particular schools in particular jurisdictions, but despite repeated requests, it has not undertaken a careful impact study before moving forward on this fundamental policy change.

This is why we believe that the Standards Review Committee bears the burden of conducting a careful ultimate pass rate study of the pass rates achieved by particular schools in particular jurisdictions before moving forward on this proposal. To date, it risks unintentionally discriminating against schools that graduate large numbers of students of color.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by restating the American Bar Association's own arguments in support of diversity in the legal profession. The ABA has outlined four powerful rationales for why it must focus its energies on helping to diversify the legal profession:

The Democracy Rationale—that lawyers and judges play a unique role in our democratic institutions, and a more diverse judiciary and legal profession will create greater trust and confidence in the fairness of our mechanisms of government and in the rule of law.

The Business Rationale—that businesses must be responsive to their increasingly diverse customers and clients, here and around the world, and lawyers who are culturally diverse can help businesses reach and better serve these diverse populations.

The Leadership Rationale—that lawyers often play leadership roles in our society, both in and out of politics, and a more broadly inclusive legal profession is essential to providing under-represented groups with access to these roles.

The Demographic Rationale—that by 2042 or sooner, America will be a country of color, in which a majority of her citizens will be people of color.

These arguments reflect the import of expanding access to the legal field, not making it harder.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 33, I was unable to vote on rollcall No. 33 due to inclement weather, which prevented me from traveling from Williamsport, PA to Washington, DC. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 32, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 1791. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

CORRECTION

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, Agricultural Act.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S707–S774

Measures Introduced: Ten bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1987–1996, and S. Res. 343–344. **Page S763**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 270, supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

S. Res. 333, strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq. **Page S761**

Measures Passed:

Congratulating the Penn State University Women's Volleyball Team: Senate agreed to S. Res. 344, congratulating the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Volleyball Championship. **Pages S773–74**

Measures Considered:

Veterans Medical Services and Benefits: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1950, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans. **Pages S707–10**

Subsequently, the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill was withdrawn. **Page S736**

Unemployment Benefits Extension—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Pages S736–38**

Rejected:

Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2631, relating to extension and modification of emergency unemployment compensation program. (By a unanimous vote of 98 yeas (Vote No. 22), Senate tabled the amendment.) **Page S737**

Withdrawn:

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2633, to change the enactment date. **Page S737**

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714, of a perfecting nature. **Page S737**

Reid Amendment No. 2715 (to Amendment No. 2714), to change the enactment date. **Page S737**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714 (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Tuesday, February 4, 2014, a vote on cloture will occur at 11:00 a.m., on Thursday, February 6, 2014. **Page S737**

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2716, to change the enactment date. **Pages S737–38**

Reid Amendment No. 2717 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2716), of a perfecting nature. **Page S738**

Reid Amendment No. 2718 (to Amendment No. 2717), of a perfecting nature. **Page S738**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714 (listed above). **Page S737**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

Reid Amendment No. 2634 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2633), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2633 was withdrawn. **Page S737**

Reid Amendment No. 2635 (to Amendment No. 2634), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid Amendment No. 2634 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2633) fell. **Page S737**

Reid Amendment No. 2632 (to Amendment No. 2631), to change the enactment date, fell when Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2631 was tabled. **Page S737**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Wednesday, February 5, 2014 count as the intervening day. **Page S738**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, February 6, 2014, Senate resume consideration of the bill, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided and controlled between the two Leaders, or their designees; that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to the bill be 9:45 a.m., on Thursday, February 6, 2014, and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714 (listed above) and the bill be 10:45 a.m., on Thursday, February 6, 2014; and that the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714, be at 11 a.m., on Thursday, February 6, 2014. **Page S774**

Bipartisan Budget Act: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. **Pages S738–55**

Conference Reports:

Agricultural Act: By 68 yeas to 32 nays (Vote No. 21), Senate agreed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018. **Pages S710–36**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13396 on February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Cote d'Ivoire; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–29) **Page S759**

Baucus Nomination—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at a time to be determined by the Majority Leader with the concurrence of the Republican Leader, Senate begin consideration of the nomination of Max Sieben Baucus, of Montana, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China; that there be 60 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nomination; that no further motions be in order. **Page S773**

Nomination Discharged: The following nomination were discharged from further committee consideration and placed on the Executive Calendar:

Michael G. Carroll, of New York, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development, which was sent to the Senate on January 6, 2014, from the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. **Page S774**

Messages from the House: **Page S759**

Measures Referred: **Page S759**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S708, S759**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S759–60, S774**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S760**

Executive Communications: **Pages S760–61**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S761–63**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S763–65**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S765–68**

Additional Statements: **Pages S758–59**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S768–69**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S769**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S769–70**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—22) **Pages S736, S737**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:58 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S774.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

AFGHANISTAN

Committee on Armed Services: Committee received a closed briefing on the situation in Afghanistan from Jennifer C. Walsh, Principal Director, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia, Office of the Secretary, Brigadier General Robert P. White, USA, Director, Pakistan/Afghanistan Coordination Cell, J–5, Joint Staff, and Kent A. Breedlove, Senior Defense Intelligence Analyst for Afghanistan, Defense Intelligence Agency, all of the Department of Defense; and

Jarrett Blanc, Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Department of State.

