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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, we would rest in You, who alone can bring order to our world. Reveal yourself to our Senators, guiding them on the path of peace. May they place behind them disappointed hopes as they lean on You for comfort and strength. Lord, rebuke their doubts, strengthen the good in them so that nothing may hinder the outflow of Your power in their lives. Direct them to make a commitment to work together for Your glory.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 27, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WALSH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 333.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion. The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 333, H.R. 3979, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO PETER D. ROBINSON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have said often that people who work here in the Capitol are some of the most intelligent men and women anyplace in the world. They come here—as I explained to a group of people from Nevada this morning—dedicated to public service. They are not here to see how much money they can make. They are here to change people's lives. Today, the Senate is losing one of its brightest and most seasoned minds.

A lawyer by trade, Pete Robinson came to the Senate in 2002. I knew Pete because he had worked in the House previously, when I served over there. I

knew him as someone I always admired—people who are good runners. I saw Pete out running and I was amazed at his gracefulness and speed. I did a lot of running. I wasn't very graceful and didn't have a lot of speed, but I did a lot of running. Pete was the captain of his high school cross-country team. He was a good athlete, which I admire very much.

From the moment he came to the Senate, the Office of Parliamentarian became a better place. He was as close to being indispensable as anyone. He has an incredible work ethic and tremendous experience—having been the Parliamentarian in the House and here and having been in the private sector. He has a great memory and has made the Senate function as it should. Not many people can make that claim, especially today. So he will be missed. I will miss him personally.

I love to joke with him and talk to him about his running days, like I talk about my running days, as if we were both still out running. But that is what life is all about. We look back at the things that we did. I am sure, just as the Presiding Officer knows, things you do as a younger man become better every day, and that is the way I look back on my athletic endeavors in that regard. Of course, talking just about myself, maybe I wasn't as good as I thought I was, but that didn't matter at the time. It made me feel good, and that is what athletics is all about—trying to build character.

So Pete is going to be missed in his retirement, but he is going to have plenty to do. He has lots of hobbies: an avid gardener, a good cook—some say an amateur chef. I won't go that far, but he is a good cook, as I understand it. He can make his own furniture. So he is going to keep busy feeding and furnishing his wife Connie, their daughter Tara, son-in-law Ethan, and grandson Milo with the good things he has done.

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



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We will truly miss him. I appreciate his courtesies all the time to me, and, as far as I know, to everyone else.

SCHEDULE

Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to H.R. 4152. At noon there will be up to three rollcall votes: the Menendez-Corker substitute, passage of the Ukraine bill, and confirmation of Maria Contreras-Sweet to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Last night I filed cloture on John Owens to be a U.S. circuit judge, and on the motion to proceed to the legislative vehicle for the unemployment insurance bill. Under the rule the first cloture vote will be tomorrow morning.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO PETER D. ROBINSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to say a word about our longtime colleague Peter Robinson, who is retiring this week.

Peter joined the Office of the Senate Parliamentarian in 2002 and quickly distinguished himself as a standout talent. He brought a remarkable breadth of knowledge to a job that really requires it and a legendary facility for reading and digesting complex legislation in record time. His colleagues describe him as kind of a genius, actually—somebody who can remember not only where he read something but the exact page on which he read it. According to Senate legend, one staffer actually showed up one day asking for the software program that he just assumed Peter had been using to analyze complex bills. He was that fast. He was that good.

Peter has all sorts of interests and hobbies, so I am sure he will make very good use of his retirement, but he will be missed around here. Pete's colleagues will miss his professional skill and mastery of precedent and procedure, but they will also miss the good humor and the equanimity which have made him such a great colleague and such a valuable and respected member of the Senate family over the years. We wish Peter all the best.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

UKRAINE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today is an important day for Ukraine and for all nations supporting international law, democracy, and decency. Later today

the Senate will pass a bipartisan bill that provides much needed aid to stabilize Ukraine's economy.

For those Russian leaders who have played a role in the destabilization of Ukraine, this legislation contains much needed repercussions against them. Remember, Russia is run by an oligarchy. One of the oligarchs is the President of that country—Putin. This bill is a reality check to him that the United States will not stand idly by while Russia plays the role of schoolyard bully.

It seems to me that President Putin does not understand the way the world works today. It is almost as if Putin yearns for the days of Joseph Stalin. Times have changed since Stalin was around, the world has changed since Stalin was around, and it has changed for the better. The Cold War is over, along with fixtures such as the Iron Curtain, dueling superpowers, and brinksmanship. Yet it is almost as if Putin is living in a time warp. Russia's place in the world has transformed. It does not wield the global power it once did. The rest of the world has changed since Stalin's era, with other countries in leading roles.

But the United States of America remains a beacon of hope to the whole world. Our economic, our military, our political power, and our influence are strong because we stand for freedom, democracy, and economic prosperity. Russia, on the other hand, led by this man who yearns for Stalin, is a nation of immense resources and potential for good. Yet they have chosen to wield its influence solely for self-interests.

Earlier this week President Obama said the following about Russia:

Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors—not out of strength, but out of weakness. The fact that Russia felt compelled to go in militarily and lay bare these violations of international law indicates less influence, not more.

President Obama is absolutely correct. Instead of using its influence to bring stability to neighboring countries, Putin has instead played the role of an antagonist. Look at what has taken place in Crimea and the country of Georgia. For what does Russia stand? For what does President Putin stand?

As the world gets closer and closer to looking at Putin, it doesn't like what it sees. The product of Putin's two decades in leadership seems to be a disregard for national law, more corruption, and increased suppression of basic human rights. While countless of his own citizens have rallied in the streets pleading for more freedom, Putin and his cronies have concerned themselves with getting richer—not only with power but with money. These oligarchs have been ruthless in protecting their power and their money.

Inside and outside of Russia, the President of Russia has displayed a penchant for being a bully. He imprisons political rivals and locks them up.

He seizes the wealth from Russians who have displeased him. If they don't say or do exactly what he wants, he puts them in jail and takes their wealth. He has singlehandedly rolled back years of progress on equality. He has endorsed the persecution of his own country's gay and lesbian community. And once again he has invaded and occupied a nation for choosing democracy. Are these acts of a statesman? No. They are acts of a bully.

As billions tuned in to the Olympics, I believe few were deluded by the fake veneer of Putin's Sochi show. In fact, all we saw was that Putin's Russia isn't working.

I say every time I get on the floor that if he so likes the vote that took place in Crimea, why doesn't he have a vote of the people in Chechnya? Everyone knows why.

I say to Mr. Putin: Operating by intimidation and belligerence will not work. In today's world, nations should work together through diplomacy and the rule of law.

He has a choice to come back into the international community and honor international law or to continue to isolate Russia.

Russian troops continue to mass at the border of Ukraine, but he should understand this: The consequences for his continued bullying will not end today and certainly not with this bill. His chest-thumping aggression is leading Russia only to isolation and irrelevance.

My colleagues and I will continue to work to strengthen Ukraine's Government and its 46 million people. The bill before the Senate today sanctions and further isolates Putin and his inner circle. What we are doing here today is just the beginning.

I support this legislation, and I am proud of my Senate colleagues who join in standing for the people of Ukraine. This is what we are doing.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

REAL SOLUTIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I will start by acknowledging the majority leader's candor yesterday in outlining his party's agenda for the rest of the year—in admitting he actually asked his party's "political arm," the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, to come up with it. Maybe he didn't intend to admit that his party's so-called agenda is actually a political gambit or that it basically has one intent—to bail out imperiled Democrats, Democrats desperate to distract from how ObamaCare is devastating the middle class—but it slipped out anyway.

But that wasn't the only Freudian slip we heard at yesterday's press conference. Here is a quote from one of the majority leader's top lieutenants:

When we play the political games that we're playing here, [middle-class families] feel that we are detached from their priorities.

Boy, I couldn't agree more with that. Maybe that is why even the press isn't taking this "agenda" seriously. The New York Times reported that helping struggling Americans is "not really the point" of Democrats' agenda and that a main goal is actually just "to motivate the Democratic base" and drive turnout in places they need to win in November. The Times also noted that the show votes associated with the Democratic agenda "will be timed to coincide with campaign-style trips [by the President]." According to the Washington Post, "Democrats hope to use the votes . . . as fodder . . . in hopes of staving off potential losses in several states."

Look, it doesn't get any more cynical than that—to demonstrate such a total lack of seriousness in such troubling times for the middle class.

At this point Washington Democrats are in the sixth year of trying to fix the economy, and the middle class continues to suffer. It is just not working.

As I have been saying for months now, this presents Washington Democrats with a choice. One option they have is to try something different. This means coming to the middle and working with us on bipartisan solutions that can create jobs, increase take-home pay, and give a leg up to the middle class. The other option is to double down on failed ideology and political gimmicks—the kinds of things that get the Democrats' leftwing base all excited.

In short, Washington Democrats have a choice between helping the middle class and pleasing the left. So when they release a poll-tested, campaign-crafted ObamaCare distraction "agenda" packed to the brim with "lefty show votes," I think middle-class families can tell whose side Washington Democrats are really on. It is certainly not their side.

The people we represent all deserve better than this. They are hurting, really hurting, and all Washington Democrats seem to have for them is a bunch of show votes. I mean, how will show votes help our constituents? How will they help the people who have been writing to me about the impact of ObamaCare on themselves and their families?

One woman who wrote me from Louisville had been enrolled in Kentucky's high-risk pool for people with pre-existing conditions. She said she had been battling cancer for years and that in 2012 her cancer metastasized and moved into her liver, pelvis, lung, and diaphragm. Just imagine hearing devastating news like that. Now imagine hearing a year or so later that you are going to lose the insurance you liked too, insurance that had helped you manage your cancer treatment, and, worse, that your new ObamaCare plan was going to classify your chemo medicine as a specialty drug that costs more than \$1,000 for a 3-week supply. ObamaCare, this constituent wrote, "is about as helpful in saving my life as a

wet paper sack to help cover me from the rain."

I would note she contacted me because she wanted me to know that ObamaCare stories like hers are anything but "lies," despite what some in this Chamber might imply.

Does anyone really think constituents like her care about some show vote? No. What she needs is relief from ObamaCare.

So does another Kentuckian, who wrote me from Henderson County, whose premium will jump \$400 a month to over \$1,100 a month under ObamaCare. He wrote:

Americans were told that we could . . . keep our existing policy [if we chose]. . . . Not only was [this] a lie—[it's] a lie that will cost me an additional \$700 per month!

How is a political show vote going to help him? Of course it isn't. And there is not a thing the Democratic Party's "political arm" can do to fix these problems.

Kentuckians and countless Americans suffering under ObamaCare need real solutions—not gimmicks, not base-pleasing ideology. Solutions are what is needed. Look, Washington Democrats forced America's middle class into this impossible situation. They basically blocked every reasonable attempt to reform this law or to change it in any meaningful way. Yet now ObamaCare is becoming politically difficult for them. They are deflecting blame. Just this morning we saw several imperiled Obama Democrats spin an op-ed that underscores the point, but Americans are not going to be fooled by any of this. Americans agree it is time for Washington Democrats to work with us to remedy the mess they created, and that means repealing this law and replacing it with real reform.

It is time for them to work with us on a real jobs agenda too, and to take up the numerous bills the House has already sent over and get them onto the President's desk.

Americans are fed up with the games and the tricks. They want serious solutions. They don't need a campaign poster to figure that out, and Republicans believe it is about time the American people got those solutions.

REMEMBERING SERGEANT MICHAEL C. CABLE

Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a Kentucky soldier who tragically has been lost while serving his country. SGT Michael C. Cable of Philpot, KY, was killed by the enemy while guarding American and Afghan officials in Afghanistan on March 27, 2013, exactly 1 year ago today. He was 26 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant Cable received several awards, medals, and decorations, including the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Non-commissioned Officers Professional De-

velopment Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Action Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

A decade ago as a high school student, Michael was a star on the Daviess County High School cross-country team, and they won many races. "I sent out an e-mail this morning with this Bible verse," says Tony Rowe, Michael's former high school coach.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He is a hero. He died fighting for us and trying to make life better for the people of Afghanistan.

What Tony Rowe says about Michael is absolutely true, and in fact the most important thing that Michael's family wants the world to understand is that Michael was performing a mission at the time he was attacked, and this important mission was protecting others. It was not only highly important work but highly dangerous.

Before leaving on his final deployment, Michael pulled his family members aside to warn them his mission would be dangerous. "He was prepared before he left for anything that happened," said Raymond Johnston, Michael's older brother. In that conversation Michael described his sisters and a close family friend as the most important people in his life, and he asked his family to take care of them if anything happened to him.

It is very hard. He was my little buddy. He wanted to make sure that no matter what, we continued to enjoy life. And we are trying to do that.

Michael's tragic loss was the first combat death for the 101st Airborne Division, based in Fort Campbell, KY, for that deployment to Afghanistan. He joined the Army in August 2007 and arrived at Fort Campbell in December of 2010. He served as a fire support specialist.

In his family Michael was known as a prankster. His last big prank was pulled on his younger sister Idalis. Michael promised he would buy Idalis a car. He had his older sister Wendy tell Idalis that Michael was determined to make good on his word but that he had bought her a really old and ugly car. Wendy told Idalis she would have to act excited so as not to hurt Michael's feelings. Far from a beat-up clunker, Michael gave his sister his own Jeep Cherokee just before he deployed to Afghanistan.

Michael loved sports of all kinds. He played golf to relax and won a golf tournament at Fort Campbell. His favorite professional sports team was the Green Bay Packers.

Michael had planned to leave the Army after his tour in Afghanistan to open his own home remodeling business. His family remembers Michael as always busy spending time with friends.

We are thinking about Michael's family today, including his parents, Vickie and Raymond Johnston, his siblings Raymond, Lisa, Wendy, Kennedy,

and Idalis, and many other beloved family members and friends.

I would like the family of SGT Michael C. Cable to know this Senate recognizes that Sergeant Cable was doing his job, and we are filled with gratitude. Without the men and women brave enough to wear our country's uniform and do the jobs our country asks them to do, I fear for what would become of our Nation.

I know my colleagues join me in honoring Sergeant Cable for his life of service and for his tragic sacrifice, and I extend my deepest condolences to Michael's family for their loss 1 year ago today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m. Senators are permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from South Dakota.

MIDTERM ELECTIONS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, yesterday the Democrats in the Senate held a news conference in which they rolled out their agenda, which has been described differently by different news organizations. The headline from the Washington Examiner said: "Majority threatened, Democrats take up populace agenda to distract from ObamaCare." The Wall Street Journal headline said: "Senate Democrats try to change subject from ObamaCare." The New York Times in reporting on that story, their headline was: "Democrats, as Part of Midterm Strategy to Schedule Votes on Pocketbook Issues." So that was a little more, perhaps, flattening headline.

In the story in the New York Times, it goes on to say:

The proposals have little chance of passing. But Democrats concede that making new laws is not really the point. Rather, they are trying to force Republicans to vote against them.

Later on in the story, the New York Times goes on to say:

Part of the goal is to energize the Democratic base, which will be crucial to turnout in the more conservative states where the party needs to win this year.

So everybody kind of gets the joke that this is really about the midterm elections. The agenda the Democrats are now rolling out is designed to try to create a distraction away from their economic record and from ObamaCare.

It is interesting to me because the Democrats have been the majority in

the Senate now for 8 years. So you would think by now this sort of an agenda would have been inactive. In fact, for a few years they had a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. They had 60 votes and could do literally anything they wanted. Most of these items now are being rolled out because it is, as I said, an election year, and they are saying: These are things that we can do for the American people.

Well, I think the American people are saying enough already. You have done enough to us. Please don't do any more.

The agenda is being described as a fair shot for everyone. Well, I think the American people, perhaps, don't see it as a shot for them as they do a shot at them.

If you look at the last several years as any indication of that, it hasn't worked very well. The agenda that has been advanced by the Democrats here in the Senate and by the President of the United States has left us with a sluggish economy, chronic high unemployment, massive amounts of debt, the lowest labor participation rate, literally, that we have seen in 35 years. In fact, last year the economy grew at 0.9 percent. So you have this sluggish economy sputtering along, and the American people are asking: Where are the jobs? Where is the take-home pay?

Since the President took office, household income in this country has gone down—not up—by \$3,700 per family. If you look at all the policies put in place by the Democratic majority, there isn't really anything that you could point to that helps create jobs mainly because it is heavy handed, top-down management from Washington, DC.

The American people need policies that will unleash the American free enterprise system and unleash the entrepreneurs and small businesses that would allow them to grow this economy and expand this economy. That is better for everyone. Every middle-class American in this country wants a better quality of life, a better standard of life for their children and grandchildren than what they have experienced. This may be the first generation of Americans where this is not true. Why? Because policies in Washington, DC, make it more difficult, more expensive, to create jobs.

You can go down the list. If you look at ObamaCare, according to the Congressional Budget Office, ObamaCare is going to result in 2.5 million fewer full-time workers. According to the CBO, there will be 2.5 million fewer full-time workers over the next decade and \$1 trillion in lower wages. Fewer jobs and lower take-home pay is what we are seeing as a result of the policies that have been put in place by the Democratic majority in the Senate and by the President of the United States.

Yesterday there was another announcement about yet another delay of ObamaCare—which will be, I think, the

30th delay that we have seen so far with regard to that legislation. In speaking about that delay, the majority leader of the Senate said yesterday that he thought the delay was necessary because people weren't educated enough about how to use the Internet. Only in Washington, DC—only in Washington, DC—do you see politicians blaming the American people for their failures because that is essentially what the ObamaCare legislation is. By and large I think most people would conclude it just isn't working. It didn't add up in the first place, and it is not working.

It is creating fewer jobs, higher premiums, higher deductibles, lower take-home pay for the American people, fewer choices for doctors and hospitals, and the idea that it is the fault of the American people because they are not educated enough to use the Internet—my dad is 94 years old. He lives in my hometown of Myrtle, SD, a town of about 500 people. He uses the Internet every single day.

I don't think the problem is the Internet or that people in this country aren't educated enough to use the Internet. I think it has a lot more to do with the fact that incompetence here in Washington, DC, led to a failed rollout that confused millions of Americans. That is not the responsibility of, nor should we blame, the American people for that. That is government trying to do big things and not doing them well. The government doesn't do complicated things very well.

So when you hear of the new agenda coming out from the Democratic majority in the Senate, that we are going to do this for the American people; we are going to do that for the American people and talk about a minimum wage increase—again, you have a Congressional Budget Office saying that raising the minimum wage by 40 percent, which is what is being proposed, would, in fact, cost the economy up to a million jobs and also would raise prices.

It is going to raise prices on the people that will be hurt the most by price increases—lower-income Americans. Instead of putting policies in place that cost the American economy jobs, we ought to be looking at things that actually create jobs.

We have a proposal called the Keystone Pipeline which the President's own State Department has said would create 42,000 jobs. So those are real jobs, shovel-ready jobs that would be available today. Instead we want to put policies in place that are actually going to cost the economy jobs. If you're an American citizen out there and you hear Washington, DC, is going to do more for you, yet again, you have got to be saying: Whoa, you know, hold the phone. We have seen enough of that already. We have seen this picture before, and we have seen what results when the government tries to do big and complicated things. It just doesn't work very well.

The Web site rollout is a perfect example of that, as is the 2,700-page

ObamaCare legislation followed by about 25,000 pages of regulations, which people in this country have to try and discern and figure out.

I would submit that there are things that will create jobs. We know the Keystone Pipeline will create jobs. Passing trade promotion authority and allowing our trade negotiators to create more market opportunities for small businesses and farmers and ranchers and entrepreneurs in this country and around the world will create jobs. Passing trade promotion authority and getting the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the European trade agreement enacted they say will expose American businesses to 1 billion new consumers worldwide. Those are the types of things that do create jobs, and we know that.

Instead of having an election year agenda that is transparently stated to be that, why don't we actually talk about things that will create jobs and will improve the overall standard of living for people in this country?

I would make one other observation, and that is another thing coming out of the administration right now, which will be incredibly harmful to the economy and make it very difficult for lower income and middle-class Americans to make ends meet, are policies coming out of the EPA that are going to drive the cost of energy. Energy is an important input. It is a huge factor in places such as South Dakota where we have a cold-weather climate and an agricultural-based economy. We travel long distances to get places. When you talk about raising the cost of energy in a State such as South Dakota, you are significantly increasing the cost of doing business in a way that will make it more difficult and more expensive to create the jobs we need, get people back to work, and get the economy growing at a faster rate. These things are harmful to job growth.

I talked to a bunch of small businesses in my State last week and asked them about some of these policies. I asked them: What are the biggest obstacles right now to your success and what are things that could be done that would actually be helpful?

Of course, ObamaCare is something that immediately comes up, but also the whole issue of the minimum wage. The smallest business owner I talked to I believe had 30 employees and the largest had maybe a little over 200 employees. They said, look, this is a job killer. What that means is we are not going to be able to hire as many people. It adds significant higher operating costs every year to our businesses and makes it more difficult to create the jobs for the people who actually need those jobs, most of whom, in a lot of these places, are going to be young people who are trying to get that first job and make their way up the economic ladder.

There are lots of things we could talk about that do address the problem rather than just addressing the symp-

toms, and we want to vote on an extension. We are going to vote on an extension of unemployment insurance, which will be the thirteenth time we have done that. When you go through an economic downturn, obviously there is a need to help people who have lost jobs and been displaced in the economy. But when are we going to start focusing on the problem rather than the symptom?

The problem is we have almost 4 million Americans who have been unemployed for more than 6 months. We ought to be looking at what we can do to create jobs for the people who don't have jobs in our economy. I have introduced an amendment to the unemployment insurance legislation, which I don't think is going to get voted on, that has some simple solutions.

One of those things is to waive the employer mandate for any employer who hires somebody who has been unemployed for more than 6 months. So if you are a long-term unemployed person and an employer hires that person, you get a waiver from the employer mandate which could save an employer several thousand dollars a year. It also calls for a 6-month payroll tax holiday for employers, which if you have a \$40,000-a-year employee on your payroll, you would save about \$2,400. You could save \$4,000, \$5,000, or \$6,000 a year in the cost of hiring someone with those two suggestions. Another suggestion is to allow people to have access to low-interest loans—up to \$10,000—to relocate to places where there is lower unemployment.

My State of South Dakota is looking for workers. When I travel through my communities, we can't find workers. One of the biggest obstacles for people to get to jobs is to relocate. If we gave them a low-interest loan that would allow them to move to places where there is low unemployment and where there are jobs, it would make a lot of sense.

Finally, it adopts the SKILLS Act that has passed the House of Representatives, which consolidates 35 Federal programs into 9 programs so you don't have all of this duplication and overlap in all of these Federal programs for worker training and shifts that resource out to the States where States can design programs that actually prepare and equip the people in their States for the jobs that are available.

Those are the types of solutions we ought to be talking about rather than top-down, heavyhanded, government-driven solutions that make it more difficult to create jobs and is equivalent to throwing a big wet blanket on the American economy at the time we can least afford it.

My State of South Dakota is a good example. We have balanced our budget every year since 1889. We have zero personal income tax, zero corporate income tax, and we have a very well-trained, hard-working, educated workforce. We have a good climate for doing

business with a light regulatory touch. We have a low unemployment rate and a vibrant economy mainly because we understand that it isn't the government that creates jobs.

When the Senate Democrats and the President come out with the election-year, poll-tested agenda, which is clearly driven simply to try to generate votes in the midterm elections rather than actually solve the problems—and it says that in the stories. The stories are very transparent about what they are trying to do. We ought to be focused on things that actually create jobs, such as passing the Keystone Pipeline, passing trade promotion authority, and looking at real solutions that do more than just treat symptoms, and actually get at the problems.

The problem is we have too many people in this economy who have been unemployed for a long period of time. We need to get them back to work and get the economy growing faster than 1.9 percent a year. If we get growth back up to 3 or 4 percent a year, it will dramatically change the future for middle-class families in this country, and that is what we ought to be focused on.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2164 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

PROVIDING FOR THE COSTS OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4152, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

Pending:

Reid (for Menendez/Corker) amendment No. 2867, to provide a complete substitute.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12 noon will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their assigned designees.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time under quorum calls be equally divided between the majority and the minority.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan agreement I have reached with five of our colleagues from across the aisle Senators HELLER, COLLINS, PORTMAN, MURKOWSKI, and KIRK to provide emergency unemployment insurance to 2.7 million Americans. This commonsense, bipartisan agreement is one of the many things the Senate should do to help create jobs and strengthen our Nation's economy so it works for every American, so everyone has a fair shot. So I hope my colleagues will join with us and pass this bill quickly so it can be taken up for a vote in the House.

The individual and economic consequences of a lapse of these unemployment insurance funds are very clear. I have described many times, and my colleagues have come to the floor many times, and indicated the individual cases where people who have worked for years found themselves without a job, through no fault of their own, desperately needing some modest assistance—and these benefits are about \$300 to \$350 a week—just to keep going, to keep looking for work, to keep trying to be part of the workforce, which they desperately want to do. We have shared these stories. These individual hardships ripple across our entire economy.

Indeed, the Congressional Budget Office and other economists looking at this, not from the individual perspective but from the overall economy, find this is one of the most effective ways to keep the economy moving forward. The CBO has indeed estimated our failure so far to extend benefits through 2014 would cost the economy 200,000 jobs. That is simply as a result of these payments to individuals going right back into the economy. It stimulates other workers who have work and creates demand.

So restoring economic assistance for Americans who have lost their jobs and who are trying to find new ones is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart thing to do for our economy. That is why I have been pressing for an extension of these benefits over a longer period of time. But, we have reached a principled compromise—and I have to underscore the word “compromise”—to do it over a 5-month period, with some retroactive and some, if we move quickly enough, prospective. But it is frustrating to realize that some in Congress don't want to do this. I think that is unfortunate not

only because of the effect it has on individual constituents but also because it is going to adversely affect our economy. It is not going to add jobs. In fact, as CBO suggests, it could indeed take away jobs.

Let me take a few moments to address some of the arguments being raised, particularly in the House of Representatives, as to why they can't support this. Basically, it comes from the notion that: Well, this is too hard to implement. Even if you concede these benefits are absolutely important, they would provide economic stimulus, we just can't implement them.

These concerns were highlighted by a letter from the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. But all of these concerns are addressable. Indeed, the Secretary of Labor, Tom Perez, has addressed these concerns point by point in a recent letter, and he has, importantly, committed to work collaboratively with the States—as has been the case in all of the 12 extensions or expansions of this program since the great recession—to do this.

We have repeatedly extended this program. There have been periods of time where there has been a gap between extensions, and they have had to look backwards, these State administrators. Secretary Perez is committed to do all he can and have all the efforts of the Department so this can be implemented successfully, and I am confident it can and he is confident it can.

But there were four basic assertions that were made that I want to address.

First, NASWA indicated that, well, States are struggling with antiquated computer systems that make it hard to implement changes quickly. Well, the States have received over the past 5 years \$345 million to modernize their unemployment insurance systems. That is Federal money going to States so they can fix their computer systems. So this is not exactly an area we have neglected in terms of helping them modernize their computer systems. Complex program changes we have made in the past—I was part of the effort in 2012 to extend unemployment compensation benefits—and we made some significant changes. We reduced the total number of weeks from 99 to 73.

So we are not talking today about some complicated new system; we are simply extending the existing system. We are not changing the tiers. We are not changing any of the calculations they have to make. Indeed, that is one of the reasons why I have been arguing consistently for a straight extension—not altering the number of weeks you qualify for tier 1 or tier 2 or tier 3, but simply taking the system that was in place on December 28, and fund it retroactively to benefit those who have lost their benefits unexpectedly, and then prospectively as far forward as we could go.

Let me also point out that I was making this request before December

28. I would have hoped we could have moved in December or at least early in January to go ahead and extend this program so there would be absolutely no disruption whatsoever to the States or for the recipients. But it has been a difficult and long process to get here. Frankly, without the collaboration and efforts of many of my colleagues, and particularly, as I have indicated, my Republican colleagues—Senators HELLER, COLLINS, PORTMAN, MURKOWSKI, and KIRK—and my Democratic colleagues, including Senator BOOKER, who is here, we would not be at this point. So I am glad we are here. But we would not have any of these implementation problems had we acted in December.

Second, there was a concern that one provision relating to Federal funding for the administration of the program could be read in an overly broad fashion so that the State agencies would be so confused and it would be so complicated they could not function. So out of an abundance of caution, we have worked to address this. We have revised the legislation we had proposed to clarify the particular provision so it could not be misconstrued.

In so doing, we make it crystal clear that the prohibition on the use of Federal funding is limited solely to eligibility determinations relating to ensuring millionaires do not receive emergency unemployment insurance benefits.

Third—and this is a related issue to the whole millionaire issue—there was some concern it would be difficult to administer this prohibition. Well, in our legislation, we have a pretty straightforward requirement that individuals certify their income in the preceding year was not more than \$1 million. This is a simple certification that I think could be accomplished rather efficiently and quickly by the agencies. And the Secretary of Labor has committed to issuing guidance to help States with implementation, as the Department does when any new statutory provision is enacted.

As I said before, the Secretary has assured all of the States that he is going to work to expeditiously and efficiently give them the tools to implement this program as soon as the Congress passes it and the President signs it.

Finally, there was a concern about the retroactivity. That challenge, as I said before, is why I and others pressed so hard to get this done prior to December 28 of last year. But even so, States were able to successfully work with the Department of Labor during previous lapses to provide this aid to unemployed workers. We have had these situations before where there has been a disruption of benefits, and then we have renewed the program several weeks later. And the Department of Labor is confident these challenges can be overcome.

Frankly, all of these administrative challenges for the States seem to me to pale in comparison to the challenges

being faced by our constituents, who are in a job market where in some places there are three applicants for every job, in a job market where, if you have worked for 25 years, you are about 50 years old and you are competing with 25- and 30-year-olds who have gotten recent education. Maybe they have more high-tech skills and computer skills than you have in a market that is rapidly becoming more technologically oriented in terms of labor demand.

They are facing severe challenges. These resources are not lavish. The idea that someone would not work because they are getting \$300 a week is difficult, I think, to imagine for many people, particularly the people who have records of work for 10, 20, and 30 years. And what they are doing with this money is putting it right back in our economy. Many are trying to hold on to their homes, and we have heard stories about that. They are trying to put gas in the car. People have contacted me indicating that they use it to keep their phones working because without a phone they cannot get the callback for the job interview to go and find a job.

So this is something that I think has to be considered and, in my book, weighs much more heavily than administrative issues, which the Secretary of Labor assures us will be dealt with, can be dealt with, and he will work with the States to make sure it is done effectively.

Let me conclude by thanking our Republican colleagues who have joined with us. They have been extraordinarily thoughtful and collaborative. They have really contributed in an atmosphere of exchanging ideas of thoughtful consideration. It is a model, I think, of how this Senate should work more frequently, and I thank them and commend them. They have done a great service for their constituents and for the economy and the country. Indeed, ultimately, many Americans will benefit through their great contribution.

So I will hope, as we come up to these procedural votes, that we can move forward, and then we could move this expeditiously. Then we would hope the House would respond appropriately, and we can give some hope and give some confidence to people who are struggling to find jobs in this very difficult time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BOOKER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the pending legislation be-

fore the body. I urge the vote of all of my colleagues. This legislation is a bipartisan effort led by Senators MENENDEZ and CORKER, the chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. It is very important.

Today the people of Ukraine will be watching the Senate and later the House as to whether we are going to give them initially the support they need after their country has been dismembered by Vladimir Putin in a blatant act of aggression that cannot go unresponded to.

A long time ago, 15 March 1938, Adolph Hitler made a speech to the Viennese people from a balcony of the Hofburg Palace, in the background of the heroic statue of Archduke Karl. The crowd in the square Heldenplatz numbered several hundred thousand. Hitler's words on that day about the obligation he had to take care of the German-speaking people and the German population in Austria is eerily reminiscent when we look at the speech Vladimir Putin made as he announced the absorption of Crimea into Russia.

I am not predicting we will have a World War III. I am predicting that unless we act and act vigorously—and a lot more than this legislation today—Vladimir Putin will be dramatically encouraged to take further aggressive actions, whether it be in Eastern Ukraine, whether it be Moldova, whether it be the Baltic countries, where he has already put significant pressures. Or will we send a message to Vladimir Putin that the cost of further aggression will not be matched with the benefit?

Have no doubt about the ambitions of Vladimir Putin; that is, to restore the Russian Empire. All of the illusions we had about him should have finally been dispelled. He must be treated for what he is, a KGB colonel who repeatedly stated the worst thing that happened in the 20th century was the dismemberment of the then-Soviet Union.

What Vladimir Putin understands is strength. In the words of Ronald Reagan, we can achieve "peace through strength." This legislation is a good start. It is important we get it done as quickly as possible, but we have to understand he will never be our partner. He will always insist on being our adversary, and he will continue, if unchecked, to continue that vision of his expansion of the old Russian Empire.

I predicted that Vladimir Putin would go into Ukraine because he could not give up the Sevastopol naval base and access to the Mediterranean. I do not know exactly what Vladimir Putin will do in Eastern Ukraine as we speak, but there has been a buildup of Russian forces on the border of Ukraine and Russia.

This should disturb all of us. All of us should be disturbed. All of us should recognize that the kind of signal he gets in response to his latest aggression will, in many ways, dictate his future behavior in the coming days and

weeks. There are many steps we need to take. We have to support Ukraine. We have to give them the economic assistance they need. We have to ensure that the March elections in Ukraine occur on time, freely, and fairly.

We have to meet Ukraine's request for immediate military assistance. Military assistance is their first priority. What did this administration do in response to their plea for the ability to defend themselves? Send them MREs. That is the same thing we did in Syria. We now have an MRE doctrine; that when a country is under threat, such as Ukraine and other countries are, we send them MREs.

We need to send them defensive weapons, which we should have done with Georgia back in the Bush administration when Vladimir Putin annexed South Ossetia and Abkhazia. His troops are there today.

We have to give them the military assistance, short term, and a long-term military assistance program of training and equipping which, by the way, we do with about 50 other countries in the world. It is not a breakthrough.

When my friends and colleagues in the administration say it would be provocative, what does it take to be further—the next time we provoke Vladimir Putin, is it going to be Alaska? We have to support countries such as Moldova and Georgia. Moldova is not a member of NATO. Transnistria is occupied by 1,500 Russian troops as we speak.

We can see the same scenario taking place in Moldova as we have seen take place in Crimea. The Baltic countries are under pressure, and continuing and increasing pressure from Russia, particularly where the "Russian-speaking" population is, especially in Latvia and Estonia. We have to expand sanctions under the Magnitsky Act, increase sanctions against Putin's sources of power, especially for corruption, target corrupt people, push for an arms embargo against Russia, prevent defense technology transfers, use the upcoming NATO summit to enlarge the alliance, move the process for Georgia into a membership action plan, expand NATO cooperation with Ukraine, conduct significant contingency plans within NATO to deter aggression, defend alliance members, especially along the eastern flank, strategically shift NATO military assets eastward to support deterrence. All of these things and more need to be done.

I wish to emphasize that does not mean American boots on the ground. I repeat. It does not mean American boots on the ground. So the response by some of my colleagues and those in the commentary community is that the American people do not want us to do it. Sixty-three percent of the American people say leave it alone. Sixty-one percent say do not get involved in any way.

I understand that. There have been previous times in history where the American people did not want to be involved. Yet leaders stepped forward.

Leaders explained to the American people why the United States has to be involved. I notice that the President's approval rating on the handling of foreign policy is sinking. I also understand the contradiction that over 60 percent of the American people do not want the United States engaged. That is because the American people have not been told what is at stake.

Neville Chamberlain, in 1938, when talking about Czechoslovakia, said: We are not going to send our young men to a country that they do not speak our language and we do not know. Again, I am not predicting World War III, but I am predicting that Vladimir Putin will go as far as he thinks he can in order to realize his ambition, which he has stated on numerous occasions, to restore the Russian Empire.

What does Vladimir Putin understand? Strong alliances, reprisals, consequences for misbehavior. That is what he would understand. This legislation before us, which I hope is passed 100 to 0, will indicate the first steps we are taking in response. I wish the President of the United States had not stated so clearly that we have now acquiesced to the absorption of Crimea into Ukraine.

My message to the people of Ukraine is that in the Cold War it took a long time. But we will never give up. We will never give up in our efforts to see that their country is fully restored, as guaranteed by a solemn agreement when Ukraine gave up their nuclear weapons inventory. At the time they were the world's third largest nuclear power.

In return for giving that up, their security and territory integrity, including Crimea, was maintained. There are other countries that may have nuclear weapons. What lesson do they take from this? Would Vladimir Putin have invaded Crimea if Ukraine still had nuclear weapons? That is an interesting question. So the point is that we have seen a blatant act of aggression.

Sometimes I am astounded at the media reporting. An overwhelming majority, 96 percent, voted for Crimea to be part of Russia. My friends, 12 percent of the population of Ukraine are Tatars who were deported by Joseph Stalin; half of them killed, and they were allowed to come back. I can guarantee you there is no one in that 12 percent of the population who would ever vote to be part of Russia. It was a phony election. There were no observers. I know of a poll taken a few months ago that showed 53 percent of the people in Crimea wanted to be part of the Ukraine. But the point is, here today, I hope we are beginning a path to, one, recognizing Vladimir Putin for what he is and what his ambitions are; two, dedicating ourselves to supporting these countries, these fledgling democracies—it has not been that long since the end of the Cold War—to help them on the path as they move forward to democracy, particularly Ukraine, so we can help them rid that country of cor-

ruption, rid it of its dependency, long term, on energy supplies from Russia.

We can, over a relatively short period of time, months if not years—but probably months—arrange it so we can supply Ukraine and other European countries with energy to have them become independent of Russia.

Finally, I have no illusions about what the Europeans are going to do. Very little, if anything. I have very little confidence in what this administration is going to do. So it is up to the Congress. It is up to us to act and to act decisively and send a clear message. By passing this bill today, hopefully with the House getting it done as quickly as possible, we send a message to the people of Ukraine: We stand with you. We will help you. We will do everything we can to see, over time, the restoration of your nation, as we have in times of old. We stand with you and we stand for freedom.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today the Senate will finally adopt, after some unfortunate delays, urgent bipartisan aid and sanctions legislation on Ukraine developed with the cooperation of a number of committees here in the Senate, and constructed by Foreign Relations Committee Chairman MENENDEZ and his ranking member, Senator CORKER. Both are also distinguished senior members of the Banking Committee, which I chair, and which has jurisdiction over the economic sanctions provided for in the bill. I am pleased to have been able to work closely with them to ensure this sound result, including provisions to impose targeted asset freeze sanctions against individuals and businesses found by the President to have been responsible for threats to the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and for certain acts of corruption in Russia.

Once we pass this bill, I hope the House will act quickly to approve it and send it to the President for his signature. With this legislation, Congress is providing the President with flexible new tools to make clear to President Putin and his allies that Russia's recent moves against Ukraine are unacceptable, and that there will be an increasingly painful economic and political price to pay for these actions.

Economic sanctions are an important tool of American diplomacy. In Iran, years of tough, comprehensive economic sanctions have helped finally to bring Iran's leaders to the nuclear negotiating table. Sanctions have been wielded effectively against Sudan, North Korea, Yemen, former military and security officials in Burma, warlords in the Congo, and elsewhere. If developed in close consultation with administration officials at Treasury and the State Department who are responsible for implementing them, appropriately targeted, and applied multilaterally, sanctions can be a potent tool in the President's foreign policy arsenal. In the case of Ukraine, they will serve both to punish former

Ukrainian officials and others responsible for the violence there, and to punish Russian officials for irresponsible behavior. If wielded effectively, as part of a larger diplomatic and political strategy, they can also help to deter future aggressive actions by Russia against Ukraine.

That is why I support this legislation to provide critical economic and security assistance to Ukraine, and to provide new sanctions authority to the President. I support it even though I am deeply disappointed that opposition from some of my Republican colleagues here and in the House forced the removal of important International Monetary Fund, IMF, reforms that had been included in earlier versions of the bill. Those reforms would have enabled the IMF to better implement the economic aid and reform package it has developed with the new Ukrainian Government's leadership in recent weeks, which it announced yesterday. We must get those reforms enacted as soon as possible, by other means.

This measure, along with the steps already taken by the President, the multilateral aid and sanctions measures adopted by our allies, and the economic stabilization package offered by the IMF should help to reduce tensions as this situation moves forward. I look forward to working with my colleagues not only to ensure Ukraine's stability but also the security of all our allies in Europe and beyond.

Again, I thank my colleagues Chairman MENENDEZ and Ranking Member CORKER for working so hard to perfect this legislation and move it quickly.

I urge my colleagues to support it and deliver on the promises this body and this country have made to support the people of Ukraine.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea is an affront to decent standards of international conduct. It is a violation of international law and of Russia's explicit commitment under the 1994 Bucharest Memorandum to respect Ukraine's territorial integrity. It has undermined the international order that has been put in place over the last 60 years to promote peace and stability.

President Putin and his advisers in Russia have resorted to these illegitimate actions in order to seize 10,000 square miles of Ukrainian territory. Perhaps the Kremlin believes its robbery has paid off. If so, Putin and his advisers have miscalculated. And we will aid in the task of making clear the costs of Russia's actions today with passage of this legislation.

This bill sends a message to the people of Ukraine and all those in Europe concerned about Russia's aggressive provocations. We provide important loan guarantees that will help stabilize a Ukrainian economy that was struggling even before Russia's aggression. We authorize funding to help the Ukrainian government provide the fundamental necessities of democratic

governance, including free and fair elections, strong civic institutions and protections against corruption. It will aid the Ukrainian government in recovering assets stolen by its disgraced former prime minister and other kleptocratic public officials. It will support Ukraine's efforts to free itself from captivity to Russian energy supplies. And it provides for increased security cooperation with Ukraine and with other nations in Central and Eastern Europe, including military assistance, training, and advice.

Passage of this bill would also send a strong message to Russia. It mandates sanctions and asset freezes that target Russian and Ukrainian individuals responsible for the human rights abuses against peaceful protesters in Kiev under the previous Ukrainian government. It also targets those Russians or Ukrainians whose actions have undermined Ukraine's territorial integrity.

By demonstrating our support for Ukraine and the other democratic nations of Central and Eastern Europe, and by taking action against the individuals who have participated in Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Congress can provide a key element in the broad, sustained, and energetic diplomatic approach this situation requires. The United States must act together with our European allies and other nations around the world who have an interest in maintaining respect for established borders and international law. Key to exacting a high price for Russia's actions is isolating Russia in the international community.

While this legislation is important to accomplishing our goals, it must be part of a sustained and, if necessary, intensifying effort in Congress, by the administration, and internationally. President Obama has wisely refrained from responding to Russian provocation with actions that would further destabilize matters or work against Ukraine's interests or our own. One important step in de-escalating the tension in Ukraine is the dispatch of international observers to eastern Ukraine to monitor the ground truth and hopefully discourage further provocations. But, along with NATO, we have made clear that Russia's actions will not go without response. President Obama has stated that Russia will face an escalating diplomatic and economic response if it does not reverse its course. Russia should be under no illusion that the U.S. response to its actions ends today with the passage of this legislation. We must remain prepared to take additional steps to ratchet up the pressure on Russia and to help stabilize Eastern Europe.

Russia also should have no doubt that the United States and our NATO allies take seriously our responsibilities under article 5 of the NATO treaty. Under article 5, an armed attack against any NATO ally is considered an attack against all members, and will draw any actions deemed necessary to assist the ally under attack, which

may include the use of military force. Actions such as redeployment of military assets, adding aircraft to the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission and surveillance flights over Poland and Romania are evidence that we take those article 5 responsibilities seriously. And, as our NATO commander in Europe, General Breedlove, has said, if Russia continues such provocative actions, "we need to think about our allies, the positioning of our forces in the alliance and the readiness of those forces in the alliance, such that we can be there to defend against it."

And as this legislation makes clear, we will continue to enhance our security cooperation with Ukraine and other Eastern European nations. One important step will be for our uniformed military professionals to expand their relationships with counterparts in Ukraine and other Eastern European nations to help build the kind of capable, professional forces that can improve their security.

Some may wonder what these events in a distant land involving old territorial disputes have to do with us as a nation. But Russia's blatant flouting of its commitments, of the territorial integrity of its European neighbors, and its trampling on the international order is damaging to our security and to the values that define us.

By passing this legislation, supporting U.S. and international actions to impose consequences on Russia and reassure the nations of Eastern Europe, and standing ready to take additional actions if required, we protect our interests and the interests of those who value peace and stability.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CORKER. I rise today to speak about the bill we are going to vote on at 12:15 p.m. relative to Ukraine.

First, I wish to say it speaks to the best of the Senate, where by working together we are going to end with a bill that sends a very strong signal to Russia but also to Ukraine in support and to the world. I believe it will be done in an overwhelming fashion in the Senate today and hopefully later today or tomorrow in the House. It is exactly what we should be doing at this time.

First, I thank Senator MENENDEZ for the way he marshaled this through the committee. I was pleased to work with him as ranking member.

I know our original piece of legislation had in it the IMF reforms that I strongly support. It was evident that the IMF reforms were not going to make it through the House and actually become law.

We all felt it was incredibly important that all of us speak in a united voice to push back on Russia's illegal actions in Crimea and potentially in Ukraine but also to do what we really need to do to support our friends in Ukraine and in the region. This bill does that. It passed out of committee with strong bipartisan support. My sense is today it will pass out of the Senate with incredibly strong bipartisan support. It will become law soon and will tremendously reinforce the way our Nation feels about what Russia is doing in such an illegal fashion—that was outmoded centuries ago—and support the people of Ukraine.

All of us know this bill provides economic support for Ukraine. We all know they are entering into an agreement with the IMF. The IMF is going to be providing some loans to help move them through the problems they have had. They have tremendous corruption in their country. They use far too much energy. They have massive deficits. Through working with the IMF and signing on to agreements, ultimately they will be forced as a nation to move ahead and to orient themselves toward stronger countries or toward the West and operate in a more democratically free manner and certainly in a way that would allow them to economically sustain themselves over time.

In this bill we also provide additional loan guarantee support, which they will need. They are facing extreme difficulties. I believe people know that recently they have agreed to charge their citizens twice as much for natural gas usage there to try to get their budgets back in balance. But it is very important that we send this signal and this strength of economic health through this \$1 billion loan guarantee, which is a part of this bill today.

Another important part is sending a strong signal to Putin and to Russia. If they feel they have no price to pay for the activities they have already undertaken, they will continue to do more.

What this bill allows us to do is show strong support for what the administration has already done but, in addition to that, to make these sanctions mandatory and actually add additional elements should Russia continue to do the things they are doing in such a terrible way.

I do want to say relative to the sanctions—I appreciate the Executive order the President signed the other day that gave them the ability to put sectoral sanctions in place. The energy sector, the banking sector, and other sectors of the economy can now be targeted with sanctions.

I understand the balance that has to be put in place with sanctions where if we throw in everything but the kitchen sink on the front end, then Russia really has nothing to lose by going on into Ukraine. So we want to calibrate those in a way that deters their behavior but also gives them the ability to de-escalate.

I will say that I do think the President's comments over the past several days in Europe have seemed cautious, have seemed timid. What I hope the administration will do very soon is turn up the volume dramatically and actually send some strong sanctions into some of these sectors—into the energy and banking sectors. We don't have to do all of the companies in those areas, but if we were to do that especially with three or four additional banks in Russia, it would send a strong signal to their economy, continue to weaken their economy and to show Putin there is a heavy price to pay for the activities he is engaged in and may engage in further relative to Ukraine itself.