MOVING FROM CONSTANT CRISES TO BROAD-BASED GROWTH

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine moving from constant crises to broad-based growth, focusing on the 2014 outlook, after receiving testimony from Mark Zandi, Moody's Analytics, West Chester, Pennsylvania; Robert Greenstein, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Washington, D.C.; and David A. Rosenberg, Gluskin Sheff and Associates Inc., Ontario, Canada.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, and Janice Marion Schneider, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Mineral Management, both of the Department of the Interior, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA DRINKING WATER CRISIS

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife concluded a hearing to examine the safety and security of drinking water supplies following the Central West Virginia drinking water crisis, including S. 1961, to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, and S. 1009, to reauthorize and modernize the Toxic Substances Control Act, after receiving testimony from Natalie E. Tennant, West Virginia Secretary of State, Randy C. Huffman, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection Cabinet Secretary, and Michael W. McNulty, Putnam Public Service District, all of Charleston, West Virginia; Erik D. Olson, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Richard O. Faulk, Hollingsworth LLP, both of Washington, D.C.; Brent Fewell, Troutman Sanders, Potomac, Maryland, on behalf of United Water; and R. Peter Weaver, International Liquid Terminals Association, Arlington, Virginia.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Finance: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of R. Gil Kerlikowske, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security, Richard G. Frank, of Massachusetts, to be Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Paige Marvel, of Maryland, and Tamara Wenda Ashford, of Virginia, both to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine negotiations on Iran's nuclear program, after receiving testimony from Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; David S. Cohen, Under Secretary of the Treasury; David Albright, Institute for Science and International Security, and Mark Dubowitz, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, both of Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. Res. 333, strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq;

S. Res. 270, supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio; and

The nominations of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Frank A. Rose, of Massachusetts, to be a Assistant Secretary for Verification and Compliance, Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs, Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland, George James Tsunis, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador to Hungary, Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the UN Human Rights Council, Max Sieben Baucus, of Montana, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, and Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, to be Director General of the Foreign Service, all of the Department of State.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Bathsheba Nell Crocker, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Michael Anderson Lawson, of California, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization, and Robert A. Wood, of New York, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, all of the Department of State, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

SECURITY IN SOCHI

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee received a closed briefing on security in Sochi from Fred Glazier, Deputy Director for Intelligence Directorate, National Counterterrorism Center; Gregory Starr, Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security; John Cohen, Deputy Counterterrorism Coordinator and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Homeland Security; John S. Adams, Deputy Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; and Garry Reid, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, and Major General Darryl Roberson, Vice Director, Operations, Joint Chiefs of Staff, both of the Department of Defense.

ARMY RECRUITING CONTRACTS

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight concluded a hearing to examine fraud and abuse in army recruiting contracts, after receiving testimony from Lieutenant General William T. Grisoli, Director of the Army Staff, Major General David E. Quantock, Provost Marshal General of the Army, Commanding General, Army Criminal Investigation Command and Army Corrections Command, Joseph P. Bentz, Principal Deputy Auditor General, Army Audit Agency, and Lieutenant General Clyde A. Vaughn, USA (Ret.), former Director, and Colonel Mike Jones, USA (Ret.), former Division Chief, Strength Maintenance Division, both of the Army National Guard, all of the Department of Defense; and Philip Crane, and Kay Hensen, both of Docupak, Pelham, Alabama.

NOMINATION

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Vivek Hallegere Murthy, of Massachusetts, to be Medical Director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service, and to be Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senator Warren, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

PRIVACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine privacy in the digital age, focusing on preventing data breaches and combating cybercrime, after receiving testimony from Edith Ramirez, Chairwoman, Federal Trade Commission; William Noonan, Deputy Special Agent in Charge, Secret Service, Criminal Investigative Division, Cyber Operations Branch; Mythili Raman, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice; Delara Derakhshani, Consumers Union, Washington, D.C.; Michael R. Kingston, Neiman Marcus Group, Dallas, Texas; John Mulligan, Target, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Fran Rosch, Symantec Corporation, Mountain View, California.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 6 public bills, H.R. 3986–3991; and 2 resolutions, H.J. Res. 108; and H. Res. 473 were introduced. **Pages H1591–92**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1592–93**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 472, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–340). **Page H1591**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Duncan (TN) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1547**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:50 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1553**

Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act: The House began consideration of H.R. 3590, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. Consideration of the measure is expected to resume tomorrow, February 5th. **Pages H1555–84**

Agreed to:

Hastings (WA) amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that makes technical, clarifying and conforming changes to the Committee Print; **Pages H1575–76**

Hanna amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that requires a report on economic impacts of the Act. The report would include any expected increases in recreational hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation activities; an estimate of jobs created to support such activities; an estimate of wages related to these jobs; and estimate of anticipated new local, State, and Federal revenue; **Pages H1576–77**

Castro (TX) amendment (No. 3 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that ensures that women and minority groups, as appropriate, are included for membership on the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee; **Page H1577**

Gallego amendment (No. 4 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that adds veterans service organizations to the list of discretionary members of the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee. Many organizations, including the VA, include outdoor activities to help wounded veterans in their rehabilitation efforts; **Pages H1577–78**

Smith (MO) amendment (No. 7 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that preserves current motorized vessel management in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, a National Park in Southeast Missouri; **Page H1579**

Crawford amendment (No. 8 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that allows the State office of the Cooperative Extension System of the Department of Agriculture and State department of fish and wildlife to determine regular agricultural practices for purposes of federal hunting guidelines; **Pages H1579–80**

Fleming amendment (No. 9 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that restores hunting access to the Kisatchie National Forest for deer hunting with dogs. Includes private property protections; and **Pages H1580–81**

Polis amendment (No. 11 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that maintains access to National Forest System lands for snowmobilers while a winter Travel Management Rule for National Forests is finalized. **Pages H1583–84**

Proceedings Postponed:

DeFazio amendment (No. 6 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that seeks to strike the National Environmental Policy Act waivers in the bill and **Pages H1578–79**

Holt amendment (No. 10 printed in H. Rept. 113–339) that seeks to promote the Secretary of the Interior's authority to consider climate change when making decisions related to recreation and conservation on public lands. **Pages H1581–83**

H. Res. 470, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to by a recorded vote of 234 ayes to 185 noes, Roll No. 35, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 225 yeas to 193 nays, Roll No. 34. **Pages H1555–64**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006 with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2014—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 113–90). **Page H1584**

Discharge Petition: Representative Honda presented to the clerk a motion to discharge the Committee on Rules from the consideration of H. Res. 459, providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3372) to provide a process for ensuring the United States does not default on its obligations (Discharge Petition No. 6).

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H1581.

Senate Referral: S. 376 was held at the desk. **Page H1581**

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1563 and H1563–64. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Committee Meetings

AL QAEDA, ITS AFFILIATES, AND ASSOCIATED GROUPS: VIEW FROM OUTSIDE EXPERTS

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing on State of Al Qaeda, its Affiliates, and Associated Groups: View From Outside Experts. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OSHA'S REGULATORY AGENDA: CHANGING LONG-STANDING POLICIES OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC RULEMAKING PROCESS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing entitled "OSHA's Regulatory Agenda: Changing Long-Standing Policies Outside the Public Rulemaking Process". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

TESTING OF CHEMICALS AND REPORTING AND RETENTION OF INFORMATION UNDER TSCA SECTIONS 4 AND 8

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy held a hearing entitled ''Testing of Chemicals and Reporting and Retention of Information under TSCA Sections 4 and 8''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL INSURANCE OFFICE'S REPORT ON MODERNIZING INSURANCE REGULATION

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''The Federal Insurance Office's Report on Modernizing Insurance Regulation''. Testimony was heard from Michael McRaith, Director, Federal Insurance Office; Thomas Leonardi, Commissioner, Connecticut Insurance Department; and public witnesses.

TERRORIST GROUPS IN LATIN AMERICA: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Terrorist Groups in Latin America: The Changing Landscape''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FUTURE OF THE HOMELAND SECURITY MISSIONS OF THE COAST GUARD

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled ''Future of the Homeland Security Missions of the Coast Guard''. Testimony was heard from Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr., Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security.

EXAMINING RECOMMENDATIONS TO REFORM FISA AUTHORITIES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Examining Recommendations to Reform FISA Authorities''. Testimony was heard from James M. Cole, Department of Justice; Peter P. Swire, Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technology; and public witnesses.

INCREASING FLEXIBILITY IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing on legislation regarding Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act. Testimony was heard from Samuel D. Rauch III, Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and public witnesses.