I encourage the administration to step ahead stronger. The European Union follows our lead, let's face it. If we act in a timid, cautious way, they are going to do the same. I think everybody in this body knows we do about \$40 billion worth of trade annually with Russia, but the European Union community does \$450 billion worth of trade. Generally, we are trying to work in unison, but if we as a nation act in a timid way, it encourages them as multiple countries to do the same.

Again, I do hope we will turn up the volume, and I do hope we will go ahead and sanction some additional entities in Russia. There are many state-owned enterprises there. We all know that. That is one problem with the Russian economy right now. I think we all know they are really an autocratic petrostate. We know that they are not doing well, that their budget is based on the fact that oil sells at \$110 per barrel, and that really that is mostly their economy.

Again, what we need to do as a nation—we are supporting the administration in this bill. We are supporting Ukraine with this bill. We are also authorizing some assistance to some of our allies in the region. We are also authorizing some democracy assistance. The bill has no fiscal areas that are not paid for. This is a great piece of legislation.

I do hope that over time Senator REID will allow us to revisit the issue because, let's face it, we created this piece of legislation about 2 weeks ago. The events in Ukraine continue to unfold. So I hope we will come back again as changes occur. I know there are many people in this body who are actually trying to put additional pieces of legislation into place not only to sanction Russia even more fully, not only to assist Ukraine in other than economic ways, but also to use some of the strategic assets we have as a nation not only to benefit our economy but also to help our allies in the region so that they are not really subject to the economic extortion we have seen Russia try to carry out with our friends and also try to carry out with Ukraine, which this bill is all about.

I close by thanking Senator MENENDEZ.

I thank Senator REID for filing cloture on a bill that came out of the committee immediately so we would be in a place today to deal with this.

I thank Senator MCCONNELL, who was able to work with Senator REID and the House to deal with this legislatively in a very creative way, using a vehicle that came from the House and sending something back to the House so that this can become law very quickly.

I thank the House for cooperating with us on this bill because to have a piece of legislation go out of the Senate today and likely become law very soon is something that takes a lot of coordination. I thank the leadership in the House for helping us make this happen.

I again thank the administration for their focus on this issue. I hope this bill will show strong support for some of the efforts that have already taken place, and I do hope the administration will not undercalculate. I think that right now Putin doesn't yet know what he is going to do relative to South and Eastern Ukraine. I don't think he knows, and I think he is watching us and he is calibrating what his steps are going to be based on the pain his own country will receive if they take the wrong steps. It is very important that the President send additional sanctions into Russia, send additional signals, and that we send shock waves into their economy now—not everything we have to throw at them but some of it—so they know that if they take additional steps, real pain is on the way.

This bill supports those efforts of the administration, it supports Ukraine, it pushes back on Russia, and it shows support for allies in the region. It is a great piece of legislation. It is the first step. More should come.

I am pleased we are at this point today. I thank all those involved, and I look forward to a very strong vote in the Senate at 12:15 p.m.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor as we are at a moment of truth and a moment of incredible importance, and I wish to start off by acknowledging the distinguished Republican ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CORKER, for the spirit in which we have worked together to marshal forces to bring critical legislation to the floor at a critical time in history. This is the type of relationship we have had for the last 15 months, during which time we have often seen such partisanship, where on every major piece of legislation that has passed out

of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, it has passed on a strong bipartisan vote, and I appreciate his leadership and his working with us.

Let me reiterate what I have said on the Senate floor. President Putin is watching. He is waiting to see what we will do, waiting to see if we have the resolve to act, waiting to see if he has a green light to take the next step. I believe we need to act now and pass this legislation, and I welcome the flexibility the House has shown in its resolve to move this quickly upon receipt.

Although I believe our response to Russia's annexation of Crimea should have included IMF reforms to strengthen the U.S. role in the international community, that will not be the case, but we still need to act on this issue today. So I hope, in short order, we can have the IMF reform legislation on the floor and take a responsible vote on an important issue.

But let us be clear where we are at this moment. Let us be clear about what happened in Ukraine over the last several years and what is happening now as Ukraine simply looks westward. Former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was elected on a platform that advocated closer ties to Europe. In fact, his first trip abroad was not to Moscow but to Brussels to meet with European Union officials. For 3 years Ukraine officials voted in good faith with their European counterparts. They believed they did so with their President's support. Ukrainian public opinion polls favored the conclusion of an agreement between the EU and the Ukraine that would increase trade and cooperation, allowing more people, goods, services, and ideas to cross the border from the West.

On November 21, Yanukovich flipped 180 degrees. He announced an end to talks with the European Union, and Ukrainians felt bitterly betrayed. For 20 years, Ukraine has struggled to economically develop. They have struggled to establish representative government. They have struggled to achieve a stable way forward, a path of economic security and political democracy. The association agreement with the European Union had promised a path toward those goals. So people were furious, and they took to the streets. They knew from personal experience what the world now knows—that Yanukovich and his government and his family had stolen tens of billions of dollars from Ukrainian taxpayers, jeopardizing the solvency and independence of their country to support a lavish lifestyle while the public went without.

The people who took to the Maidan Square in the freezing cold were simply looking westward. They believed the European Union was their last best hope to break the cycle of corruption. They knew their future was being stolen. So they marched and they took beatings from Yanukovich's paramilitary forces, not for a treaty but for the hope of a better, more honest and free Ukraine that it promised.

Putin resorted to outright extortion to keep Ukraine in his sphere of influence, essentially offering to buy Ukraine by offering Yanukovich \$15 billion, and it would have worked but for the uprising of the Ukrainian people who realized this was a Faustian bargain and that Putin was the devil, not their savior.

Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians demonstrated for 3 months to call for the President's resignation. On February 22 of this year, President Yanukovich fled to Russia and an interim government was installed in Ukraine.

Almost immediately, Russian forces took control of the Crimean Peninsula, a clear violation of international law and Russia's own commitments under the Budapest agreement and the Helsinki Final Act. This demands a swift and coordinated and powerful response from the international community and from this Congress. It demands a message to Putin of our resolve and to the Ukrainian people of our support.

That message came, in part, on March 13, when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed, by a bipartisan vote of 14 to 3, the Support for the Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014.

In addition to providing \$1 billion in loan guarantees for Ukraine to provide crucial support to stabilize Ukraine's economy, this legislation authorizes assistance for democracy, governance, and civil society programs as well as for enhanced security cooperation. It provides support to the Ukrainian Government to help recover access linked to corruption by former President Yanukovich, his family, and other government officials.

It imposes sanctions against those who are responsible for violent human rights abuses against antigovernment protesters as well as those responsible for undermining the peace, security, stability, sovereignty or territorial integrity of the Ukraine. It imposes asset freezes and visa revocations on Russian officials and their associates who are complicit in or responsible for significant corruption in Ukraine and authorizes sanctions against any Russian official engaged in corruption in the Ukraine or in Russia. Putin's cronies should recognize that Putin may not be the right horse to be betting on any longer. Finally, it sends a powerful message to Russia that there are consequences for using force to annex sovereign territory against the established norms of the international community.

I will take one other moment to say that I have read some editorials suggesting that Ukraine is not that important to us; that it is more important to Europe than it is to us, so what could be our interest. Let me offer a few observations of what the interest of the United States is.

For some time we have been working to see Ukraine move to a democratic, stable government, looking westward,

and in doing so strengthening a big part of Eastern Europe at the end of the day in a way that strengthens the security of that region and the fiscal opportunities of that region.

We look at the Ukraine and we say to ourselves, well, they are not a NATO member. But other NATO allies—some of which I met with when I was in Brussels this past week—who are NATO members are watching and asking: What will Europe and the United States do in the face of Russian aggression? What is our ultimate security going to depend on? We are a NATO member. We are, under article 5 of NATO's treaty, ultimately supposed to be protected because we are committed to the protection of all our other neighbors under NATO. Some of those countries actually meet the full responsibility they have under NATO to pay their quota for the collective defense.

So Ukraine is not a NATO member, but they are looking at what the West's resolve is in the face of this aggression and the possibility of Russian forces moving further west, asking: Is NATO going to stand up for me? That agreement is one of the fundamental institutions that has created security on the European Continent and for which America twice—twice—sent its sons and daughters abroad to ultimately guarantee that security. We need to ensure that NATO continues to be a vibrant entity for the collective security of the United States and of Europe. This is another reason we are interested.

Thirdly, I would just simply say, as I have said on the Senate floor before, the world is watching. China is watching, and they are wondering what America and the West will do as they look at territories they dispute with our allies—Japan and South Korea in the South China Sea. They say: The West let Putin get away with this. Why should we not take those territories? There will be no consequence. Or as we are negotiating with Iran across the table to stop their nuclear weapons program, the Iranians look and ask: How much will the West punish Russia for this aggression, because if there isn't much consequence, then why should I not try to get the maximum of this deal or not accept the deal at all. Or North Korea, which wants to advance even further its missile program, which already possesses nuclear capability, what is their calculation?

I could go around the globe describing at this moment, beyond the Ukraine, how the European Union and the United States acts will send a very clear message to world actors, and that message hopefully will be one of strength, because in doing so we may avert the consequences of security challenges around the globe, avert the possibility we will have to send our sons and daughters into harm's way if we act decisively, if we act with strength.

That is the opportunity we have. The world is watching, and we must rise to

the challenge. Passing this legislation goes a long way toward that goal, and that is both the opportunity and the responsibility before the Senate. I urge my colleagues to speak with one voice.

I hope we get as near to unanimity as possible, as we have done at other times; for example, on the question of sanctions on Iran. This is such a moment. If the Senate speaks with one voice, I think President Putin will understand the consequences of miscalculating further. I hope that is the opportunity of which we will avail ourselves and, in doing so, send a message beyond Putin to the rest of the world that we have the resolve necessary to rise to such challenges.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. PRYOR. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

All time is expired.

Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2867, offered by the Senator from Nevada, Mr. REID.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 88 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Cornyn	Johnson (WI)
Ayotte	Crapo	Kaine
Baldwin	Cruz	King
Barrasso	Donnelly	Kirk
Begich	Durbin	Klobuchar
Bennet	Enzi	Landrieu
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Leahy
Blunt	Fischer	Lee
Booker	Flake	Levin
Boozman	Franken	Manchin
Boxer	Gillibrand	Markey
Brown	Graham	McCain
Burr	Grassley	McCaskill
Cantwell	Hagan	McConnell
Cardin	Harkin	Menendez
Carper	Hatch	Merkley
Casey	Heinrich	Mikulski
Chambliss	Heitkamp	Moran
Coats	Hirono	Murkowski
Coburn	Hoeven	Murphy
Cochran	Inhofe	Murray
Collins	Isakson	Nelson
Coons	Johanns	Portman
Corker	Johnson (SD)	Pryor

Reed	Scott	Udall (NM)
Reid	Sessions	Vitter
Risch	Shaheen	Walsh
Roberts	Shelby	Warner
Rockefeller	Stabenow	Warren
Rubio	Tester	Whitehouse
Sanders	Thune	Wicker
Schatz	Toomey	Wyden
Schumer	Udall (CO)	

NAYS—2

Heller Paul

The amendment was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I am hopeful and confident the next two votes will be by voice. We expect to have the next vote around 1:45 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the engrossment of the amendment and third reading of the bill.

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

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (H.R. 4152), as amended, was passed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask to be recognized for 3 minutes.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I understand that this will be a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Thank you Madam President. I want to thank my Senate colleagues and Senator RISCH for helping us get the next Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration to the floor.

First, I want to recognize everybody's thoughts and prayers here for Oso and Darrington, WA, and for the people who have been hit by an unbelievable tragedy. Our hearts go out

to this community and I want to say that this has been a tremendous effort by first responders.

There are hundreds of volunteers, thousands of dollars of contributions. And Darrington High School students made 1,300 sandwiches to try to support the research and recovery effort. I thank them for all of their hard work.

One of the reasons I want to get a Small Business Administrator is because this agency is going to play a role in this recovery. I thank my colleague, Senator MURRAY, for her help and support.

The Small Business Administration plays an important role for communities in disasters and the woman we have before us is a well-qualified woman who can help us with this crisis and continued small business lending.

The SBA has been without an Administrator for 8 months, and it is critical that we get this position filled today. We cannot forget that small businesses create two out of three new jobs in our country—and the SBA provide \$28 million small business assistance that helps them create more jobs.

So every single day we need to think about small businesses in our community and how much we need to help and support them. Businesses, from Chobani Yogurt to Ben & Jerry's ice cream to Federal Express, have benefited from the SBA program. To have somebody like Maria Contreras-Sweet to be this person is critical for us.

I urge my colleagues to support her in this nomination and to move forward on an SBA agenda. Everything from making sure we approve the 504 program, to the STEP export assistance program, and to make sure that we continue to make ground on exporting small business products—made in the United States of America—to the growing middle-class around the globe.

I thank my colleagues and I urge them to support this nominee.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I rise to express my strong support for Maria Contreras-Sweet—a woman eminently qualified to serve our country as the next administrator of the Small Business Administration.

Maria Contreras-Sweet is the right person to lead the SBA given her distinguished record of public service and her deep understanding of the challenges and needs facing small businesses today.

As the founder of ProAmerica Bank, the first Latino-owned business bank in California in over 30 years and a leading financial services provider and SBA lender, she successfully expanded access to capital for small- and medium-sized businesses that often lacked access to larger, traditional financial institutions.

Just yesterday, my colleagues in the Hispanic Task Force and I met with Latino business leaders from across the Nation, and the No. 1 issue that was raised by nearly everyone in the room was the need to assist minority entrepreneurs and small business owners

with obtaining financing and access to capital—an essential function of the SBA, and one that Maria-Contreras Sweet understands first-hand.

Her commitment to supporting small businesses owners embodies the entrepreneurial spirit that makes our country great—and is exactly the kind of leadership the SBA needs.

Maria Contreras-Sweet also has a proven track record as a dedicated public servant. She previously served as secretary of the California Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency, where she was the driving force behind major job creation and public investments in infrastructure and housing.

As the first Latina to serve as a cabinet secretary in the state, she managed a budget of \$14 billion and oversaw more than 40,000 employees. This is truly a remarkable nominee who brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership to the Small Business Administration, as well as a compelling personal story.

Maria Contreras-Sweet, like me, has humble beginnings. As a young child, she immigrated to the United States from Guadalajara, Mexico. She settled in California, where her mother worked long hours at a chicken packaging plant to support her and her five siblings. Her family did not speak any English when they arrived, and Maria has said that it was precisely hearing no' so many times and seeing so many doors close for them that prompted her to speak up for others, to fight to level the playing field for all, and to find a way to say yes' to people with good ideas who can drive innovation who are all too often overlooked for the wrong reasons.

Maria Contreras-Sweet represents the promise of America, the fulfillment of the American Dream, and the expansion of this dream to millions more entrepreneurs and small business owners across the Nation. She is building wealth for American families and communities, and building pathways to growth and prosperity that extend far beyond the business sector.

Maria Contreras-Sweet is the right nominee for the job. I applaud President Obama for selecting her to be our nation's next SBA administrator, and I thank Leader REID for moving quickly to confirm her nomination without delay. I'm very pleased the time has finally come for good people like Maria Contreras-Sweet to get the up-or-down vote they deserve.

I urge my colleagues to vote to confirm this qualified, competent nominee without hesitation.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I am pleased to support the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration. The SBA Administrator plays an important role in helping small businesses create jobs, mainly by making sure small businesses have access to capital. Ms. Contreras-Sweet is remarkably qualified for this position,

having founded and run a bank that focuses on making small and mid-size loans. She also served as the head of California's Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. The SBA will benefit from the valuable insight Ms. Contreras-Sweet gained from this combination of experience working directly with small businesses and administering a large government agency. The experience will serve her well as SBA Administrator.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship I had the opportunity to engage Ms. Contreras-Sweet during her confirmation hearing. She impressed me with her understanding of all that it takes to launch and run a successful small business. She has the skills and the enthusiasm to help entrepreneurs drive our economic growth and create jobs.

I am happy to support Ms. Contreras-Sweet's nomination and I look forward to working with her as the SBA Administrator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. today the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Owens nomination—Calendar No. 573; that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination; that immediately following the cloture vote and notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate resume legislative session and proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 3979; further, if cloture is invoked on the Owens nomination, all postcloture time be considered expired at 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 31, and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the Owens

nomination; that upon disposition of the Owens nomination, the Senate resume legislative session and, if cloture is invoked on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979, then all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to consideration of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 700; that there be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

SGR

Mr. REID. Madam President, for the knowledge of all Members, 20 minutes ago or so the House passed by voice vote the—

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, the Senate is not in order. No one can hear.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is correct. The Senate is not in order. The Senate will be in order. Senators will bring their conversations to a close.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Twenty minutes ago the House passed by voice vote the 13-month patch of the SGR.

There was work done on a bipartisan basis by all Senators to get a permanent fix. We can only do what we can do. I have had a number of my Republican colleagues come to me and say: We will do this, but you have to get the assurance of the Speaker that he would accept this, and the Speaker would not accept what was being proposed. The original plan was my idea and I am very disappointed it didn't work out, but I have been trying to do it for 4 years, so I am not surprised. But it is no one's fault in the Senate.

We have a new chair of the Finance Committee. He has worked very hard on a bipartisan basis to come up with a way to get rid of this SGR once and for all. We weren't able to do that.

So the patch we have is imperfect, but it is something that will take care of things. I don't mean to be mean-spirited, but I am tired of people saying you are taking care of the doctors but no one else. We are taking care of patients for the next 13 months—patients—and I think that is extremely important. We have millions of people who have doctors who take Medicare patients. For us not to do this would have been truly unfortunate.

I am disappointed we aren't able to get a permanent fix, but we have been

able to do that. We should be very happy we have been able to do as well as we have done. I personally am not overjoyed about what is in the bill, but I am satisfied with what is in the bill. I hope we can expeditiously move and get this done today.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VENEZUELA

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, the reason I come to the floor is to call attention to a crisis that has fallen off the front pages over the last few weeks; that is, the situation in our own hemisphere that is occurring in Venezuela. I recognize there have been news stories about an airplane that has been tragically potentially lost—or has been lost. We don't know the full outcome of that yet. I know the situation in Ukraine has captivated the attention of the public—and rightfully so—and I am pleased to see the Senate has taken important steps today toward addressing that issue.

I wish to speak about something that is happening in our own backyard, in our own hemisphere; in fact, something that is impacting hundreds of thousands of people who live in Florida because they have family members who still live in the country of Venezuela.

Since February 4 of this year, Venezuelans have been taking to the streets to complain about their government. These Venezuelans are from all walks of life, but they have truly been motivated by young people, by students.

The origins of this public discontent are important to understand because they are not just purely political. It in fact has to do with the dysfunction and the failures of the government that is currently in charge of that country. The statistics bear out that dysfunction and their failures. For example, violence and insecurity is among the highest in the entire Western Hemisphere. The murder rate in Venezuela was 79 per 100,000 people in 2013.

In the city of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, the murder rate is actually almost double that. It is 122 per 100,000, making it one of the most dangerous cities on Earth. The unbridled corruption that exists in terms of how State assets are used—Venezuela is an oil-rich country. There are individuals in that government who have empowered themselves of Venezuela's oil, not their oil, and are basically giving it away to countries such as Cuba and others and using it as their own personal piggy bank for personal enrichment and to fund their governmental operations at the expense of the people of Venezuela.

Their inflation rate is 57 percent. In fact, this week Fitch ratings lowered Venezuela's sovereign debt rating into junk territory from B-plus to B. They warned, by the way, that further downgrades are on the way.

There is also this unprecedented scarcity of basic goods, including food staples; even things such as toilet paper there is a shortage of. I will show some graphics. This is a line of people waiting in the city of San Cristobal to go into a supermarket. We are talking about a rich country. This is not a Third World country. This is not a nation that is poor. This is a revenue-rich nation, among the most resource rich on the planet. Here is a line of people waiting to go into a grocery store, reminiscent of Cuba, for example, a country whose model this government follows, and we will talk about that more in a moment.

Let me show my colleagues a picture of some store shelves inside a Venezuelan supermarket: completely empty, nothing on the shelves. This is the economic reality of the failure of the Maduro-Chavez government in Venezuela today, and this is why, among other reasons, people have taken to the streets to demonstrate.

There was another catalyst: a sexual assault that occurred on a college campus, and students were protesting against law enforcement's unwillingness to address that assault. The government cracked down—but not on the sexual assaulters, not on the perpetrators, on the demonstrators.

All of these things we have talked about—the failure of that State, the lack of democratic opening, the political abuses, the corruption, and the economic disaster of the Venezuelan Government—led to demonstrations that began on February 4 and continue throughout the country.

I want to show you a picture of what those demonstrations looked like. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets to protest, and they were protesting the things I have outlined already: the insecurity, the violence, the scarcity of basic goods, the lack of opportunity, the political repression.

Meanwhile, Nicolas Maduro, the President of that country, and all of his cronies live a life of luxury—and we are going to talk about that more in a moment—because this government is surrounded by individuals who are living lives of luxury not just in Venezuela but in Florida.

While the people take to the streets—and you saw the empty store shelves—there are people tied to the Government in Venezuela buying gold-plated iPads—I did not even know there was such a thing—in Miami and investing in enormous properties and mansions, with the money they are stealing, with the help of the Maduro government, from the people of Venezuela, leading to these protests.

So what has been the response of the Maduro government? What has been

the response to these legitimate complaints about what is happening in Venezuela?

I am going to show you some images of what the response has been from the government.

Here is the first. Here is their national guard. Here is their national guard battling with students in the streets, fully equipped with riot gear, ready to battle against them. This has been their response: repression at every turn in multiple cities.

Here is the other response: teargas—teargas by a fully armored individual, firing teargas canisters into the crowd.

Let me talk about the teargas for a moment. Let me show you this canister. This canister that was used against peaceful protesters actually has a marking. It says: "HECHO EN BRASIL"—"MADE IN BRAZIL." And there have been reports, in fact, that there has been some U.S.-manufactured teargas being used against protesters in the streets in Venezuela.

But if it stopped at teargas, it would be one thing. But it has not stopped at teargas. In fact, it is now known that the Interior Ministry of Venezuela authorized snipers to travel to Tachira State and fire on demonstrators.

Here is a picture of a government official, of a law enforcement or army or national guard individual, or an Interior Ministry individual on a rooftop with a rifle and a scope aiming into a crowd.

Here is a picture of a sniper. It does not end there. Those are not the only pictures we have.

Here are more pictures of more snipers on rooftops.

Here is another sniper aiming into the crowd, with a spotter next to him.

Here is another blown-up picture of the same sniper.

These are government-sponsored individuals. What civilized planet on Earth sends the national guard and the interior ministry of their own government, of their own country, with snipers to fire on their own people who are demonstrating because of the lack of freedoms and opportunity and economic degradation that exists in a country?

They cannot deny this. Here are pictures, taken by demonstrators themselves, of the snipers ready to shoot down people. In fact, 36 people have lost their lives.

But it does not end just with the government snipers. Because what the government is trying to do here to hide their involvement is they have organized these progovernment militia groups, basically—these militant groups that they hide behind. These groups do not wear uniforms. They are called "colectivos." They drive around the city on motorcycles, and they assault protesters. They break in and vandalize their homes. They have weapons that they use to shoot into the crowds and kill or harm people.

There are three main groups. By the way, these groups began under Hugo

Chavez's reign, and these groups are actually organized around a concept that has existed for years in Cuba—these committees to defend the revolution. These are neighborhood groups, so they know your family, they know who you are, they are always watching, and they organize themselves into armed militias. The government's claim is: Well, these groups are on their own. We are not coordinating with them. But, in fact, there have been multiple reports that these groups coordinate with the national guard to take down barricades set up by protesters, to break into the homes of protesters, to vandalize homes, to terrorize people, and to kill.

There are three main groups that I want to point out, these colectivos.

La Piedrita is one of them. It is based in a working-class neighborhood of Caracas. It has a far-left ideology. It is armed. It is comprised of radicals who claim to be willing to die for their revolutionary ideals—whatever those are.

In January, this group, by the way, tweeted that Henrique Capriles—the opposition party's nominee for President in the last elections—is a racist and a fascist and accused him of intending to launch attacks on the poor and on impoverished neighborhoods.

Another colectivo: the Patriotic Force of National Liberation. This group bases its beliefs on the teachings of a leftist revolutionary and murderer by the name of Che Guevara.

A third group is the Tupamaro Revolutionary Movement. This is an armed communist political and militant organization that also operates out of Caracas.

These are just three of these armed, un-uniformed, thuggish, criminal groups that operate under the auspices and at the direction of the government of Nicolas Maduro and the people who surround him.

So what is the result?

The result is there have been over 1,800 people detained in Venezuela since this began last month. Over 450 people have been injured. Over 50 people have been tortured while detained—that we have reports on. And over 36 people have been killed.

This is not happening on a continent halfway around the world. This is happening in our hemisphere, right now, in real time. And these numbers, they just summarize the depth and the scope and the breadth of what is happening in the regime's brutality in Venezuela.

But these are not just statistics. Behind every single one of these—behind the 36 who have been killed, behind the 1,800 who have been detained, behind the 450 who have been injured—are real people, with names and families and fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and children. I want to tell you the story of a couple of them.

The first is Marvinia Jimenez. Here in this picture you see her on her knees as part of a peaceful protest. And here you see an armed individual with a pistol pointed at her. She is on her knees

and poses no threat. She has given herself up as a peaceful protester, as she confronts an armed individual associated with the government holding a pistol.

What happened next in these pictures is these armed individuals from the Interior Ministry grabbed her by the wrist and head. They subsequently throw her to the ground. And here is what they do when she is on the ground. This individual here—a female, a member of the Interior Ministry—takes off her helmet and proceeds to beat her in the head with that helmet.

Here is the picture. This is real. This is not a movie. This is happening. This is happening now.

This happened to Marvinia Jimenez, and luckily someone caught it on their phone and was able to capture these images.

These are uniformed individuals associated with the government. You saw she had given herself up and was on her knees. And this is what happens: She gets beaten in the face with a helmet.

She lived to tell her story. But there are others who have not been so fortunate.

Here is Geraldine Moreno. She was a college student in the city of Valencia.

On February 19, she stepped outside of her home to see what was going on during an antigovernment protest. Six national guard members—six national guard members of the Maduro government—came by on motorcycles to break up the protest.

As the demonstrators fled, they fired into the crowd, and she was hit by gunfire and fell to the ground. She struggled to get up, and just then one of the national guard members came up and shot her in the face at point blank range and killed her.

Geraldine was someone's daughter. In fact, she was not just anyone's daughter, she was Rosa Orozco's daughter, and Rosa has lost her daughter forever.

This is the youth of Venezuela. This is supposed to be Venezuela's future, and they are being indiscriminately mowed down in the street by the government of their own country.

There are some inspiring stories too.

As shown in this picture, this is Maria Corina Machado, a member of the Venezuelan opposition party in Parliament. She was here in Washington this week. She has bravely spoken out against these things going on in Venezuela, and bravely, the Government of Panama gave her the space to speak out on behalf of the people of Venezuela at a recent OAS meeting. But, shamefully, the rest of the countries that are members of the OAS—not the United States or Canada but every other country did nothing to defend her right to speak, and she was denied the right to tell the world the truth about what is happening.

She could have stayed in exile and asked for political asylum, but do you know what this brave young woman did? She got on an airplane and flew back to Venezuela—to her country—to continue the fight there, peacefully, as a member of their Parliament, as a member of the opposition party.

Well, when she arrived, she was immediately detained at the airport in Caracas. She was questioned by the thugs you just saw, who no doubt tried to intimidate her in that questioning. She was verbally attacked by government supporters at the airport. And then she got in her car to leave, to go to her destination, and these same thugs tried to run her car off the road. They are so incompetent that they could not even carry that out, thankfully. She finally made it to her destination.

And then guess what happens this week. The speaker of their so-called National Assembly—an individual by the name of Diosdado Cabello—a Maduro loyalist, a criminal—decided to remove her, to basically just expel her from the National Assembly. She is no longer a member of the National Assembly—unilaterally dismissed by the equivalent of their Assembly's president, their speaker.

The OAS's response to this has been shameful. The Organization of American States has been downright embarrassing and shameful. I thought it was best summarized by the opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, who wrote in the New York Times on March 25:

The outspoken response from human rights organizations is in sharp contrast to the shameful silence from many of Venezuela's neighbors in Latin America. The Organization of American States, which represents nations in the Western Hemisphere, has abstained from any real leadership on the current crisis of human rights and the looming specter of a failed state, even though it was formed precisely to address issues like these.

Why do we even need an OAS—an organization of democratically elected governments—why do we even need it, why are we even members of it, why do we even contribute funds of American taxpayers towards it, if it cannot meet and address systemic human rights abuses such as these?

I am less than pleased, by the way, with our own government's reaction. This is not a partisan issue, but I have to say this. President Obama has expressed he is concerned about this. To his credit, the Vice President was stronger in condemning the Maduro regime.

We are not just concerned about this. We should be outraged about this. Just as we are outraged when things go wrong in other parts of the world and weigh in with sanctions—and we should—and our voices—and we should—this is happening in our own hemisphere, right underneath our nose. And it is shameful that the leadership of our government has so far not done more to address this. But we can change that, and I am hoping that we will.

What I hope to do over the next few days is to propose specific sanctions against individuals and companies associated with the Maduro regime so they know there are consequences for what is happening here. And you think our sanctions have an impact on Russia in its violations of Ukrainian sovereignty? Sanctions against Maduro and his government would have a dra-

matic impact. Because all those people who are around him who are getting rich off this regime, who are supporting these abuses so they can stay in power and keep making money, they all have bank accounts and property and restaurants and businesses and mansions in the United States of America. And if you support this, this government should sanction you.

I ask what I did a few weeks ago in a speech on this subject: If the United States of America will not stand up and be a strong voice on behalf of people who all they seek is freedom and liberty that our own founding documents say belong to all people—rights given to them by their Creator—if the United States of America will not be a forceful voice, what nation on Earth will? They look to us. Our own model of freedom and our Republic inspires people. We say we stand for these principles. We need to defend them when they are threatened, especially in our own backyard.

So I hope in the weeks to come we can pursue these targeted sanctions against some of these individuals associated with the government, like the Assembly president Diosdado Cabello, and others such as these individuals who we will come on the floor in the next few weeks and identify by name, those who benefit from the systematic violation of human rights in Venezuela, who are stealing money from the Venezuelan people, who are using the resources of that nation to enrich themselves. In the next few weeks, we will identify them by name and the properties they own and the assets they hold in our own Nation.

But I implore my colleagues not to ignore this issue. This is happening right now, right in our own backyard, in our own hemisphere, and it is impacting real people at an extraordinary price.

So I hope in the weeks to come that I—along with Senator MENENDEZ and others who have united behind us and with us—will be able to convince enough of my colleagues to take the next step.

We have already unanimously passed the resolution condemning all of this. I thank my colleagues in the Senate for that. The next step is to build in real consequences for being a part of this. My colleagues will have an opportunity to be a part of this in the next few days, especially when we return next week.

I hope we can get a hearing on these sanctions in the Foreign Relations Committee, and I hope we can get passage of it on the floor, so we can send a clear signal to the people of Venezuela: The people of the United States of America are on your side. We support your cause. We will not forget what you are going through. We will not abandon your aspirations. We stand for the liberty and the freedom of all people, including those who do not live here with us.

This is what we are going to have a chance to do in the next few days. I hope we can successfully take action.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I was not planning this today, but as many of my colleagues do, I do a morning coffee where anybody from my State of Ohio—as Senator DURBIN does in Illinois, Senator UDALL in New Mexico, and others—and my colleague from Ohio does one too, Senator PORTMAN—people can come in from around the State and talk about what they want.

A couple came in today, a father and a mother and two children. One looked to be maybe 10 and the other looked to be maybe 15. They came and wanted to talk to me about their private school. They have sort of a home school association, it sounded like, from a conservative part of Ohio, Southwest Ohio. We talked about what we could do to help them in terms of educating their children.

Then, right before we parted—and I was going to see other people at this coffee; we had maybe 75 people there—the mother of these two children said: By the way, thank you for the Affordable Care Act.

I said: How is that?

She pointed to her son. She said: My son—I think he was 15. She said: My son is diabetic. As I learned later, he was diagnosed at the age of 6 and has injected insulin into his arm and his leg for 8 or 9 years. She said: My son who is diabetic, we could not get insurance because of my son's preexisting condition, diabetes. We were turned down—I counted them. We were turned down 34 times for insurance. My family was turned down 34 times for insurance. Because of the Affordable Care Act we now have health insurance.

She smiled. That is one of the most poignant stories I have heard about the importance of this new law. There are 160,000 people in my State who now have insurance that did not have it in December. But this family—you think about what this is all about. This family's peace of mind, this family's ability to focus on other things now, because they have insurance that they could not get, even though he had a job—the father had a job—I am not sure where the mother worked.

But the point is, they were turned down, she said, 34 times because their son cost the insurance more money be-

cause he had a preexisting condition with diabetes. So I guess my question to my colleagues is, why do we want to repeal this? How do my colleagues, including many, many elected officials in my State who before have been resistant to the Affordable Care Act to win elections, saying: Repeal the Affordable Care Act—how do they explain that to this family—if they met this family and the mother said: We have insurance; we were turned down 34 times. Why do you want to repeal this law? Why do you want to take it away from the 160,000 Ohioans who have insurance? Why do you want to do that to the 100,000 25-, 22-, and 19-year-olds in Ohio—in my State alone, one State of the 50 where 100,000 young people have insurance and they are on their parent's plan because of the Affordable Care Act.

Some 900,000 Ohio seniors have gotten check-ups, no copay, no deductibles, free checkups, free osteoporosis screenings, and free physicals because of the Affordable Care Act.

How do you take that away from those seniors? How do you take away the \$900 in savings that the average senior in my State, who is on this—President Bush's, initially—drug plan, the Medicare drug plan? How do you take away that \$900 savings? You are going to repeal ObamaCare? You are going to repeal the Affordable Care Act and take those away? How do you face the people like the family I met today? Thirty-four times she was turned down for insurance. I did not make this up. That is her number. She said: I counted; 34 times they turned our family down for insurance because my child has diabetes. How do you think that makes him feel, first of all. But equally importantly, she has the comfort and safety in her mind now of having insurance.

I do not even understand. What do my colleagues do? Do they wake up every morning thinking: I want to take that insurance from 150,000 Ohio families; I do not want them to have it; I want to take those benefits from those 900,000 Ohio seniors. I want to make them pay \$900 more.

That is what they are saying: Repeal ObamaCare.

We lose all of that, if they want to keep talking about taking these benefits away. Let's live with this law. Let's make it work well. It is starting to work really well in Ohio. We are having thousands of sign-ups every single day. I know in the Presiding Officer's State of Hawaii, they are getting lots of people to sign up. Lots of young people are signing up. Let's move on. Let's stop debating this. Help make it work better. Let's talk about how we create jobs, not how you are going to repeal some health care law that you did not like because it did not fit with your ideology or you did not like the President—whatever the reason my colleagues seem to not like the Affordable Care Act.

History is going to say over and over: Why do you want to take these benefits away? This is working. Remember back with Medicare in 1965. They were not the tea party. They were called the John Birch Society back then. They did not like it. Insurance companies did not like it. But everybody liked it 5 years later.

Social Security—the same forces, the same far right forces opposed it. Five years later, people liked it. This stuff works. It is going to make such a difference in people's lives. Forget about the 150,000. Forget about the numbers. Focus on that family—34 times turned down for insurance. She has insurance now. Her diabetic son can get the care he needs. That is such a wonderful thing.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CARDIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING PETTY OFFICER MARK MAYO

Mr. CARDIN. I rise to speak about the tragic death of a fellow Marylander, PO2 Mark Mayo. His heroic sacrifice is the truest display of the U.S. Navy's core values of honor, courage, and commitment. The U.S. Navy confirmed yesterday that PO2 Mark Mayo put himself in harm's way to save his shipmate. On behalf of a grateful nation and on behalf of my fellow Senators, I offer condolences to the families, friends, and shipmates of Petty Officer Mayo.

The tragic events this past Monday evening are still under investigation by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, but what we know so far is that at approximately 11:20 p.m. there was a shooting on board the destroyer Mahan.

A civilian who was behaving erratically approached the Mahan's quarterdeck and was confronted by the ship's petty officer of the watch. The two engaged in a struggle and the civilian was able to disarm the sailor.

Petty Officer Mayo, serving as the chief of the guard, witnessed the fight and ran to the quarterdeck and placed himself between the civilian and his shipmate, the petty officer of the watch. The civilian opened fire and fatally wounded Petty Officer Mayo.

U.S. Navy CAPT Robert Clark, Norfolk Naval Station's commanding officer, said:

Petty Officer Mayo's actions were nothing less than heroic; he selflessly gave his own life to ensure the safety of the sailors on board.

Petty Officer Mayo's parents, Sharon Blair and Decondi Mayo, said their son's actions reflected his strong, caring nature. As his mother put it: "He protected people. He was a protector."

Petty Officer Mayo was born in Washington, DC, and moved with his family to Hagerstown, MD, in 1998. He enlisted in the Navy in 2007, 4 months after graduating from Williamsport High School, where he was a Washington County wrestling champion, because he wanted to serve his country and because the Navy offers educational opportunities. He enlisted in the Navy, and he reported to Naval Station Norfolk in May of 2011. Petty Officer Mayo's mother, who is a geriatric nursing assistant, said he always wanted to work in law enforcement.

Randy Longnecker, Petty Officer Mayo's former guidance counselor at Williamsport High School, recalled him as a kind and easygoing student who earned good grades, saying:

He always wanted to make sure he was doing the right thing. He liked athletics and being part of a team. He must have fallen in love with the Navy.

Petty Officer Mayo served tours of duty in Rota, Spain, and in Bahrain. He earned the Good Conduct Award, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon. He was a distinguished member of the Navy.

Americans are privileged and fortunate to have such brave and outstanding young men and women serving in our Armed Forces. We must never forget the sacrifices they and their families make on our behalf in defense of freedom.

Petty Officer Mayo has made the ultimate sacrifice. While his death is tragic, we should remember and honor the way he lived and how he voluntarily chose to save a fellow sailor from harm. He is an American hero.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRAPO. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

OWENS NOMINATION

Mr. CRAPO. I rise to discuss the nomination of John Owens to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. Owens, who currently works as a lawyer in California, has been nominated to fill the seat that has been held for the last 25 years by Judge Stephen Trott of Idaho.

Judge Trott took senior status on December 31, 2004, making the Trott seat the longest current vacancy of any seat on the Federal circuit courts.

That doesn't mean that there haven't been previous attempts to fill this seat. In a letter to the Idaho Senate delegation in 2003, then White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales stated:

I also want to make clear the President's commitment to nominate an Idahoan for a

second Ninth Circuit seat if Judge Trott retires or assumes senior status while President Bush is still in office. Idaho has had two Ninth Circuit seats for more than a decade, and that allotment is appropriate.

As such, when Judge Trott did take senior status the following year, President Bush nominated Judge Randy Smith of Idaho to the Trott seat. At the same time another nominee was pending in the Senate to fill another Idaho vacancy on the Ninth Circuit.

Regrettably, Senate Democrats used the longstanding Senate rules that were available at that time to block the confirmation of both Idaho nominees. The reason given by the California delegation for blocking the Randy Smith nomination to the Trott seat made clear that the objections had nothing to do with Judge Smith's qualifications and that they were willing to support his confirmation to the other Idaho seat, the Nelson seat, which is ultimately what happened.

As such, the California delegation blocked Randy Smith's nomination to the Trott seat, not because they believed he was not qualified but because they wanted the seat moved to California—and he was not a Californian.

The so-called Trott seat on the Ninth Circuit has been held by five different judges, including Judge Trott, since it was first created in 1935.

The first judge to hold that seat was from Oregon. The next two judges to hold that seat were from Washington State. Judge Sneed of California, the only judge in that seat to maintain his chambers in California, was the next to hold the seat. Finally, as I mentioned earlier, Judge Trott was the next to hold that seat, and he has maintained his chambers in Idaho for his entire 25 years on the bench.

Despite the fact that California already has more than 20—that is right, more than 20—active and senior judges on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the California delegation apparently believes that Californians have been denied justice for the past 25 years and that the only remedy is to add yet another California judge, leaving the State of Idaho with only one, single active judgeship on the Ninth Circuit. Senator RISCH and I had multiple conversations with the White House counsel in President Obama's first term where we expressed our interest in working with the White House and the California delegation to reach a resolution to this long-standing dispute in a way that would satisfy both delegations.

Clearly, the Idaho delegation and the Idaho people are disappointed by the President's decision to decline to nominate an Idahoan to fill the Trott seat.

It is even more disappointing that declining to submit any nominee for the Trott seat in his entire first term, the President has chosen to wait until the Senate Democrats unilaterally broke the longstanding Senate rules regarding the consideration of nominees in order to push through this nomination,

rather than working with the Idaho and California delegations to develop a mutually agreeable solution.

If these new Senate rules had been in place when Judge Trott first took senior status, the California delegation would not have had the opportunity it took advantage of to block the appointment of Idaho nominees to this seat.

This dispute is not about the qualifications of Mr. Owens. He has been rated unanimously well qualified by the American Bar Association, and I would be happy to work with the California delegation to support his nomination for the next California vacancy on the Ninth Circuit.

But I cannot support a process that is the result of an unfair breaking of the Senate's rules in order to push through a nominee that takes away a seat that has been an Idaho seat on the Ninth Circuit for 25 years, leaving Idaho with only one seat on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Sadly, because of the Senate Democrats' rule change, the Idaho delegation will not have the opportunity to stop this effort.

Therefore, I will vote no on this nomination, and my hope is that, if confirmed, Mr. Owens will make the same decision that Judge Trott did 25 years ago by also choosing to maintain his chambers in Idaho.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I have come to the floor to urge my colleagues to support the nomination of John Owens to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. This was approved by the Judiciary Committee without dissent.

I would like to quickly mention his qualifications. He received his bachelor's with high distinction from the University of California in 1993 and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated first in his class at Stanford Law School in 1996.

From 1996 to 1997 he was law clerk to Judge J. Clifford Wallace, a noted conservative jurist appointed by President Nixon to the Ninth Circuit. He then went on to serve as a law clerk to Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

In 2001 John Owens became a Federal prosecutor, joining the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, California. He began in the general crimes section, prosecuting a wide variety of violent crimes—drug crimes. He also served in the public corruption and government fraud section.

From 2004 to 2012, he served in the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Diego.

There, primarily his focus was prosecuting complex crimes, including fraud, health care, money laundering, public corruption, and national security.

He has had occasion to receive more than one award, among them the Director's Award for Superior Performance from the Justice Department. Mr. Owens has broad support, and the American Bar Association has given him their highest rating of "well qualified."

The problem that has arisen around this nomination, though, is not really his qualifications because the record will bear those qualifications out. It is the longstanding discussion over the seat vacated by Judge Stephen Trott. There is a history here, and I would like to explain it.

This seat has been vacant for over 9 years—since Judge Trott took senior status in December 2004. It is the longest running vacancy in the entire Federal judiciary. The Ninth Circuit has the greatest number of pending appeals per panel. It takes longer than other circuits to resolve an appeal. It makes no sense for this seat on the busiest circuit to stay vacant any longer.

My colleagues from Idaho have asserted that this is a vacancy which should be filled by someone from their State. Let me explain why that is not the case.

Judge Trott, whom Mr. Owens would replace, spent his entire legal career in California before joining the Justice Department under President Reagan. Throughout his career he was licensed to practice law in one State—California. Beginning in 1965 he served as county prosecutor in Los Angeles. In 1975 he sought the position of DA from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors after then-district attorney Joseph Busch passed away. When John Van De Kamp was named district attorney, Trott was chosen as his chief deputy, the second in command in the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office. In 1981 President Reagan appointed Mr. Trott to be U.S. attorney for the Central District of California.

All these things are happening in California. He was recommended for the U.S. attorney position by Senator S.I. Hayakawa of California.

In 1982, while serving as U.S. attorney, he again submitted an application to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to become DA after the DA, John Van De Kamp, was elected to be California's attorney general.

Trott was nominated by President Reagan in 1983 to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice. At his confirmation hearing for that position, Senator Pete Wilson of California introduced him. Judge Trott's official Judiciary Committee biography states that his legal residence at the time was California.

Now, this is all about whether Trott occupies an Idaho seat or a California seat.

In 1986 he was nominated by President Reagan to be Associate Attorney General. Once again Senator Wilson of California introduced him at his confirmation hearing, and once again his official Judiciary Committee biography states that his legal residence at the time was California.

In 1987 President Reagan nominated Trott to the Ninth Circuit. The Judiciary Committee sent blue slips to Senators Wilson and Cranston of California. That is the point. The point is that historically Judge Trott has occupied a California seat. He stated in his committee questionnaire that his "two clients have been the People of the State of California and the Government of the United States."

Judge Trott was confirmed in 1988 to a seat previously held by Judge Joseph Sneed, a California nominee. That judge's connection to the Ninth Circuit prior to his appointment was his 9-year tenure as professor at Stanford Law School. Judge Sneed established his chambers in San Francisco. These are the facts.

Judge Trott was a California nominee to a California seat on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, as was his predecessor. Once confirmed, however, Judge Trott made a personal choice to establish his chambers in Idaho. This personal choice—essentially an arbitrary occurrence—cannot result in a State losing a judgeship to another State.

As we all know, the overwhelming practice of administrations and Senates of both parties has been to retain each State's representation on its respective circuit. Just look at the makeup of the circuits represented by the members of the Judiciary Committee. Both Iowans on the Eighth Circuit occupy Iowa seats. Three Alabamians on the Eleventh Circuit occupy Alabama seats. All of the Texas judges on the Fifth Circuit, who are not the first occupants of their seats, were preceded by Texans. The Senate recently confirmed Carolyn McHugh to the Tenth Circuit. Judge McHugh was strongly supported by Senators HATCH and LEE, and she replaced Michael Murphy, who had been a Utah nominee.

I could go through the history of each circuit, and the same pattern would emerge time after time. This is not by accident. There is a reason for it. Presidents of either party must know which Senators to consult, and Senators must know which vacancies to make recommendations for.

This might sound like inside baseball to some, but it is fundamental to the Senate's advice and consent role, and no Senator of either party would allow the arbitrary occurrence of a judge's personal choice of residence to remove a judgeship from the Senator's home State. This is a precedent this body cannot allow to be set.

Some might accuse California of trying to take more than its share of seats. This is simply not so. There is no objective reason for the Trott seat to

be transferred to Idaho, where Judge N. Randy Smith already occupies that State's seat on the circuit.

By every metric—population, appeals generated, district court caseload—California has far less than its proportional share of circuit judgeships and Idaho already has its fair share. In fact, if Idaho were to get an additional judgeship, its representation on the Ninth Circuit would be 5½ times its share of caseload. That is ridiculous. Idaho would have twice as many seats as Montana and the State of our Presiding Officer, Hawaii, have even though those States generate more Ninth Circuit cases than Idaho. Nothing supports removing this seat from California to Idaho—not history, not population, not caseload. Nothing.