MIXED SIGNALS: THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY ON MARIJUANA

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''Mixed Signals: The Administration's Policy on Marijuana''. Testimony was heard from Michael Botticelli, Deputy Director, Office of the National Drug Control Policy.

TO AUTHORIZE ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO CONVEY CERTAIN PROPERTY THAT WAS FORMERLY PART OF SANTA ROSA ISLAND NATIONAL MONUMENT AND THAT WAS CONVEYED TO ESCAMBIA COUNTY SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS ON USE AND RECONVEYANCE; AND SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 2954, to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance; and H.R. 3964, the ''Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.'' The Committee granted, by record vote of 9–2, a structured rule for H.R 2954. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–35 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in a nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments to H.R. 2954 printed in part A of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part A of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule also granted a structured rule for H.R. 3964. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule waives all

points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–34 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments to H.R. 3964 printed in part B of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Hastings (WA); and Representatives Stewart; Napolitano; Costa; Huffman; Garamendi; Nunes; Peters (CA); McClintock; and Valadao.

NECESSARY UPDATES TO THE COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH ACT

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Space held a hearing entitled ''Necessary Updates to the Commercial Space Launch Act''. Testimony was heard from George Nield, Associate Administrator, Commercial Space Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration; Alicia Cackley, Director, Financial Markets and Community Investment Team, Government Accountability Office; and a public witness.

FUTURE OF FEDERAL AIDS TO NAVIGATION

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''Finding Your Way: The Future of Federal Aids to Navigation''. Testimony was heard from Rear Admiral Joseph Servidio, Assistant Commandant for Prevention Policy, United States Coast Guard; Rear Admiral Gerd F. Glang, Director, Office of Coast Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Jim Hannon, Chief, Operations and Regulatory Division, United States Army Corps of Engineers; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 2575, the ''Save American Workers Act of 2013''; and H.R. 3979, the ''Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act''. The bills H.R. 2575 and H.R. 3979 were ordered reported, as amended.

WORLD WIDE THREATS

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''World Wide Threats''. Testimony was heard from James R. Clapper, Director, National Intelligence; John O. Brennan, Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Michael T. Flynn, Lieutenant General, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense; James B. Comey, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Matthew G. Olsen, Director, National Counterterrorism Center.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Congressional Budget Office's Budget and Economic Outlook'', 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Foundation for Success: Discussing Early Childhood Education and Care in America'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing entitled ''Protecting Consumer Information: Can Data Breaches Be Prevented?'', 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Examining the Implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act'', 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Impact of the Volcker Rule on Job Creators, Part II'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''The Annual Report of the Office of Financial Research'', 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Al-Qaeda's Resurgence in Iraq: A Threat to U.S. Interests'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, hearing entitled ''U.S. Counternarcotics Operations in Afghanistan'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, hearing entitled ''America's Future in Asia: From Rebalancing to Managing Sovereignty Disputes'', 2 p.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee On Homeland Security, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 3696, the ''National Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure Protection Act of 2013'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 2919, the ''Open Book on Equal Access to Justice Act''; resolution on reauthorization of the Over-Criminalization Task Force; and ratification of subcommittee memberships, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water and Power, hearing on H.R. 3981, the ''Accelerated Revenue, Repayment, and Surface Water Storage Enhancement Act; H.R. 3980, the ''Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act''; and draft discussion to amend the Secure Water Act of 2009 to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to implement a surface water storage enhancement program, and for other purposes, 10 a.m., 1324 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing on the following measures: H.R. 3110, the ''Huna Tlingit Traditional Gull Egg Use Act'', and H.R. 3605, the ''Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act'', 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, oversight hearing on Energy in America: BLM's Red-Tape Run Around and its Impact on American Energy Production'', 2 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''ObamaCare: Why the Need for an Insurance Company Bailout?'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs; and Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlement hearing entitled ''Health Insurance Co-ops: Examining ObamaCare's Billion Loan Gamble:, 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Examining the Science of EPA Overreach: A Case Study in Texas'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The FAA's Impact on Small Businesses in the General Aviation Industry'', 1 p.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled ''The FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012: Two Years Later'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, hearing entitled ''Beyond Transformation: Reviewing Current Status and Secondary Effects of VBA Technology'', 3:30 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing on issues before the IRS that affect American taxpayers, 9:30 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, February 6

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will resume consideration of S. 1845, Unemployment Benefits Extension, with a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714 at 11 a.m. The filing deadline for first-degree amendments to the bill will be at 9:45 a.m., and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2714 and to the bill will be at 10:45 a.m.

Also, Senate expects to consider the nomination of Senator Max Sieben Baucus, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, February 5

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Complete consideration of H.R. 3590—Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act. Consideration of H.R. 3964—Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act (Subject to a Rule).

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