Let me conclude by saying this: I don't begrudge the Senators from Idaho seeking additional Federal judicial resources for their State. Senators CRAPO and RISCHE have introduced a bill to create a new judgeship on the Federal district court in Idaho. I represent four judicial districts that virtually always have caseloads at judicial emergency levels. One of them—the Eastern District of California—is the most overburdened judicial district in the country and has a caseload that is more than double the national average. So I understand the desire of the Senators from Idaho to ensure that a sufficient number of Federal judges are present in their State to resolve the disputes of their constituents. In fact, I am a cosponsor of the Federal Judgeship Act of 2013, which would create all the new judgeships recommended by the Judicial Conference, including one for Idaho. But the fact remains this seat on the Ninth Circuit was previously held by two Californians and it should be filled by a Californian. I very much hope the Californian will be John Owens, who has an impeccable record, bipartisan support, and whom I am proud to have recommended to President Obama, and whom I would urge my colleagues to support.

I yield the floor.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, we are once again spending unnecessary floor time overcoming a procedural obstacle so we can move to an up-or-down vote on a judicial nomination. John Owens is nominated to fill the longest open vacancy on our Federal courts. For more than 9 years, the busiest circuit court in our Nation—the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit—has been running at less than full strength. In 2013, the Ninth Circuit had 12,761 appeals filed, several thousand more appeals than the next busiest circuit. It also had 14,171 appeals pending, three times more than the next busiest circuit. Each judge in that circuit has nearly 525 appeals pending per active judge. That is nearly 70 more appeals pending per active judge than the next busiest circuit. These caseloads are not sustainable and the delay in resolving these appeals hurts the American people. We should and must approve Mr.

Owens's nomination, along with Michelle Friedland's nomination to the Ninth Circuit, as soon as possible.

Mr. Owens was first nominated last August and his early October hearing date had to be moved after Republicans forced a shutdown of our government. A hearing on his nomination was finally held in late October. Mr. Owens could and should have been confirmed before we adjourned last year. Instead, because Republicans refused to consent to hold any nominations in the Senate, every single one had to be returned to the President at the end of last year. They then had to be re-nominated and re-processed through committee this year and Mr. Owens was voted out of committee on a voice vote, without dissent, on January 16, 2014.

Mr. Owens is among six circuit nominees pending on the Senate floor. We last voted on a circuit nominee during the last work period in early March and before that we voted on a circuit court nominee in early January. If Republicans continue to obstruct the Senate from having up-or-down votes on uncontroversial judicial nominees, at our current pace of filing cloture petitions once every month or so, we will not have time this year to vote on even those who are currently pending on the Senate floor.

We have not had a vote on a judicial nomination this year that was not subject to a Republican filibuster. For all but two Republican Senators, I have started to notice a pattern of voting to end filibusters only if a nominee is from a State with at least one Republican home State Senator. Most recently this happened yesterday on the cloture vote for Judge Edward Smith of Pennsylvania. It should not require a judicial nominee to be from a State with one or more Republican home State Senators for some Senators to do the right thing. Filling vacancies so that our Federal judiciary can be fully functioning should not be a partisan issue.

Born in Washington, DC, Mr. Owens earned his B.A., with high distinction, from the University of California, Berkeley, and his J.D., with distinction, Order of the Coif, from Stanford Law School. At Stanford, he was the Nathan Abbott Scholar, an award given to the student with the highest cumulative point average in the class. Mr. Owens served as executive editor of the Stanford Law Review where he earned the Stanford Law Review Board of Editors Award.

After law school, Mr. Owens served as a law clerk to Judge J. Clifford Wallace of the Ninth Circuit and for Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the United States Supreme Court. He has been a litigator in both public and private practice. In 1998, he joined the U.S. Department of Justice, where he would later serve as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California and the Southern District of California. In 2008, Mr. Owens was promoted to serve as the Deputy Chief of

Major Frauds in the Southern District office and later the Chief of the Criminal Division. In 2012, he rejoined private practice as a partner at Munger, Tolles & Olson where he presently works. Over the course of his legal career, he has been counsel of record in more than 20 cases before the court on which he is nominated to serve.

Mr. Owens has the support of his home State Senators—Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BOXER. I hope my fellow Senators will join me today to vote to end the filibuster of Mr. Owens's nomination.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate shall proceed to executive session.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 nomination of John B. Owens, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Patty Murray, Bill Nelson, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jack Reed, Tammy Baldwin, Jon Tester, Tom Udall, Bernard Sanders, Michael F. Bennet, Christopher A. Coons, Elizabeth Warren, Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard Blumenthal, Richard J. Durbin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of John B. Owens, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Ninth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 89 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Carper	Harkin
Begich	Casey	Heinrich
Bennet	Coons	Heitkamp
Blumenthal	Donnelly	Hirono
Booker	Durbin	Johnson (SD)
Boxer	Feinstein	Kaine
Brown	Franken	King
Cantwell	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Cardin	Hagan	Landrieu

Leahy	Murray	Stabenow
Levin	Nelson	Tester
Manchin	Pryor	Udall (CO)
Markey	Reed	Udall (NM)
McCaskill	Reid	Walsh
Menendez	Sanders	Warner
Merkley	Schatz	Warren
Mikulski	Schumer	Whitehouse
Murphy	Shaheen	Wyden

NAYS—44

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Murkowski
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Coats	Hoehn	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	

NOT VOTING—2

Moran Rockefeller

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 54, the nays are 44.

The motion to invoke cloture is agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate resumes legislative session.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

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 motion to proceed to Calendar No. 333, H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Bill Nelson, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tammy Baldwin, Jon Tester, Tom Udall, Bernard Sanders, Michael F. Bennet, Christopher A. Coons, Elizabeth Warren, Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard Blumenthal, Richard J. Durbin, Patrick J. Leahy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 333, H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 65, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 90 Leg.]

YEAS—65

Ayotte	Harkin	Murray
Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Portman
Bennet	Heller	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (WI)	Rockefeller
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Kirk	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Landrieu	Stabenow
Coats	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Levin	Toomey
Coons	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—34

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Flake	Risch
Blunt	Graham	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rubio
Burr	Hatch	Scott
Chambliss	Hoeben	Sessions
Coburn	Inhofe	Shelby
Cochran	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Johanns	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—1

Moran

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 65, the nays are 34.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MATTHEW H. TUELLER, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Matthew H. Tueller, of Utah, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Yemen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Matthew H. Tueller, of Utah, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Yemen?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I wish to thank all of my colleagues for this very strong bipartisan vote to move a step closer to restoring unemployment insurance benefits for over 2 million Americans. I particularly wish to thank Senator HELLER, whose leadership from the beginning has been instrumental, as well as Senator COLLINS, whose leadership, wise counsel, and thoughtful proposals have been one of the really strong forces sustaining our efforts throughout. I also thank Senator PORTMAN, who has consistently thought about progressive changes for our training programs so that people are better prepared for jobs, as well as Senator MURKOWSKI for her support, and Senator KIRK, both of them valuable contributors. I thank all of my colleagues today who came forward.

This is not the end of the story, but it is an important step forward for over 2 million Americans who are looking desperately for work, who need the benefits, and who will contribute to our economy.

With that, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 400, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 400) recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Great Alaska Earthquake, which struck the State of Alaska at 5:36 p.m. on Good Friday, March 27, 1964, honoring those who lost their lives in the Great Alaska Earthquake and associated tsunamis, and expressing continued support for research on earthquake and tsunami prediction and mitigation strategies.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, over the past several days we have all watched the news of the massive landslide in Washington State. We have watched that with sadness, with shock—truly an awful, awful episode. Our hearts, our prayers are certainly with all of those who have been affected by this terrible tragedy. We continue to hope for the best as rescue and recovery efforts continue.

Today I have come to the floor to speak about a different natural disaster. This is a natural disaster that affected Alaska on Good Friday exactly 50 years ago today, in 1964. This is the Great Alaska Earthquake, the Good Friday Earthquake, the epic earthquake of 1964.

At the time that Alaska was struck by this massive earthquake, I was a young child. I was living in the southeastern community of Wrangell, AK. I have a map here, a map of the State of Alaska. The epicenter of the earthquake is here in the south central area. About a year prior to the quake, my family and I moved down to the small southeastern community of Wrangell, tucked safely in the inland passage waterways here.

We were all looking forward to Easter. When the earthquake hit, I certainly did not know that we had been struck by a massive, massive 9.2 earthquake of the magnitude on the Richter scale that decimated southcentral Alaska. The earthquake struck at 5:36 in the evening. I did not know that what had just occurred was the largest earthquake to strike the United States in recorded history. It is the second largest earthquake ever recorded on modern instrumentation.

Those of us who lived in Alaska at the time have memories of what happened on Good Friday 50 years ago. We have stories that will live with us for generations and passed down from generation to generation. You can talk to Alaskans about it: Where were you in the quake of 1964?

We had just moved, as I said, from Anchorage to Wrangell, AK. We did not feel the shake in Wrangell. We waited

for the big waves to come. We waited for the tsunami. We sat listening to the radio. But our home was situated directly on the beach. Everyone was told to move up to higher ground. So we moved everybody in the family, five kids at the time, up the hill. We went to my first grade teacher's house, which was really quite exciting for me.

We were allowed to stay up late into the evening. As a small child, there was a buzz. It was kind of exciting but kind of scary because we did not know what was happening in other parts of the State. My mom had basically packed some diapers for the smallest of the children in the family. She tells me that she brought along her silver tea set. That is the only thing that she brought from the house, along with the five kids.

We also tell the story of the home that we lived in just before we had moved to Wrangell. It was situated in a residential area called Turnagain. Turnagain was the area that was immediately and massively hit.

This is the Turnagain neighborhood. Our home that we lived in prior to moving to Wrangell was situated about two blocks back from the bluff. After the earthquake, the bluff slid down taking tens and tens of houses with it. The home that we were in then became bluff property. It was condemned never to be lived in again.

We all have stories of the earthquake. We saw the news accounts as they came slowly to us. We saw the photographs of the collapsed buildings.

I am going to go back to the first picture here. This first one that was up initially is downtown Anchorage, AK, 1964. This is on Fourth Avenue. You can see from the picture the ground just sunk, dropped—the crumpled buildings, the cars cattywampus.

The destruction and the devastation in the downtown area literally took your breath away. One very photographed picture was the J.C. Penney building which had just recently been constructed. The whole front facade of the J.C. Penney building just crashed down onto the streets and onto the cars below.

This is a picture here of Government Hill Elementary School. I showed you the previous picture where my family and I had lived in the neighborhood at Turnagain when I was a child. When my husband and I bought our home, where our sons were raised, it was directly across the street from this property where Government Hill Elementary literally slid down the hill.

As you can see from the picture there, the devastation to the school was extraordinary. Fortunately, it was 5:36 in the evening on Good Friday, and there were no children at the school. But the devastation, the visual impact that still remains as we look back 50 years now at what happened—the stories of loss of property, of damage to property, the stories of loss of life and truly miraculous survival—slowly started to reveal the extent of the de-

struction from an earthquake that Federal scientists would tell us years later was roughly equivalent to 100 million tons of TNT exploding—massive.

The Good Friday Earthquake reshaped the Alaska landscape. Land was lifted 33 feet in some places, and then in other places it sank in the ground—sank as much as 6 feet in places. Cliffs and buildings crumbled, forests and towns were flooded. Huge waves approximately 200 feet high were measured near the community of Valdez. A 200-foot wall of water was coming into the community of Valdez. Communities were literally washed off the map in Anchorage.

This is a picture here of Seward, which again is in Resurrection Bay along the coast, but the waves literally came in and swept everything out with it. But it was not just one wave. It was a series of waves. Anchorage, which is our State's most populous city and really the center of infrastructure in the State, was just 74 miles from the epicenter of the quake.

That is where we see so many pictures of the tremendous damage there. There has been a series of articles in our local newspaper, the Anchorage Daily News, leading up to this historic 50th anniversary. It is a series written by Mike Dunham. I ask unanimous consent that a portion of these series be printed in the RECORD.

But in the series discussing the tsunamis that hit Alaska, I would like to share with my colleagues some of the information that Mike outlined. He said NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center puts the total number of deaths resulting from the Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964 at 139. Fifteen of those deaths are attributed to falling buildings or crumbling ground during the quake itself. The rest were killed by the water. Thirty-two people died when a wave 30-foot high built up in Valdez. Similar-sized waves took 12 lives in Seward, and 15 in Kodiak and its surrounding villages. Another dozen perished when a wall of water 40-foot high smashed into Whittier in the Prince William Sound village of Chenega. One-third of the population, 23 people, were swept away by a 90-foot wave.

One thing that I found very fascinating in understanding some of the attributes of this earthquake and the tsunamis that came is that in many places the ground was still shaking when the water hit. Keep in mind, this earthquake lasted 4½ minutes—4½ minutes where the earth is lurching and shuddering and shaking. That is a horribly long time.

The first tsunami that hit Valdez, I am told, hit just 2 minutes after the quake had begun. So imagine the terror. You have got the ground moving all around you, up and down, lurching back and forth, and 2 minutes into it, you have a tsunami at your doorstep.

The loss of life from the tsunamis did not stop at the Alaska border, though.

Four children died in Beverly Beach State Park in Oregon; 12 people died in California, mostly in the waves that destroyed Crescent City's harbor.

But we know that it could have been much worse. The death toll was low for an earthquake of this magnitude. As I mentioned, it was after work. It was on a holiday.

It occurred in an area with a small population that constructed buildings from wood, not bricks or other heavier materials. But the Good Friday Earthquake and the subsequent tsunamis that followed caused some \$3.75 billion in damage and that is in today's dollars. This is 50 years ago, so \$3.75 billion is amazing.

Also, consider this was largely done to a State that was barely 5 years old, but the impacts reached far beyond Alaska. Tsunamis also caused damage to many of our Pacific neighbors, including Canada, Washington, Oregon, California, Washington, and Hawaii.

Those tsunamis destroyed everything in their path. They destroyed houses, cars, boats, and fishing gear all along the Pacific coast. In Ocean City, WA, a bridge over the Copalis River collapsed. In Crescent City, CA, a dockside tavern was destroyed. In Hilo, HI, 12.5 foot waves overran the waterfront. Seiches, which are seismically induced water waves in rivers, lakes, bays, and harbors, caused minor damage. It wasn't extensive damage, but it caused damage along the gulf coasts of Louisiana and Texas. Think about how this massive earthquake reverberated around the world.

If we look again to the map that has the epicenter, we would think the extent would only be where the epicenter lines, the fault limits go, but in fact when we account for the tsunami effect, it truly was an amazing instance where Mother Nature came together in a massive and a violent way.

As we think about the devastation, the loss of life, the lost property, we have to ask the question whether anything good can come from a tragedy such as the Good Friday Earthquake, but I think the answer is ultimately yes. We came together, Alaskans came together in the aftermath of the quake and the tsunamis to help rebuild the worst hit communities. We rebuilt them to withstand earthquakes and in locations that are hopefully protected from the ravages of future tsunamis. We set aside parks to remember the historic earthquake and to prevent future building on landslide-prone cliffs. Out of the devastation we did gain a better understanding of what is happening below the surface in Alaska and other earthquake-prone areas.

In the 1960s we had very little information about what caused the massive shifts in the Good Friday Earthquake. There was very little understanding of the giant tectonic plates that make up the surface of the Earth and how their movement causes earthquakes. The 1964 earthquake resulted in greater seismic monitoring across the country

and has led scientists to have a far better understanding of how earthquakes occur and where they occur. We can now better protect our citizens by implementing better building codes and preparing for earthquake disaster response in earthquake-prone regions, thereby reducing the chance that another earthquake would result in so many deaths.

The tsunamis that were spawned by the Good Friday Earthquake provided scientists with a unique and important set of tsunami arrival times and heights that have been used to validate new models of tsunami propagation. These models have allowed our scientists and emergency authorities to warn coastal populations of potential tsunamis, protecting life and property.

We see these exercises and drills conducted certainly in my State, I know in Hawaii, and in our coastal communities.

The science has come a long way in the past 50 years and Alaska has too. As we mark this historic anniversary, we remember those who perished in the Good Friday Earthquake.

We salute the men and women who help protect our safety by monitoring and researching earthquakes and tsunamis, both in our State and in others. We thank the first responders who helped Alaskans in 1964, just as we thank those who are helping with the recovery in Washington today. Let us also use this occasion to consider whether we ourselves are prepared for the worst should we ever face a similar day of reckoning in the future.

To recognize this historic event, I have submitted a Senate resolution that commemorates the Great Alaska Earthquake. My colleague from Alaska, Senator BEGICH, and my colleagues from Oregon, California, and Hawaii have joined me.

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

[From Anchorage Daily News, Mar. 24, 2014]

TSUNAMIS: WARNING SYSTEMS IMPROVED SINCE GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE BUT UNLIKELY TO HELP

(By Mike Dunham)

NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center puts the total number of deaths resulting from the Great Alaska Earthquake of 1964 at 139. Fifteen of those deaths are attributed to falling buildings or crumbling ground during the quake itself.

The rest were killed by water.

Thirty-two people died when a wave 30 feet high boiled up in Port Valdez. Similar sized waves took 12 lives in Seward and 15 in Kodiak and its surrounding villages. Another dozen perished when a wall of water 40 feet high smashed into Whittier. In the Prince William Sound village of Chenega, a third of the population—23 people—was swept away by a 90-foot wave.

Smaller numbers of casualties were reported in scattered settlements across the region, from Cape St. Elias to Port Nellie Juan. One death took place at Shoup Bay on Valdez Arm, where the wave may have splashed 220 feet up the Chugach mountains.

In many places, the ground was still shaking as the water hit.

"We have this picture in our heads that first an earthquake happens, then the tsunami comes," said Mike West, State Seismologist at the Alaska Earthquake Information Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. "But in Alaska's fiords, something else happens."

In the second biggest earthquake ever recorded, that "something else" was massive.

"The entire floor of Prince William Sound failed," said Cindi Preller, Tsunami Program Manager for NOAA Alaska Region. "It was chaos."

WAVE TRAINS

There are different kinds of tsunamis and the 1964 earthquake set off a variety of them.

One was a general global splashing generated by the magnitude of the quake. The 1964 event was so strong that it made the whole world "ring like a bell," reads a U.S. Geological Survey pamphlet. Vibrations shook the planet for weeks and caused measurable sloshing as far away as Florida. Shifts in water levels were recorded in 47 states, including land-locked ones. Even in South Africa—about as far from Alaska as one can get—fluctuations in well water were noted.

One type of tsunami produced by the earthquake, seiche waves, caused no casualties, but they were violent enough to sink boats in Louisiana. Seiche action refers to standing waves in enclosed or confined water. They can be caused in different ways. Those caused by seismic disruptions can occur in places with no direct connection to bodies of water near the source of an earthquake.

Tectonic tsunamis are created directly by the shock of a fracture. They tend to come in a series of waves rather than a single surge, like the ripples formed when you plunk a rock into a calm pool and the displaced water spreads out in rings.

In the case of an undersea fracture, the displacement of the water comes from below. University of Alaska Anchorage geology professor Kristine Crossen said the sudden upthrust at one spot of Prince William Sound was so large that it took two minutes for the water to run off it.

"When the ocean bottom is moved, it sets up a wave train," said Peter Haeussler, U.S. Geological Survey research geologist.

These trains can travel thousands of miles at speeds of 500 miles an hour. In the deep water of the open ocean they seem small. But as they enter shallow water near shore, they grow slower and taller.

Current thinking is that, in 1964, tectonic waves were generated from two areas in the massive rupture, said Preller. One was near the epicenter, where the quake began, in northern Prince William Sound. The other was near Kodiak, hundreds of miles away. These waves took lives and leveled buildings from Alaska to California, often in concert with the most lethal kind of wave to emanate from the 1964 quake, landslide tsunamis.

These happen when the earthquake causes an avalanche. That's what happened in Lituya Bay in Glacier Bay National Park on July 9, 1958. Tumbling rock and ice sent up a megatsunami 1,720 feet high, the largest wave recorded in modern times.

The steep, mile-high mountains we see above ground throughout the southern coast of Alaska are mirrored by a similar submarine geography, where slopes can be further encumbered by millions of years of volcanic residue, glacial silt and other muck. A strong shake can send incalculable tons of material tumbling underwater, unseen and undetected until the displaced ocean shoots into the air.

"Those are really devilish," West said. "And they're not currently predictable."

SUDDEN DEATH

Valdez was founded during the gold rush on glacial fill and alluvial deposits surrounded by precipitous mountains. The ground at the old townsite was flat and easy to build on and ran right to the edge of a deep water port.

When the earthquake began, the delta deposits liquified. A mile of waterfront slumped into the bottom of the harbor, pushing water toward the open sea.

A home movie taken from the deck of the freighter Chena, tied to the city dock at the time of the quake, shows the 400-foot ship sinking into a giant hole in the water, the bottom of the harbor exposed. Then, with ferocious frothing, the ocean crashes back.

Those on the dock—citizens, curious children and workers—were killed in the first seconds of the quake. Amazingly, the Chena rode out the surge that carried it into the town and left it high and dry—temporarily. New waves hit, some after midnight, and floated it out to sea again.

"We think Valdez had two landslipping events," said Preller—one in Valdez Arm, the other right under the dock.

Most Valdez businesses and half of the homes in town were destroyed. Fuel tanks split open and their contents caught fire, a catastrophe that would be repeated in the ports of Whittier, Seward and Crescent City.

The fiords and coves throughout Prince William Sound, the area nearest where the quake began, experienced similar underwater landslides causing waves estimated to have splashed as much as 220 feet above sea level. Most of these places had few if any residents.

But there were people in Whittier and Seward. In those towns, as in Valdez, the narrow harbors confined by steep slopes channelized the water into a bore, amplifying the wave action like a giant bathtub.

Arriving immediately after the quake, or even while it was still rumbling, they gave residents no warning and little chance to escape. "The first tsunamis hit two minutes after the earthquake started," said Preller. The quake lasted for 4½ minutes.

The island of Chenega, southwest of Valdez, is not a dead-end inlet, like Whittier. But it is surrounded by precipitous submarine channels. "Prince William Sound is an environment where the inlets are extremely deep," said Preller. The underwater valleys had much the same effect as the above-water fiords.

The first wave rose smoothly but with astonishing speed, catching people trying to outrun it, trapping others in their homes. A second wave struck more violently, smashing every structure in the village except for the school. A third scattered whatever was left.

Survivors huddled around a fire through the night with no way to get word of their plight to the outside world.

EVACUATION

Most people in Kodiak figured the big quake was shaking only their neighborhood. The first inkling that it might be more serious came when they noticed that long distance phone service was out.

In the village of Kaguyak on the south end of Kodiak island, however, residents observed the odd swell on the ocean. They began moving away from the shore and sent radio warnings to nearby communities. Warnings picked up elsewhere on the island, alerting the people of Kodiak city 20 minutes before the first wave arrived.

The city's fire trucks ran their sirens to warn the population. Police went door to door urging evacuation and a line of cars started driving up Pillar Mountain. The town's taxi fleet used their CB radios to establish an ad hoc communications network.

The first surge came into Kodiak harbor at low tide, about half an hour after the quake. It didn't reach much past the docks and is thought to have been a landslide tsunami. "It came much sooner than we would have expected from a tectonic tsunami," said Preller. Most of the affected towns experienced both types of wave, she said.

Thirty minutes later a second wave came into the city, pushing boats into the city streets, floating cars away, wrenching buildings from their foundations and causing walls to collapse. It was not the towering breaker that swept up the Chena in Valdez or wiped out a sawmill and its workers in Whittier, but more on the lines of a large swell. "Survivors most often describe tsunamis as a rapidly rising tide," said Haeussler. "They're like a continuous rise of the ocean that never stops. Often you cannot outrun it. It just overwhelms everything in its path."

At least three more waves ripped through the town in the next few hours. It's presumed that the highest reached 26 feet above mean low tide level. But no one saw it. It came in pitch dark after midnight when most of the population had moved up the hill. Kodiak fatalities tended to come not from people on land, but from those who were in fishing boats caught in the surge.

LONG-DISTANCE KILLER

Kodiak was luckier than Crescent City, Calif. Residents there received a warning three hours after the Alaska quake began. Many evacuated before the tectonic wave came in, just before midnight. Half an hour later a second wave, lower than the first, rolled into the harbor.

"People thought that was it," said Lori Dengler, a professor of geology at Humboldt State University in Northern California. "They came back."

At 1:20 a.m., a wave swirled into the waterfront that broke the tide gauge. The fourth wave is estimated to have reached 22 feet, Dengler said. "It was terribly timed. It came just at the top of the tide."

More than 100 homes were destroyed. Eleven people died. Total damage was estimated at \$23 million.

Others died in the rising waters at Newport, Ore. and Klamath River, Calif. \$600,000 in damage was sustained by boats and harbor facilities in San Raphael, Calif.

In Hawaii, tsunamis from the Alaska earthquake caused about \$70,000 in damage. Waves in several places were as high as the one that devastated Crescent City.

But no lives were lost. When the tsunami warning sirens went off, the Hawaiians paid heed. They had learned their lesson from another Alaska earthquake 18 years before.

On April 1, 1946, an Aleutian quake with a magnitude perhaps as high as 8.1 set off a wave that wiped out the concrete, five-story high Scotch Cap Lighthouse on Unimak Island. Hours later, Hawaiians flocked to the shores to observe the peculiar super-low tide. Curious crowds gathered on the beach at Hilo. Children ran to explore the exposed sea bottom. By the time they saw the wave coming it was too late to get away; 165 people died, including six in Alaska.

As a result, a system of ocean-based alarms was established to detect tsunami activity in areas particularly prone to seismic shifts. A line of detectors follows the Alaska coast where earthquake activity is particularly high.

EARLY WARNING

The detectors do a good job of alerting populations far from where the earthquakes take place, Dengler said. She noted a tsunami that hit Crescent City following the 2011 Japan quake was within inches of what the data predicted.

"But near the source area, they're not helpful," she said.

That's because a landslide tsunami will get to shore before the warning does, if there's any warning at all.

"We cannot detect when a landslide has happened," said Preller. "If you're near the ocean when there's an earthquake, get to high ground and stay there. Don't wait for a warning. The earthquake is your warning."

Nonetheless, Dengler said, the progress in long-distance tsunami warning has come a long way since 1964. "Back then it took three hours after the quake for Crescent City to get the warning. Today it would be two or three minutes."

Preller called the Japanese tsunami warning system "the best on the planet." That country has made some intriguing progress in providing early warnings for earthquakes.

"From the moment an earthquake initiates, you usually have some period of time before the shaking reaches you," said West. "If you can nail down that earthquake immediately when it happens, there's the potential of providing several tens of seconds of warning. That's enough time to shut down transit systems or have a surgeon put down his scalpel."

West is impressed by Japan's combination of good instrumentation and a warning notification system. "It was quite successful in the 2011 earthquake," he said. He sent a link to a Youtube video that shows a computer screen just before the massive earthquake and tsunami of March 11 that year. An automated voice is counting down from 29 seconds. At the moment the countdown reaches zero, the rattling begins.

"California, Oregon and Washington are in the process of developing such systems," West said. "Gov. Jerry Brown has mandated that California will do this."

"There's a legitimate discussion to be held as to whether or not such an investment would be worth it here. But nothing like it is currently in development for Alaska."

Wednesday: Witness to destruction

Shortly after tsunamis destroyed much of Seward, school students recorded their experiences with pictures.

Tidal wave vs. tsunami

In 1964 the phrase "tidal wave" was universally used by both average Alaskans and experts quoted in the media to describe the giant waves that wrought so much death and damage. Today the preferred term for a wave generated by a solid physical force such as an earthquake, landslide or volcano is tsunami. Tidal waves refer to waves caused by extreme tidal action or wind, including tidal bores or storm surges.

Casualties

There are various numbers given for the number of deaths caused by the Great Alaska Earthquake. The most recent estimate is given by the National Geophysical Data Center as 139, 124 of which were due to tsunamis; however that database does not break down the fatalities by location. "The casualties are still under discussion," said Cindi Preller, Tsunami Program Manager, NOAA Alaska Region.

Is Anchorage in danger?

In theory, a tsunami is possible at any oceanside location. But it's considered improbable in upper Cook Inlet. "Generally speaking, tsunamis travel better through deep water," said Kristine Crossen, head of UAA's geology department. "Cook Inlet is fairly shallow. It creates a lot of friction on the base of the wave."

Ms. MURKOWSKI. 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. 400) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank you for the opportunity to speak again on this historic event to recognize those who lost lives, lost family, and those who helped to not only ensure that Alaska was able to regroup and regain but knowing we have used these lessons learned 50 years ago to help us going forward.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

Mr. LEAHY. Over the past 20 years I have spoken many times about the toll inflicted on innocent civilians and U.S. soldiers from antipersonnel landmines. I have talked about it in the Senate, in Ottawa, and in most parts of the world.

The reason I have done so is that landmines, like booby traps, are inherently indiscriminate. They are triggered by whomever comes in contact with them, whether an unsuspecting child, a farmer, a refugee, or a soldier. They are the antithesis of a precision guided weapon.

One hundred sixty-one nations, including most of our allies and friends and every European member of NATO, have signed a treaty banning them. One hundred sixty-one nations had the courage to sign that treaty.

Unfortunately, the United States is conspicuously not among them.

In 1994, 20 years ago, in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, President Bill Clinton called for the elimination of antipersonnel landmines.

Two years later, in 1996, President Clinton said: "Today I am launching an international effort to ban antipersonnel landmines."

President Clinton went on to announce a U.S. plan to develop alternatives to landmines, with the goal that the United States would end its use of antipersonnel landmines by 2006.

We had a meeting in Ottawa where nations came together and Canada's Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, called for an antipersonnel landmine treaty. But in 1997 the United States missed an opportunity to be a leader in the international effort to ban antipersonnel mines, when it failed to sign the Mine Ban Treaty.

The year 2006 came and went. President Clinton's administration ended and President George W. Bush served for 8 years. President Obama was then elected and then reelected. In the meantime, U.S. troops fought two long ground wars. They fought those wars without using antipersonnel landmines.

In 2010, along with 67 other Senators, Democrats and Republicans, I sent a letter to President Obama. We commended him for agreeing to review the U.S. Government's policy on anti-personnel mines, and we urged him to conform U.S. policy to the Mine Ban Treaty as a first step. That was 5 years ago. Five years since the start of that review we are still waiting for the results.

After 20 years and three U.S. Presidents, there is no evidence the United States is any closer to joining the treaty than when President Clinton made that speech.

I find it disheartening as an American to think that my country is unwilling to stand with these 161 other countries, many of which real threats, and yet we will not join them.

The Pentagon has long argued that landmines are needed to defend South Korea. In 1996, then-Secretary of Defense William Perry said the Pentagon would "move vigorously" to achieve alternative ways to prevent a North Korean attack so they would no longer need landmines.

In the last century, in 1996, they pledged to vigorously. I don't know what their definition of "vigorous" is, but after 20 years there is no evidence they have done anything to revise their Korea war plans without antipersonnel mines or that any President has told them to do so.

One could ask what difference it would make if the United States joins the Mine Ban Treaty. As I said, we have not used antipersonnel mines for 23 years. The United States has done more to support humanitarian demining than any other country in the world. We have not exported antipersonnel mines since the Leahy law was passed in 1992, and we have spent many tens of millions of dollars through the Leahy War Victims Fund to aid those injured by mines.

If we are not causing the problem, why bother signing the treaty? Because antipersonnel mines continue to kill and cripple innocent people and because indiscriminate, victim-activated weapons have no place in the arsenal of a civilized country.

Countries as diverse as Afghanistan and Great Britain have signed it.

The United States has by far the most powerful military in the world, and this treaty needs the strong leadership of the United States.

As President Obama said in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize:

I am convinced that adhering to standards, international standards, strengthens those who do, and isolates and weakens those who don't.

Twenty years after President Clinton's U.N. speech, President Obama can give real meaning to his words by putting the United States on the path to join the treaty. That means destroying what remains of our stockpile of mines. We are never going to use them. Get rid of them. It means revising our

Korea war plans to eliminate anti-personnel mines.

President Obama is the only one who could make that happen. Time is running out.

Let me tell a story. During the ill-fated contra war, during the time of the Reagan administration, I was visiting one of the contra camps along the Nicaragua-Honduras border. As I looked from a helicopter, I saw a clearing inside Nicaragua where there was a field hospital. So we decided to land. I talked to the doctors who were treating victims. There was a little boy, about 10 or 12 years old, who came out, and he had a makeshift crutch. He had one leg.

He came from a family who survived from what they could hunt and gather in the jungle along the border. We talked to him, and it turned out he had lost his leg by stepping on an antipersonnel mine—mines that were not going to stop any army, they were just there to terrorize and injure civilians.

This is not a picture of that little boy, but this is an example of what happens. I asked the boy which side put this mine there. He had only a vague knowledge of what the two countries were, that there was a border there. All he knew was that his life was changed forever. He would not be able to earn a living as his parents and grandparents and others had. He had a place to stay only because the doctors had put a pile of rags and sheets in the corner on the dirt floor where other people were recovering from their war wounds.

I became more and more interested in the horrifying toll of landmines around the world, and I met other innocent victims like this young girl her legs and a hand missing. I think of those in conflicts especially children—who saw what they thought was a pretty and shiny toy on the side of the road, and they touched it only to have their limbs blown off or their eyesight lost.

I think of the teenage girl I met in an area where there was a war. I met her at a hospital where she was getting artificial legs through the Leahy War Victims Fund. Her parents had sent her away during the war, where she would be safe. The war ended and she was walking home and saw her parents and started running toward them, and in a flash a landmine explodes and she both her legs were blown off.

After World War I, countries came together to ban poison gas. We had international negotiations to do that. The Pentagon was against it, arguing that they might need to use poison gas sometime. We get the same reaction today about antipersonnel landmines: we might need them some day.

This photograph show one of the places supported by the Leahy War Victims Fund—where they make artificial legs. If any one of the Senators in this body were to lose a leg, our insurance would buy us a high-tech leg to replace it or we might be told: You can have an even better one but it will cost

\$500 or \$1,000 more than your insurance will pay. We would all take out our checkbook and pay it. Here, we are talking about countries in which the per capita income is maybe \$300 or \$400 a year.

Signing a landmine treaty is not going to by itself stop everything. There are millions of mines still littering countries where the wars ended decades ago.

As I said earlier, the United States, to its credit, has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to clear mines and to help people who have been injured. But why shouldn't the United States of America—the country that should be the moral leader—why shouldn't we step up and sign the treaty? How do we credibly tell others not to use them, when they say: Yes, but you never signed the treaty. You have reserved the right to use them. You are the most powerful Nation on Earth; we are not.

Why shouldn't we?

I am proud of the Leahy War Victims Fund, but I would give anything to think there was no need for it. Maybe that day will come.

I tell President Obama: Time is running out. You know what you should do.

I think if he talked to President Clinton, he would find that President Clinton wishes he had signed it. Let's sign it now. Do that. That can be part of his legacy.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GREAT ALASKAN EARTHQUAKE

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I rise today to remember the Great Alaskan Earthquake, which struck 50 years ago today on Good Friday, March 27, 1964. Over 100 Alaskans died in the earthquake and the resulting tsunami. Entire coastal towns were literally wiped off the map.

I was very young—only 2 years old—but I remember my family telling stories as I was growing up and showing pictures. In those days it was not like we see today—pictures on a computer—because there was none of that existing. I remember in our family of six we always had slideshow night. We had these little slides my mother would put in this carousel, and off it would go and we would be reminded of all the vacations and things we went on, but we would also see these slides about what happened in the earthquake in 1964.

We were lucky. We lived in East Anchorage in half of a small apartment complex, and the only things that broke in our house were these three swinging lights that went back and forth because our house was built on

gravel soil and was very strong and sturdy, in many ways, in its development. But when you look back at the houses on Third Avenue that literally disappeared or Fourth Avenue that collapsed downtown, it was a different story, or around Turnagain, the community out in West Anchorage, that literally fell off and sank.

Today I am honored to join my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI—who I know was on the floor earlier—in cosponsoring a resolution marking the tragic yet important event in our history and thanking those who helped us survive and recover. In those days we had limited access anyway, but when there was an earthquake, especially in a small town or community, the first responders sometimes couldn't get there because of the uniqueness of the situation from the earthquake. But every Alaskan, every first responder, everybody who was available got down to the business of doing everything they could to help people in need. We were coming out of a winter—still cold and yet spring, what we would call a spring winter day.

Alaskans know the importance of tsunami preparedness and warnings and making sure we are prepared for what can happen. Today we are proud to host NOAA's National Tsunami Warning Center in Palmer, AK. I have been there, and it is the most amazing technology, to see what we can do and what we can see or sense through the sensors and other scientific equipment we have to tell us when a tsunami may be occurring or the magnitude of the tsunami. We monitor on a 24-hour basis with scientists.

The tsunami's impact was felt, from our earthquake, as far away as Hawaii, California, and Washington. That is why today I join Senator CANTWELL and Senator SCHATZ in introducing the Tsunami Warning and Educational Reauthorization Act for 2014. This bill would improve NOAA's Tsunami Warning Center, bringing supercomputing power to the tsunami modeling. It would ensure that all coastal weather forecast offices are better prepared to issue tsunami warnings.

The bill also ensures that coastal communities will be more tsunami-resilient through the National Tsunami Hazardous Mitigation Program. It ensures that communities understand tsunami risks, planning to minimize damages, and are ready to bounce back quickly after the damage occurs.

The bill also recognizes the critical role that advancing our understanding and technology through scientific research plays in meeting the tsunami threat.

This bill was originally envisioned by the late Senator Inouye. I have been proud to pick up where he was unable to continue on an issue I know is critical in his home State.

Fifty years ago Alaska was a young State with a bright but uncertain future. We still had foreign fishing vessels coming in and taking our fish just

a few miles off the coast. The trans-Alaska oil pipeline and the energy it delivers was just a dream. After the damage from the quake and tsunami, there were serious questions from outside whether Alaska could survive. Keep in mind that this was only a few years after becoming a State. But Alaskans already knew the answer. They knew we would rebuild and become stronger, and we have. Alaska is now the Nation's Arctic energy storehouse and feeds the Nation with sustainable seafood stocks. I know the Presiding Officer understands the value of fisheries and that they are an incredible element of our food inventory and storage for our country. Alaska is a State that is important in this regard, as is the State of Massachusetts.

But we must still be very vigilant against the threat of earthquakes and tsunamis. That is why I introduced this bill, joining again with Senators CANTWELL and SCHATZ in this endeavor. We encourage its swift passage, as it is important to make sure, when it comes to these issues, that no matter where one lives, safety is protected because the devastation is incredible.

Let me end on another personal note. When I think of growing up in Alaska—someone born and raised there—and living in East Anchorage, I can still remember growing up and my dad thinking about where he bought land to build this house, and this apartment building was on incredible soil. But years later, when I became mayor of Anchorage and sat on the city assembly, I remember the great debate on building codes and earthquake capacity and stability and making sure buildings were designed right.

I remember the Federal building, which is now city hall—and I was on the Anchorage Assembly then—and the great debate came up as to whether we were going to renovate or move or something else in regard to the location. But we decided we wanted to stay downtown to keep downtown vibrant. Well, the building was built during a time when it would probably not withstand an earthquake of the magnitude that occurred in the 1964 earthquake.

I remember when we vacated the building and they stripped the building down and left the shell. I walked in to take a tour of the building with the developer. He was showing me what he called the shock absorbers—these incredible columns within the building that, if an earthquake hit, not only would they try to absorb it, they would help the building move up or side to side, absorbing the impact of the earthquake and preserving the building, ensuring that the investment and lives would be saved. To me, it was the most amazing thing because in the old days—as I said, when I grew up—we just put the buildings together, slapped them up, and thanked God we had a home to live in during a cold winter. So the technology has advanced significantly so as to ensure safety in an area that is clearly an earthquake zone.

It is not uncommon for me to be back home and be at a meeting in a hotel or giving a speech in a ballroom or sitting in a home with someone and having a conversation and an earthquake kind of comes through. It is always amazing to me that if I am there with visitors from out of town, they get a little nervous. But as Alaskans, we know we have improved our building codes, we have improved our warning systems, and we have continued to make sure we can minimize or mitigate the damage from those natural disasters that could occur. Again, this bill reauthorization on tsunamis focuses on that. We saw a whole city or town washed off the map—gone—because of the power of a tsunami.

So today I appreciate and remember the history of Alaska and the uniqueness of being there during times of growth and also times of tragedy, but today being part of legislation which in an odd way comes full circle: As a 2-year-old experiencing an earthquake, to where I am today, being able to ensure that not only my State but any coastal State has the capacity to ensure a tsunami warning system is not only the best but the best in the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

WEALTH DISTRIBUTION

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, as the longest serving Independent in the history of the U.S. Congress, I wish to address an issue which I believe does not get the kind of discussion it should from either political party but certainly not from our Republican colleagues—the moral, economic, and political dimensions of the kind of income and wealth inequality which we have in our country today. In my view, this is the most important issue facing the United States because it impacts on virtually every aspect of our lives. It is an issue we must be discussing thoroughly and one in which the American people have to be engaged.

The fact is that while we often speak of the United States of America being the wealthiest Nation on the face of the Earth, that is only partially true, because within the context of total wealth is the reality that the great middle class of this country is disappearing. The reality is we have more people living in poverty today than at any time in the history of the United States of America. The fact is we have by far the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major industrialized nation on Earth. So if we add it all together, yes, we are the wealthiest Nation on Earth, but the reality is the people on top own a huge amount of this wealth while the middle class is shrinking and poverty is increasing.

I will speak to our colleagues and the American people about some of the realities in terms of income and wealth distribution.

Today the top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the financial wealth of America. I wonder how many Americans

know how much the bottom 60 percent owns. I want people to think about it. The top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the financial wealth, and the bottom 60 percent owns 2.3 percent. One family in this country—the Walton family, the owners of Walmart—are now worth as a family \$148 billion. This is more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of American society. Today the richest 400 Americans own more wealth than the bottom half of America, 150 million people. This is distribution of wealth—what we own.

The latest information we have in terms of distribution of income is from 2009 through 2012, which says that 95 percent of all new income earned in this country went to the top 1 percent. When we talk about economic growth—2 percent or 4 percent, whatever it is—it doesn't mean much, because almost all of the new income generated in this growth has gone to the very wealthiest people in this country. The top 25 hedge fund managers made last year over \$24 billion. This is enough to pay the salaries of more than 425,000 public schoolteachers. Over the past decade, the net worth of the top 400 billionaires in this country has doubled by an astronomical \$1 trillion in the last 10 years.

In a moment I will discuss the extraordinary political power of the Koch brothers, a family investing very heavily in the political process, spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars to elect rightwing candidates who will protect the interests of the wealthy and the powerful.

To give some idea of what is going on in this economy, everybody should understand that Charles and David Koch—the Koch brothers—are the second wealthiest family in this country. In the last year alone, this one family saw a \$12 billion increase in their wealth, bringing their total wealth to \$80 billion.

The other day in the Washington Post there was an article talking about the Adelson primary. When we talk about a political primary, what it means is we have candidates in the Democratic Party and the Republican Party competing against each other to get the support of the people in their respective parties. Well, forget about that. That is old news. Now the goal is to appeal to one multibillionaire so this individual can contribute hundreds of millions of dollars into the campaign. This is what is going on right now in the Republican Party.

While the wealthiest are doing phenomenally well, while the United States today has the most unequal distribution of wealth and income of any major country on Earth, and while that income inequality is worse today than at any time since 1928, what we are also seeing is the collapse of the middle class and an increase in poverty.

Since 1999, the typical middle-class family has seen its income go down by more than \$5,000 after adjusting for inflation. The typical middle-class Amer-

ican family earned less income last year than it did 25 years ago, back in 1989. The Presiding Officer is probably the last person in the world I have to explain this to, having written several books on this subject.

Why are people angry in this country? The median male worker in this country made \$283 less last year than he did 44 years ago, and the typical female worker earned \$1,700 less than in 2007.

The question I think every American should be asking is: How does it happen, when we have a huge increase in productivity—everybody has a cell phone, everybody has a sophisticated computer, we have robotics in all of our factories, we have a huge increase in productivity—where is all of the wealth going which increased productivity has created? The answer is pretty clear: It has gone to the top 1 percent.

So the moral issue we have to address as a nation is: Are we comfortable as a nation in which in recent years we have seen a huge increase in the number of millionaires and billionaires, while at the same time we have more people living in poverty than we have ever had before?

This is an incredible fact: As an aging nation with more and more people reaching retirement, half of the American people have less than \$10,000 in their savings accounts and in many ways have no idea how they are going to retire with dignity. So the first issue we have to deal with is a moral issue. Are we comfortable living in a nation when so few have so much while so many have so little, and so many of our brothers and sisters—our fellow Americans—are struggling economically every single day?

Today we are addressing the issue of extending long-term unemployment benefits. There are millions of workers right now, including people who have worked their entire lives and who no longer can find a job. They have virtually no income coming in and are struggling to survive. Single moms are trying to raise families with very limited income. Is this the nation we are comfortable being?

I don't think we are. But it is not just an issue of individual income. Today, corporate profits are at an all-time high while wages are near an all-time low.

Then when we look at issues about how can we fund early childhood education, how can we make sure every American has health care as a right—how do we make sure that when people lose their jobs they are going to get the unemployment they need, we should remember that every single year corporations—large, multinational corporations—avoid paying at least \$100 billion a year in taxes because they stash their cash in the Cayman Islands and other offshore tax havens. The result is one out of four American corporations pays nothing in Federal income taxes. In fact, over the last 5

years, huge companies, profitable companies, such as General Electric, Boeing, and Verizon, pay nothing—zero—in Federal income tax, even though all of those companies have made a combined profit of \$78 billion since 2008.

Here is the irony of all ironies. It is one thing to understand that the very wealthy are becoming wealthier while everybody else is becoming poorer, but it is another thing to understand that the people who have the money, the billionaire class, are going to war against working Americans. If one has \$80 billion, do they really need to invest in the political process so they can elect candidates who will give even more tax breaks? Do they really need to invest in rightwing candidates who are out there trying to cut Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Environmental Protection Agency, nutrition, food stamps, and education? Why, if somebody has \$80 billion, are they working so hard for more tax breaks for themselves and for more cuts to the middle class and working class in terms of programs people desperately need?

Frankly, I think this is not an economic issue. I think it is a psychiatric issue. I think it is an issue which suggests people are simply power hungry. They need more and more. I think this is a very sad state of affairs.

The struggle we are engaged in now is stopping the billionaire class from cutting Social Security, from cutting Medicare, from cutting Medicaid, and from preventing us from creating the millions of jobs our economy desperately needs. But at the end of the day, what we are really talking about is whether this Nation is going to become an oligarchic form of society, and what that means, what an oligarchic form of society is about and which has existed in many countries throughout the world, historically—in many countries in Latin America, although that has recently changed—is a nation in which both the economics and politics of the nation are controlled by a handful of very wealthy, billionaire families. It doesn't matter what party is in power because the real power economically and politically rests with a billionaire class. It clearly seems that unless we act boldly to reverse this trend, we are seeing this country moving in exactly that direction.

One of the reasons is as a result of the disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court ruling, which regards corporations as people and allows the super-wealthy to spend as much as they want on elections. The billionaire party, which is obviously aligned with the Republicans, is now, in fact, the major political force in this country. It is not the Republican party, per se. It is not the Democratic party, per se. It is the billionaire party led by people like the Koch brothers and Sheldon Adelson. They are the dominant political force in this country because they can spend unbelievable sums of money on elections. They can spend as much money

as they need, setting up think tanks and various organizations which will support their extreme rightwing point of view.

In the last presidential election Barack Obama's campaign spent a little bit over \$1 billion. Mitt Romney spent somewhere around there, maybe a little bit less, but about \$1 billion. The Koch brothers' wealth increased by \$12 billion in one year.

Is there any reason to doubt that in the future this one family will be able to spend more money on a campaign than the presidential candidates themselves, receiving donations from hundreds of thousands of people? That is where we are today. Where we are today is that the very foundations of American democracy are being threatened by a handful of incredibly wealthy people who are saying: You know what. Eighty billion is not enough for me. Yeah, I made \$12 billion more than last year—not enough for me. I have to have more, and I am going to get more tax cuts for myself, and in order to do that we may have to cut Social Security; we may have to cut Medicare; we may have to cut Medicaid; we may have to cut education for middle-class families.

We are in a debate about whether we raise the minimum wage. My view—and I know the Presiding Officer's view—is that we should raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour so that every working person in this country at least—at least—can have a minimal—minimal—standard of living. Many Americans don't know that it is not just that virtually all Republicans in the Congress are opposed to raising the minimum wage. The truth is many of them want to abolish the concept of the minimum wage.

The theory of the minimum wage is that nobody should work for below a certain wage. For many of my extreme conservative friends, they think it would be perfectly fine in a high unemployment area if we abolish the minimum wage. People today are working in this country for \$3 and \$4 an hour.

It is not only economics. Many of these billionaires are involved, as the Koch brothers are, in energy, in oil. What they want to do is abolish agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency so they can pollute more and more and more. The scientific community tells us in an almost unanimous fashion that climate change is real, climate change is made by human activity, climate change is already creating problems in our country and around the world, and that if we don't get our act together and significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions, the problems will only become worse. Yet you have families such as the Koch brothers and other energy-related billionaires spending huge sums of money trying to confuse people about the reality of climate change.

So to my mind the issue that we have to focus on as a Congress, the issue that we have to focus on as American

people is: What kind of nation do we wish to live in? Do we want to live in a nation where a handful of billionaires own a significant amount of the wealth in this country while the middle class has less and less, where families cannot afford to send their kids to college or get decent childcare for their little ones, where people are reaching the age of 65 with virtually nothing in the bank in order to provide a dignified retirement? Is that the country we want to live in or do we want to see the middle class grow and have a more equitable distribution of wealth and income, a fairer tax system where the millionaires and billionaires and large corporations start paying their fair share of taxes.

From a political point of view, which is equally important: Do we want to have a nation in which the concept is one person, one vote; that we are all equal; that you have as much say about what happens in government as anybody else or do we want to have a political system where a handful of billionaires can sit around the room and say: OK, put \$100 million into that State. Let's put \$50 million into that State—where a handful of billionaires will determine who gets elected President, who gets elected Senator, who gets elected Governor, and have Members of Congress crawling up to these billionaires: What do you need, Mr. Billionaire? How do I get the hundreds of millions of dollars you can give me?

Is that really what American democracy is supposed to be about?

We have some very fundamental issues we have to address as a Congress. So I would suggest that we put on the agenda the issue of distribution of wealth and income and the implication of that grossly unfair distribution of wealth and income that we have right now.

With that, Mr. President, I would yield the floor, and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BOSTON'S LOST HEROES

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, this is a difficult day for the city of Boston. Yesterday Boston lost two courageous firefighters who gave up their lives battling a terrible fire in the city's Back Bay.

When others flee, our firefighters rush headlong into danger, concerned only for the safety of others. They put their lives on the line every time. Today we mourn the loss of two brave men, two heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Lieutenant Ed Walsh and firefighter Mike Kennedy were highly respected and committed members of the Boston Fire Department who dedicated their

lives to keeping our families safe. Firefighter Kennedy of Ladder Company 15 on Boylston Street was a member of the Boston Fire Department for 6½ years. He grew up in Roslindale, served our country as a U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran in Iraq, and was a first responder to the Boston Marathon attacks last year. He wanted to run in this year's marathon, so to be admitted he wrote an essay about his experiences responding to the marathon bombing. He had been at training for the big day, but he won't be running this year.

Lieutenant Walsh served on Engine 33, also based at the Boylston Street Fire Station. He was a firefighter in Boston for 9½ years and lived in West Roxbury with his wife Kristen and their three young kids. Lieutenant Walsh came from a firefighting family and followed in the footsteps of his father and his uncle, both of whom served on the Watertown Fire Department. He will be missed.

I know I speak on behalf of the city of Boston and the people of Boston when I say that all our thoughts and prayers are with Lieutenant Walsh's and Firefighter Kennedy's families at this very difficult time. Boston is deeply grateful to Lieutenant Walsh and to Firefighter Kennedy, and to all our policemen, firefighters, and first responders who put their lives at risk to protect our families every single day, and to all of our firefighter families who face the risk that a loved one will rush into a burning building and give up everything to keep all of us safe.

Thank you, Mr. President. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, every day firefighters and other first responders around our country put their lives on the line to protect the public. Yesterday members of the Boston Fire Department bravely entered a burning building in Boston's Back Bay in a selfless effort to save lives and keep the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts safe.

Firefighters head toward the danger as ordinary citizens run away from danger. They are a very special breed, these firefighters. It is with a very heavy heart that I come to the floor today, along with Senator WARREN, to honor two of these courageous men, Lieutenant Edward Walsh and firefighter Michael Kennedy, who became caught in the fire and heroically sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Thirteen other firefighters were injured in the blaze and are expected to survive.

Firefighter Michael Kennedy was 33 years old. A native of the Roslindale

section of Boston, he lived in Hyde Park and had been with the Boston Fire Department for the past 6 years. A former marine, Michael was among the first responders who nobly and bravely served those injured in the Boston Marathon bombing almost 1 year ago.

Lieutenant Edward Walsh was 43 years old. He lived in West Roxbury with his wife and three children. Lieutenant Walsh came from a firefighting family. Both his father and uncle were fire lieutenants in nearby Watertown. He had been with the Boston Fire Department for 9½ years and was stationed at Engine 33, Ladder 15, just blocks from the building where the fire occurred.

Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy are American heroes. Their memories will live on forever as everlasting examples of the extraordinary courage and dedication that is at the very heart of the Boston Fire Department and in the hearts of firefighters everywhere. Boston is strong because of heroes such as Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy who place the safety of others before themselves.

In this nine-alarm fire, there were zero civilian casualties. These two brave men put their lives on the line so that others may go on living. I offer my condolences to the families of Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy and to the Boston Fire Department. Massachusetts has lost two of its finest sons, and I grieve along with the rest of the Commonwealth, along with Senator WARREN, and along with everyone else for the loss that has been suffered.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, George Holland was a pretty exceptional kid. When he was 14 years old, he went through something that I do not think any of us can even imagine what it is like to go through. His parents got into a heated argument. They were estranged at the time. It became so violent that it culminated in his mother fatally stabbing his father. He was 14 years old, and he lost his dad and then saw his mother get sent away to prison.

He then went to live with his aunt. His aunt attests to the fact that even in those dark days, he was full of a positive attitude. He refused to dwell on the murder, to use it as a crutch. He excelled.

His friends said his smile was infectious. He was always hugging everybody.

He played center on the high school football team in Providence, RI, which

is where he is from. His coach says that he was a great team player, he was a leader, and he was always looking to take the younger kids under his wing. His coach said, "He was just a great kid."

Well, 3 years after his mother killed his father, George Holland died as well. A gunman targeted his house on February 4 of this year—a house he was visiting. He was with his girlfriend and her family when someone shot into the house around 9 p.m. A bullet went through the kitchen window and struck George, who collapsed and later died at Rhode Island Hospital. He was 17 years old.

Steve Finkbeiner and his wife Constance were beloved in their town of LaPlace, LA. They owned a feedstore that was at the end of a quiet road. They had owned it for 28 years. The community all looked upon the Finkbeiners as family. Everybody had some reason to go into that feedstore every now and again. Constance and Steve treated their customers as if they were members of their own immediate family.

One friend said exactly that: They were like family. They were just like family.

Others remembered Steve as a hard-working man and a community member.

It was just after 2:30 p.m. on February 25—just a few weeks ago—when deputies received a call from the feed and supply store. A woman said she and her husband had just been shot during an armed robbery. Constance survived the attack but was critically injured. Her husband Steve died. What happened was two robbers initially went into the store inquiring about shots for a pet. They left briefly only to return to rob the place and shoot the couple who owned the store.

Ruthanne Lodato lived just over the border in Alexandria, VA. She was a music teacher, 59 years old. She was as involved as one can be in the community. She was a loving wife to her husband and the mother of three daughters. She was planning her class's 40th reunion. She was remembered fondly as a music teacher who would hold up her hand to cue the group to sing her school's alma mater. She was the glue that held her family and friends together. That is how she was described.

There were 300 mourners at her funeral. On February 6 of this year—again, just over a month ago—she was shot after she opened the door to her suburban home for what was described as a balding, bearded man in a tan jacket, who shot her dead.

Ricky Roberts was a very exceptional guy. He lived out in Sonora, CA. He was a demolition derby driver, and he used his garage to construct demolition derby cars. That is what he loved to do. He loved it so much that when he got married to his wife Teddi, they were married on top of a derby car, probably one that he had made, in July of 1990. They were married on top one

of his derby cars at the town's Mother Lode Fairgrounds.

What he also loved was volunteering for his community. Ricky was a long-time Sonora police volunteer and a member of the Christian Heights Church. He volunteered hours and hours every week as one of the citizen police officers, and he was very involved with the Police Explorers, helping to train and organize some of the kids who were involved in the Police Explorers Program.

He was a very positive person. His mom said that he made people feel good about themselves and that he had a great rapport with people. He had a great sense of humor and he had the ability to laugh at himself.

On February 16 of this year, Ricky was found at 11 a.m. bleeding in his garage—the garage where he built demolition derby cars—from an apparent gunshot. He was pronounced dead at the scene. He was the first homicide victim in Sonora, CA, in nearly 13 years.

The numbers are pretty stunning: 31,000 people every year die from gun violence; 2,600 people die every month, and 86 people die every day.

There is no other country in the industrialized world that has numbers that come anywhere close to approximating these catastrophic totals.

What I have tried to do is come down to the floor every week to tell the story of the voices of these victims to let my friends know that these are real people with real families who are getting killed at a rate of 86 per day all across the country. We can talk about these statistics, but apparently the statistics haven't moved Congress and the Senate to action. Maybe the voices of those 86 people a day will—even after they leave this place.

The carnage and the wreckage that is left behind is nearly incalculable. Surveys have been done of what it is like to live in cities with a high incidence of gun violence. They show that the rates of PTSD among the kids who have to live every day with the fear of being shot or with the knowledge that they are pretty sure that in that year a friend, a neighbor or a relative will be killed. They rival the rates of PTSD of our returning soldiers. These cities are like war zones.

The tragedy of all of this is that we are not powerless to do something about it. We have the ability to change laws, to modify laws, in order to reduce the rates of gun violence all across this country.

I close by drawing attention to the evidence. Johns Hopkins recently did a new study of a Missouri law that for years had required background checks before people bought guns and licenses for all handgun owners.

In 2007, Missouri repealed that law. Johns Hopkins, one of the best research universities in the country, did an exhaustive study of rates of gun violence before that law was passed and the rates of gun violence afterwards.

They controlled for every factor other than this law that was repealed. They looked at whether rates of gun violence were increasing in only certain counties. They compared it to rates of gun violence in nearby States, and they looked at all of the other factors that could go into an explanation other than the repeal of the law when trying to figure out why rates of gun violence were increasing.

What they found was very simple. They found that even when we control for all of the other factors, the repeal of the background checks law in Missouri led to a 23-percent spike in firearm homicide rates. That is an additional 55 to 63 murders every year from 2008 to 2012.

There were 60 additional people killed in one State alone because that State had chosen to allow criminals to own guns. When we repeal a background check law, we essentially are allowing criminals to go into places where guns are sold, purchase them, and then either use them themselves or sell them in the black market to people who will do the kind of destruction that leads to 31,000 people dying every year.

My colleagues, we have the ability to change this situation. I try to make this point every time I come to the floor to talk about the voices of victims. I understand that we are not going to bring these numbers to zero by passing a commonsense background checks bill or by investing more money into our mental health system or by trying to do something, even if it is in a nonlegislative way, to address the culture of violence in our society. There is always going to be gun violence.

We can do something. We can lower these numbers. We can lessen the damage, the trauma, and the carnage all across our country, all across the States that we represent.

Think about a kid like George Holland, who had overcome so much, the death of one of his parents and the imprisonment of the other, to become an immensely compassionate 17-year-old. Who knew. Who knows what he was going to accomplish.

We will never get to understand the good that George Holland could have done in this world because, at age 17 on February 4 of this year, he was gunned down in his girlfriend's home.

Hopefully, whether it is the data or the voices of victims, the Senate will figure out that we can do something to change that reality.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with

respect to the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979 be modified so that when the postcloture time is expired the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion to proceed to the bill.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4302

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Monday, March 31, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4302, which was received from the House and is at the desk; that there be no amendments or motions in order to the bill with the exception of budget points of order and the applicable motions to waive; that the time until 5 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees for debate on the bill; that notwithstanding the previous order, following the vote on confirmation of the Owens nomination on Monday, March 31, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 4302, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill; that the bill be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; finally, that upon disposition of H.R. 4302, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979, as provided under the previous order.

Madam President, I want everyone to understand there will be at least 3 hours of debate on H.R. 4302, and I want to make sure everyone understands I will be giving Senator WYDEN the 1½ hours on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the request is agreed to.

SGR

Mr. REID. Madam President, before Chairman BAUCUS became Ambassador to China, the Finance Committee, under his auspices, negotiated a bipartisan, bicameral bill with the House to repeal the flawed Medicare physician payment system. He worked on that for more than a year. But the committees didn't come to an agreement on the really hard part—how to pay for it.

Senator WYDEN, the new chairman of the Finance Committee, has come up with a way to pay for it. I support repealing the payment system—the SGR—permanently. I have been in favor of that for a long time, and I appreciate the work done on that in the past period of time Senator WYDEN has been chairman of that committee. I repeat, the work done on it for a year didn't have a way to pay for it. So I support repealing this permanently. I believe we should repeal it without pay-fors or by using reductions in the overseas contingency fund, called OCO.

The deadline is here. I spoke on the floor this morning, and I say it again. Everyone is saying, Well, why are you helping the doctors? Madam President, I am helping my Medicare recipients in Nevada. They need physicians. And for us to play around with this bill, as we do continually, isn't fair to the patients. Because doctors are unhappy that they do not have some degree of certainty, and that is what they need. So that is why I am for getting rid of this totally. We don't have that now.

The House passed a short time ago a patch of 12 or 13 months, which is good. So efforts will continue on the permanent repeal of the SGR, and I support Senator WYDEN seeing what he can do to come up with some votes for a permanent repeal. He served a long time in the House and a long time in the Senate and he knows what he is doing. So let us hope he gets enough votes. Until then, we are left with a patch.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING ED MUSKIE

Mr. KING. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to memorialize one of the great residents, citizens, denizens of this body—Senator Edmund Sixtus Muskie of Maine—who tomorrow, March 28, 2014, would have been 100 years old.

I knew Ed Muskie—not well, but I knew him. I knew him working here as a staff member. We were very scared of him. He was a presence. He was a force. He was indeed a great man. He is the classic American story—a classic American story we need to remind ourselves of.

He was the son of a Polish immigrant tailor in a small town called Rumford on the Androscoggin River in western Maine. He rose to become a great U.S. Senator, Secretary of State, candidate for President, candidate on the ballot for Vice President of the United States, and one of the great citizens of Maine and the country of the 20th century. Ed Muskie rose by his own merits.

I am convinced that the secret sauce of America is the welcoming of people from all over the world who come here to bring their talents and allowing them to express themselves fully and freely in the wonderful rich soil of this great country.

Ed Muskie went to school on a scholarship at a small college in Maine, Bates College, where the Muskie Archives currently reside. Then he went on to Cornell Law School through the generosity of individuals and scholarships because he had no resources of his own. He was in World War II and then came back to practice law in the small town of Waterville in Central Maine.

In 1954 Ed Muskie literally invented the Democratic Party in Maine. I don't believe there had been a major Democratic officeholder in Maine for some 50 years. I think perhaps there were a few in the 1920s and 1930s, but the State was completely dominated by the Republican Party all through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

When Ed Muskie ran for Governor in 1954, it was the longest of long shots. In fact, the story in Maine was that, of course, in the 1936 election, when

Franklin D. Roosevelt ran against Alf Landon, Roosevelt carried every State in the Union except two—Maine and Vermont. Hence the famous saying: As goes Maine, so goes Vermont.

The story goes that on the coast of Maine, in a small Republican town of several hundred people, the clerk announced the vote.

At the end of the tally, she said: Landon 47, Roosevelt 2.

Someone mumbled: The SOB voted twice.

That was the way the Republican Party dominated the State—until Ed Muskie in 1954. He drove from one end of the State to the other with friends, stayed on friends' living room couches—nothing fancy. The idea of a political ad on television in those days was to show up at the TV station at the appointed hour, and as the clock ticked to 8 you would look into the camera, give your statement for 30 seconds, and then you were off to the next campaign stop.

As the campaign went on in 1954, something happened in Maine: An excitement built—a buzz, I guess we would say today. Ed Muskie—indeed, to everyone's shock and surprise—was elected Governor in that year. In those days, the Maine Governor's term was 2 years. He was reelected in 1956—a very successful Governor—and then was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1958.

There is a wonderful story about when Muskie first came to the Senate. Lyndon Johnson, of course, was the dynamic, I would say all-powerful majority leader of the Senate at the time. The story is that Johnson took Muskie aside and said: Now, Ed, when somebody comes and asks you for your vote, you just tell them you haven't made up your mind yet. Your vote is the most valuable thing you have in the U.S. Senate, and keep it to yourself. And if they press you, just say, "Senator, they haven't gotten to the M's yet. When they do, you will know how I am going to vote."

This was Johnson's advice to the freshman Senator from Maine.

A few weeks later, apparently there was some kind of procedural vote on the floor, and Johnson wanted to line up his votes in his Democratic caucus.

He went to Ed Muskie and said: Ed, can I count on your support?

Allegedly, Muskie replied: Senator, they haven't gotten to the M's yet.

The result was that Muskie was exiled to the Public Works Committee—at the time one of the least desirable of committee assignments. Of course, now it is the Environment & Public Works Committee and one of the most important and prestigious of our committees. But at the time it was the same as being sent to the outer limits by the majority leader, who didn't like this smart aleck from Maine.

But I think this story has an important and instructive ending because Ed Muskie, with his Maine work ethic, his common sense, and his intuition and insight, used the Public Works Com-

mittee to invent environmental law in America.

In 1970, 12 years later, the passage of the Clean Air Act was the first major passage of an environmental piece of legislation in American history. There had been a few small things here and there, but most States had very little in the way of environmental regulation and certainly there was no national regulation. But the amazing thing, the astonishing thing about the passage of the Clean Air Act—and it was a very important piece of legislation. It was very significant. It affected every business in the country. It affected the automobile industry. It affected the paper and manufacturing industry. It was a tremendously important piece of legislation and very controversial. But the Clean Air Act passed the Senate unanimously. Imagine. We can't pass the time of day unanimously, and he marshaled the resources, the votes, and the sentiment of the entire Senate. He did it through amazingly hard work. They had hundreds of hearings and hundreds of hours of markup. He listened to his colleagues, he found compromises, and he found ways to make it work across the entire spectrum of the Senate.

There were plenty of conservative Senators here in 1970. In fact, at one point in the debate on the Clean Air Act, Howard Baker, who was the Republican leader, gave his proxy to Muskie because he had to be out of the Chamber for a few hours. Again, imagine today the Republican leader giving his proxy to one of the Democratic Senators on a major piece of legislation. I think it says something about, unfortunately, the difference between then and now in the Senate, but it also says something about Muskie's leadership. It was made up in part of incredibly high intelligence. People who knew him well, such as Senator George Mitchell, have said he was one of the most brilliant people they have ever met. So he had high intelligence, but he also had high emotional intelligence. He could intuit what people needed, what they needed and wanted, and what they had to hear and how to persuade them. But he also had incredible perseverance and patience, and he was willing to listen and understand other people's point of view.

The Clean Air Act and later the Clean Water Act in 1972 are really the pillars of environmental law in this entire country. It is hard for us to realize today because we take for granted our commitment to environmental protection, but it didn't really exist until Ed Muskie's leadership in the late 1960s.

It is all the more remarkable for me as a political representative of the State of Maine that Muskie took this step because it had a significant impact on our major industry. Maine is a pulp and paper State, with huge mills and outpourings into the water and into the air. At the time, they were virtually untreated.

So this was not an insignificant act from Muskie's own political situation.

It wasn't as though he had a free ride on this, but I believe part of the impetus for this great action, for this great insight was Muskie's being raised as a young boy in the town of Rumford on the Androscoggin River. The Androscoggin River at one point was one of the most polluted rivers in America. I live on the Androscoggin today. When Muskie was a boy, the saying was that the river was too thick to drink and too thin to plow. It was a terrible situation. Ed Muskie realized that, and he realized he had to do something about it. So he used the vehicle of the Public Works Committee, where he had been sent in exile, to achieve one of the great legislative monuments of the 20th century.

He also is the father of our current budget process. He was one of the Senators who put together the budget process in the mid to late 1970s. He had an incredibly distinguished career. He was an incredible force and a very powerful man.

I have a vivid personal recollection of him which to this day I don't quite know what to make of, but it is an absolutely true one. In 1968 he was running for Vice President of the United States. Ed Muskie was Hubert Humphrey's running mate. In the latter stages of the campaign—September, October of that year, 1968—it was the last several weeks of the campaign, and it was a time when Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates flew around the country. They didn't even take the time to have a motorcade and go into town to make a speech. The plane would land, the crowd would be right out on the airport runway, there would be a little fence line, and the candidate would come down the stairs, make a speech, and get back on the plane and go.

I was a law student that year at the University of Virginia, and I had no connection to Maine at the time, but I somehow heard that Ed Muskie, the Vice Presidential candidate, was coming to Richmond, VA, and was going to be at the airport at 8 or whatever on Tuesday night. So a bunch of us went over to Richmond to hear him. I can remember standing in this crowd along a fence line with probably 300 or 400 people and listening to Muskie right before the election in 1968. He spoke passionately about his vision for America. He spoke about what this country can and should mean. And this was a very important election. This was Richard Nixon versus Hubert Humphrey, and it was an election decided by one vote per precinct across the country—it was that close. It was a very close election.

Here is my strange memory, which again I say I don't really fully understand. I remember standing in the crowd listening to Muskie speak—whom I didn't know at all. I had never set foot in Maine at that point. I didn't know him. I hadn't met him. But I was listening to him speak. And at the end of his speech, out of my mouth completely spontaneously came the words

“We trust you.” It was something about the man that made you feel you could trust him. He was so honest, so authentic, and so entirely himself. It was an amazing moment.

Here it is almost 50 years later, and I remember that evening in Richmond, VA, my first encounter with Ed Muskie.

I got to know him somewhat more when I worked here as a staff member for his colleague Bill Hathaway, the other Senator from Maine at that time. Then I had the privilege of interviewing him in my capacity as a public television host for a documentary in 1981, when he retired as Secretary of State.

He had a distinguished career here in the Senate. Then he went on and heeded Jimmy Carter’s call in 1980 to serve as Secretary of State during the height of the Iran hostage crisis. He served our country honorably and well during that period and then retired. But when he retired, he didn’t stop his involvement in public affairs. He became a champion of access to the legal system for the poor. He, of course, remained committed to the environment and had a very active life—mostly in Maine, in his beloved house in Kennebunkport—and was a contributor right up to his death in 1996.

Ed Muskie is a true American hero. There is no way my poor words or anybody else’s can really capture his career and the impact he made. I think perhaps the closest I could come is to recall Sir Christopher Wren’s epitaph on his tomb in St. Paul’s Cathedral. On the tomb it says, “If you seek his monument, look around you.” If you would see Ed Muskie’s memorial, look around you. Take a deep breath. Experience our great rivers. Experience the environment we now have in this country which we treasure and which is so much a part of who we are across the country and in, of course, the State of Maine. Ed Muskie was a great man. He was a great member of this body and it is an honor for me—to say it is an honor is a gross understatement—to be standing today in his seat, the seat that he held for those important years from 1958 to 1980 and when he served our country so, so well. Ed Muskie is a man who belongs to the ages, who we all miss, and who made such a difference in all of our lives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with

Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I urge Members from both sides of the aisle to come together and support passage of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013, an important and bipartisan bill that will improve the effectiveness of our criminal justice system. This legislation was voted unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on October 31, 2013. It is fitting that the full Senate is considering this legislation now, ahead of Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

This important legislation, which is cosponsored by Senator JOHN CORNYN of Texas, reauthorizes the original Justice for All Act of 2004. That landmark law took significant steps to improve the quality of justice in this country by increasing the resources devoted to DNA analysis and other forensic science technology, establishing safeguards to prevent wrongful convictions, and enhancing protections for crime victims. The programs created by the Justice for All Act have had an enormous impact, and it is crucial that we reauthorize them.

We must do more than just reauthorize these vital programs, however.

The legislation before us strengthens key rights for crime victims, reauthorizes the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, includes provisions to improve the quality of indigent defense, and increases access to post-conviction DNA testing to protect the innocent. It also includes new measures to help ensure the effective administration of criminal justice in the States.

The reauthorization strengthens the Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program. Kirk Bloodsworth was a young man just out of the marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime that he did not commit. He was the first person in the United States to be exonerated from a death row crime through the use of DNA evidence.

The Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program provides grants to States for testing in cases like Mr. Bloodsworth’s—when someone has been convicted but significant DNA evidence was not tested. The reauthorization clarifies the conditions set for this program, so that participating States are required to preserve key evidence, and are given further guidance that will make the program more effective and allow more States to participate.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013 also takes important steps to ensure that all criminal defendants, including those who cannot afford a lawyer, receive effective representation. It requires the Department of

Justice to assist States in developing an effective and efficient system of indigent defense, and it calls on the States to produce comprehensive plans for their criminal justice systems. I know from my time as a prosecutor that the justice system only works as it should when each side is well represented by competent and well-trained counsel. The principle that all sides deserve zealous and effective counsel is at the bedrock of our constitutional system, and I am glad the legislation before us today embodies this belief.

The bill reauthorizes and improves key grant programs in a variety of areas throughout the criminal justice system. Importantly, it increases authorized funding for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant program, which is a vital program to assist forensic laboratories in performing the many forensic tests that are essential to solving crimes and prosecuting those who commit those crimes.

It is also important to note that this bill would make all of these improvements while responsibly reducing the total authorized funding under the Justice for All Act. These changes will help States, communities, and the Federal government save money in the long term.

I thank the many law enforcement and criminal justice organizations that have helped to pinpoint the needed improvements that this bill will provide and I appreciate their ongoing support. I also thank Senators COONS, UDALL of New Mexico, MCCONNELL, KLOBUCHAR, FRANKEN, PORTMAN, FEINSTEIN, HATCH, SCHUMER, LANDRIEU, BURR, COLLINS, and MERKLEY for cosponsoring this critical legislation, and I thank the lead Republican cosponsor Senator CORNYN for working with me on this and on broader legislation to improve the use of forensic evidence in criminal cases.

Together we will continue to work toward a criminal justice system in which the innocent remain free, the guilty are punished, and all sides have the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to advance the cause of justice. Our criminal justice system is not perfect and we are all less safe when the system gets it wrong. Americans need and deserve a criminal justice system that keeps us safe, ensures fairness and accuracy, and fulfills the promise of our Constitution. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act will take important steps to bring us closer to that goal.

DISAPPEARANCE OF SOMBATH SOMPHONE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concern with the lack of progress in the case of Sombath Somphone, who has been missing in Laos since December 2012. Mr. Somphone disappeared while working on civil society development, and despite repeated calls by the U.S. government for a transparent investigation

and Mr. Somphone's safe return to his family, his disappearance is still unexplained.

A respected member of the development community, Mr. Somphone has lived and worked for many years in Laos and his efforts to strengthen Laotian civil society are well documented. The circumstances of his disappearance are mysterious, and, given his high profile, more than troubling. Furthermore, the lack of effort on the part of the Laotian government to investigate what has been described by many international observers as a forced disappearance is deeply disappointing.

Mr. Somphone's courageous work on behalf of political freedom and the protection of human rights in Laos is admirable, and he and others who engage in such pursuits should not fear for their safety, especially at the hands of a government. Despite repeated offers of international assistance and numerous inquiries about Mr. Somphone's welfare, the Laotian government appears satisfied despite having made no progress on the case.

I call on Laotian authorities to recognize the importance this has for Members of Congress and the American people, and people around the world, and to take all actions necessary to enable Mr. Somphone to return home to his family.

TRIBUTE TO RAY ALLEN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have spoken many times on the Senate floor about Vermont's dedicated farming families. Today, I would like to recognize the contributions of a great Vermont farmer, at a time of transition, Ray Allen of Allenholm Farm in South Hero, VT.

Ray has, since 1990, represented the University of Vermont as a delegate to the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching, CARET. The APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization representing 235 universities and public land grant institutions nationwide, and CARET advocates for greater national support and understanding of the land-grant university system's food and agricultural research, extension, and teaching programs that enhance the quality of life for all people.

Ray is the longest serving delegate nationally to the CARET and has made many significant contributions to the university extension component of the land grant mission. It is fitting, and should surprise no one that this seventh generation Vermont farmer has so truly served the land grant mission, considering that Ray's ancestors began farming in South Hero, VT in 1870, at about the same time that Vermont Senator Justin Morrill gained passage of his legislation creating the Land Grant College system.

Allenholm Farm is the oldest continuously operating apple orchard in the State of Vermont, and over the

years has grown to be a mainstay of our regional and State agricultural economy.

In 1870, Ray Allen's great-grandfather purchased the current farm, marking the beginning of a family farming tradition on lovely Grand Isle, VT. Today, Ray and his wife Pam run the Allenholm Farm with the help of their children, grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren.

The chain of islands running up the center of Lake Champlain was once home to more than 100 commercial apple orchards. Today there are fewer, but the Allen's have thrived through creativity. They have diversified the farm to include many new apple varieties, and they now produce and retail their own cider, ice cider, hard cider, applesauce, and more than 3,000 apple pies every year.

Making great use of their location, which is within sight of New York and a few miles from the Canadian border, Ray and Pam have made the Allenholm Farm an international destination. Visitors can rent bicycles, stay the night at the Bed & Breakfast overlooking the orchards, buy maple syrup and maple creamies, and visit their petting zoo to meet Willie and Sassafrass, the famous kissing donkeys.

The Allenholm Farm AppleFest attracts up to 25,000 visitors annually and has yielded a bountiful harvest for the entire local economy of the Champlain islands.

Vermont's agricultural economy is thriving today as more and more of farmers follow Ray and Pam's formula: Focus on superb quality, create value-added products, build the Vermont brand, provide local food to local markets, and have fun doing it. For many visitors, Ray and Pam Allen are the face of farming.

As Vermont's agricultural leaders are inclined to do, Ray has taken on many leadership roles in his local community, as well at the State and National level, all in addition to his decades of service to the Association of Public Land Grant Universities. He has served as town auditor, justice of the peace, a member of the school board and has been chief of the rescue squad since its inception in 1973. Ray's contributions to his alma mater, the University of Vermont, are too numerous to list completely here, but they include current or past membership on the boards of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, UVM Extension, and the Alumni Council. Ray's feats as a student track star are still the subject of legend now, 50 years later, and two annual track trophies bear his name.

As a strong supporter of the land grant mission, I thank Ray Allen for his service to the Association of Public Land Grant Universities as a delegate to the Council of Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching. I am certain that Ray will be missed in this role but that he will continue to build on this record of accomplishment and

public service in many other venues and that the seventh generation Allenholm Farm will continue to thrive under his leadership.

Marcelle and I think of Ray and Pam as very special friends and cherished Vermonters.

RECOGNIZING SUNDY BEST

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize an exceptionally talented country music duo from my home State of Kentucky. Kris Bentley and Nick Jamerson have vaulted their band, Sundy Best, from the small bars and music halls of eastern Kentucky into the national spotlight. The story of their rise is remarkable, and one that is far from its conclusion.

Nick and Kris first met in elementary school in Prestonsburg, KY, where they both grew up in music-loving families. The two started a band together in high school but parted ways when Nick went to play football at Pikeville College and Kris enrolled in Centre College, where he played basketball. Nick's passion for music never subsided, though, and after college he contacted Kris to inquire about purchasing a drum set. As it happened, Kris's passion for music remained as well—he didn't have a set to sell, but he would gladly come play with his old buddy Nick. The two friends picked up right where they left off, and the very next night they were playing their first gig together.

The band's big break came in November of 2010. Nick had just moved to Lexington with Kris, and the two landed a gig at Redmon's, a classic Lexington live music establishment. Previously the two had played just as "Nick and Kris," but for a venue like Redmon's they needed a name that they could promote. The two settled on one that reflected their musical roots in Sunday church services. As Kris tells it, "It was originally going to be Sunday's Best but then we said, 'No, Sundy Best.'" The duo dropped the "a" from Sunday because, "That's the way we talk."

The show at Redmon's was an enormous success, so much so that they began to play a regular gig there. This consistent venue for their music was instrumental in establishing the band's fan base and name recognition. Kris acknowledges that this was when "people started taking us seriously . . . because that's a premier music venue."

Things have been looking up for Sundy Best ever since. In 2013 they released their first album, *Door Without a Screen*, and watched it climb into the iTunes Top 10. The video for the hit song from the album, "Home (I Wanna Go)," helped drive the album's success and is a fixture on Country Music Television.

As a fellow Kentuckian, I am proud of the success seen by Sundy Best. Nick and Kris are not only talented musicians, but they are also outstanding ambassadors for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Although their

music is spreading further across the country each day, their roots remain grounded in eastern Kentucky.

I ask that my Senate colleagues join me in recognizing the success of Sundy Best and wishing them well with the recent release of their new album, *Bring Up the Sun*.

Kentucky Monthly recently published an article chronicling the rise of Sundy Best. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Kentucky Monthly, Feb. 25, 2014]

THE BEST MEN WIN

(By Tricia Despres)

When kids grow up with something to prove, they can become stubborn and a bit hardheaded. But when those kids grow up to be adults who want to make a living as musicians . . . well, they just might become superstars.

So goes the story of Sundy Best.

Blending an eclectic mix of acoustic guitar with the beat of the cajón drum and the compelling vocals of Nick Jamerson and Kris Bentley, Sundy Best looks as if they are about to embark on a career many others are often left to dream about. Just last year, the Kentucky-based duo released a deluxe version of their album *Door Without a Screen* and watched as it landed in the Top 10 on iTunes. The video for their single "Home (I Wanna Go)" reached the top of CMT Pure's fan-voted poll for multiple weeks. A brand-new album in 2014 is sure to help the duo prove to the rest of the world that, sometimes, the underdogs win.

"Growing up, I always seemed to have a chip on my shoulder," says Jamerson. "As a kid who loved playing sports, I was smaller than anyone else, so I always had something to prove in everything that I did. It was the attitude I would ultimately have with everything in my life. I was just always super competitive."

It was an attitude Jamerson seemed to inherit from his close-knit family. "Three of my grandparents had a college degree, which, coming from a small mining town in Kentucky, was not at all common," he recalls. "I mean, my grandmother could build anything. Being around those kinds of people all my life and seeing how driven and successful they were . . . it definitely made an impression on me."

As a 5-foot-10 kid basketball player from Prestonsburg, Bentley also was up against his share of obstacles, none of which he hadn't learned to conquer during his childhood years growing up within the sacred walls of the church, hence the name Sundy Best. "I would play drums every Sunday with my dad and brother," recalls Bentley, describing himself as a good kid who "put Mom through the wringer . . . church really was the only outlet to get out there and do music, especially in eastern Kentucky."

Besides sports and a childhood spent within the church, the two also shared a musical foundation formed within their homes, often spending countless hours listening to a diverse mix of rock, pop, and bluegrass. "Everyone would get together at my grandparents' house and play the old bluegrass standards," recalls Jamerson. "The doctor up the road would come over and play the fiddle, Grandpa played the banjo, Grandma played guitar, and my great-aunt played the mandolin."

First meeting in elementary school, Jamerson and Bentley would go on to form a

firm foundation of friendship through their teenage years, which continues to benefit them to this day. "When you know someone as long as we have, you know each other's dynamics," says Jamerson. "He is like a brother to me. It's gratifying to do this whole music thing alongside someone you have known for so long."

After high school, the pair's goal to play sports often competed with the draw they shared to ultimately pursue a music career. "Music was the one passion that I always had, but looking back, I am glad my parents talked me into getting a college degree," says Jamerson, who was on the Pikeville College football team. "The people I met and the experiences I had in college made me the person I am now. That's where songs come from. You need perspective and life lessons as a writer."

The end of college (Bentley attended and played basketball for Centre) brought the beginning of the duo's quick, yet organic, ascent to musical success. After their joint move to Lexington and a brief stint working at the local cable company, the two began performing at patio parties, restaurants and clubs, often playing four-hour sets each night. A regular gig at Lexington's Redmon's helped the two establish a growing fan base eager to find out more about the band.

"Thank goodness for social media," says Bentley, who cut his musical teeth trying to emulate the songs of artists such as Bob Seger and Tom Petty. "Good ol' Facebook was the only way to connect to our fans and tell them where we were going to be every night. We would always have 20 or 30 people from eastern Kentucky who knew us from when we played sports drive up on a weeknight to see us perform. Seeing that kind of support when we were just out there playing cover songs was a huge boost to our confidence."

Then, Sundy Best recorded the song that would change their career: "Home (I Wanna Go)." "That song took off right around the same time when the winter had set in and the patio gigs had shut down," recalls Bentley. "Once people heard that song, the whole thing just grew. People knew we were serious about doing music."

In 2012, the duo recorded some of their songs that they self-produced with friend and filmmaker Coleman Saunders, and independently released *Door Without a Screen*.

Last year, they were asked to play the jewel of all venues: the Grand Ole Opry. "As a musician and performer, I don't think I will ever be the same," says Jamerson. "I cried when I found out we were playing there. It was like being at church and feeling something on your heart and you don't know what it is. We had been touring all year, so sharing it with our families was an unbelievable feeling. I mean, what else could top that? I was watching Netflix the other night and they were doing a two-day concert special on Neil Young and were showing this concert he did at the Ryman Auditorium, and I mean, he was walking through the same doors we did when we were playing there for the Grand Ole Opry. Every time we get the chance to play there, it ends up being quite the spiritual experience."

The year 2014 brings Sundy Best fans the much-anticipated new album *Bring Up the Sun*, a collection of songs that just might take their longtime fans a bit by surprise. "Our first album was quite Kentucky-centric," says Jamerson, who spends any spare time he has at home in Lexington with his two dogs and cat. "The music just feels good in our bones. It's a really broad album, which everyone we work with has a hard time explaining. But everyone will find something different in it. It's good music, but it's coming from a bit of a different

angle now, so I suppose people are going to be surprised. Some people want every record to sound the same, but once your fans think they know you, you are done. You won't grow as musicians if they think they have you figured out."

"We definitely have a vision of where we want to be," says Bentley, who with Jamerson played more than 190 dates out on the road in 2013. "I would never have expected to be where we are today just one year ago. I think 2014 is going to be another growth year for us. A lot of people still don't know who we are, so we want to definitely continue to play new markets. We are excited to see what happens with this new record and then determine what happens next."

No matter where their musical journey might still yet lead them, one thing is for sure: These two will continue to give credit where credit is due.

"You hear people all the time talking about how they are Texas proud or Georgia proud or even Tennessee proud," says Bentley. "When you are from eastern Kentucky, you are automatically proud. You can be anywhere in the world, and if you meet someone from eastern Kentucky, you are immediately friends. Plus, they are the craziest fans ever. We love Nashville and all, but we would just rather stay right here in Kentucky. The people here have been the biggest driving factor in our career, and we can never be too thankful."

"Before I moved to Lexington, my whole life had been spent living in eastern Kentucky. I had never had a chance to miss living in the country. And as we have begun touring more, I now know it was something I myself took for granted," says Jamerson. "We love Kentucky and will always want to carry that flag . . . but we can't wait to spread the word to everyone else, too."

SYRIAN WAR CRIME TRIBUNAL

Mr. DURBIN, Mr. President, Senators RUBIO, MURPHY, KAINE, and I recently introduced in the Senate a concurrent resolution on the need for the investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide committed by any groups involved in civil war in Syria. Congressman CHRIS SMITH has introduced the House version of this concurrent resolution. It calls for President Obama to have our Ambassador to the U.N. use the influence and vote of the United States to promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal. The need is stark. Quite simply, the terrible crimes being committed in the civil war in Syria call out for justice. As such, the U.N. should establish a tribunal similar to the ones created in response to the charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in the former Yugoslavia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda.

As the Syrian conflict entered its fourth year this month, the horrific violence there continues unabated. The losses from the conflict are staggering. According to some estimates the death toll has reached more than 146,000. There are an estimated 6.5 million internally displaced persons in Syria and millions of Syrian refugees have fled their country.

Last week I had the privilege of meeting with a number of dedicated

Chicago-area members of the Syrian-American Medical Society who recently returned from a medical mission to treat Syrian patients in the north of Lebanon. They shared heartbreaking stories of the Syrian refugees they met and treated and appealed for continued international help for these millions of innocent victims. As a hearing I chaired in January on Syrian refugees illustrated, this humanitarian catastrophe has created grave challenges for neighboring countries that are hosting the vast majority of the refugees. Additionally, the fighting in Syria is inflaming sectarian violence in neighbors such as Iraq and Lebanon.

A staggering 9.3 million Syrians inside the country are estimated to be in need of assistance due to the conflict, and even more barbaric, starvation is being used as a weapon of war, with an estimated 220,000 people trapped in besieged areas in Syria. The Assad regime and, to a far lesser extent, some opposition groups have blocked humanitarian assistance in a deliberate effort to increase pressure on besieged civilians. If the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime wasn't horrific enough, it has also utilized so-called barrel bombs, mixes of explosives and shrapnel stuffed into barrels, that helicopter gunships drop in civilian areas controlled by the opposition such as Aleppo.

The Syrian conflict has devastated even the most innocent members of Syrian society. I was deeply moved by the plight of the children when last year I visited Kilis, a Syrian refugee camp in Turkey. Yet sadly their plight continues. In January the U.N. issued a report which estimated that more than 10,000 children have been killed. UNICEF said in March that the real number is likely to be even higher. The January U.N. report stated that children in Syria experienced suffering which was "unspeakable." Some of the reports of terrible abuses include sexual violence against children held in Syrian Government detention as well as minors being used in combat and as human shields. In addition, UNICEF released a report in March that estimated there are up to 1 million children who live under siege and in hard-to-reach areas that UNICEF and its humanitarian partners cannot access on a regular basis.

As my colleague Senator McCAIN mentioned in his remarks in February on the Senate floor, respected former war crimes prosecutors issued a report in January based on evidence they obtained regarding torture and murder by the Syrian regime. The report stated that the evidence—largely provided by a Syrian defector and which includes 55,000 photographic images of approximately 11,000 detained persons who had been tortured and killed by the Syrian regime—was credible. Additionally, these war crimes prosecutors noted that such evidence could support findings of war crimes as well as crimes against humanity against the Assad regime.

In 2011, I was joined by Senators BOXER, CARDIN, and MENENDEZ on a letter to then-U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice urging that Assad be referred by the Security Council to the International Criminal Court. Now, 2½ years later, with so many further atrocities in Syria, the need for holding those accountable for war crimes is as strong as ever. We, and other concerned countries, have an interest in seeing justice served. Those who commit war crimes and crimes against humanity must be put on notice that the international community will strive to hold them accountable for their unlawful acts.

Unfortunately, establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal may face opposition from other members of the U.N. Security Council, most notably Russia. Particularly given the widespread condemnation of Russia illegally violating the territorial integrity of another state, it seems that Russian President Putin does not care about the laws or views of the international community. The hypocrisy of Putin stating that other countries should not intervene in Syria where there is an undisputed humanitarian catastrophe, while he illegally annexes the territory of another state, in part on false humanitarian ground, is staggering.

Nevertheless, if Putin wants to block establishing a Syrian war crimes tribunal, let us have Russia go on the record to say why it opposes justice for those who have suffered so much in Syria. Let them explain how Russia, having suffered its own horrific siege of Leningrad during which 800,000 people—one-third of the city's population—died of starvation during the almost 900-day siege by the Nazis, continues to support the same brutal starvation techniques of its client autocrat in Syria, Bashar al-Assad. With these types of brazen actions and statements, Putin will never earn the global respect and credibility he so desperately demands by invading neighboring countries, while at the same time continuing to support and arm butchers such as Assad.

In February the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution, which Russia finally supported, demanding greater humanitarian access as well as calling on all parties to immediately cease attacks against civilians and lift the siege of populated areas. Yet 1 month after the Security Council ordered all parties in Syria to allow aid workers into besieged areas and stop indiscriminate attacks on civilians, a soon-to-be-released U.N. report says that the Syrian Government has essentially ignored the Security Council. Food supplies have been held up at government checkpoints, medical supplies removed from aid convoys, visas stalled for U.N. officials, and key supply routes cynically kept closed. And Assad's forces persist in using brutal barrel bombs, causing horrific indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians. The international community should not let this obstruc-

tion stand and must enforce the Security Council resolution.

Ultimately, as President Obama has stated, this conflict needs to be resolved politically. Last year, I did support the limited use of military force when Assad broke a long-established global taboo against the use of chemical weapons but also agree that a political solution must ultimately be pursued in Syria. But for a long-term and stable political solution to the war there must also be justice for those who have suffered so much, and a Syrian war crimes tribunal would play a vital role in such a process.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of Carolyn Hessler Radelet to be the Director of the Peace Corps.

I will object because I am inquiring into the circumstances related to the refusal of the Peace Corps to grant the Peace Corps inspector general full and timely access to records to which the inspector general is entitled under the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011 and the Inspector General Act of 1978.

At a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform convened on January 15, 2014, Peace Corps inspector general Kathy Buller detailed difficulties she has encountered in accessing records which she deemed were directly relevant to her review of Peace Corps' handling of reports from its volunteers who claim that they have been sexually assaulted.

According to Inspector General Buller's testimony, records were withheld based on reasoning that directly contravenes the Kate Puzey Act and the Inspector General Act.

In addition, Inspector General Buller testified that even when limited access to records was later granted, most of the relevant information was withheld under an overbroad interpretation of what constitutes "personally identifying information" under 22 U.S.C. §2507a(f)(1)–(2). Inspector General Buller did clarify that, following objections from Congress, Peace Corps narrowed its interpretation of "personally identifying information" which allowed her to access slightly more information relating to the subject sexual assaults but not everything to which the inspector general is entitled.

In order to exercise the oversight function envisioned by the Kate Puzey Act and the Inspector General Act, it is critical for the Peace Corps inspector general to have full and timely access to all Peace Corps records which she deems relevant to her review.

The Peace Corps apparently withheld records from the inspector general during the nominee's tenure as the Acting Director, and I would like the opportunity to understand the circumstances more fully.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SFC OLLEN HUNT

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to SFC retired Ollen Hunt for his exceptional dedication to duty and service to the U.S. Army and to the United States of America.

A native of McLemoresville, TN, Sergeant Hunt was drafted into the U.S. Army in November of 1942. Sergeant Hunt was a part of the 92nd Infantry Division, which was also known as "The Buffalo Division." Sergeant Hunt and his unit boarded troop ships at Camp Henry, VA, and survived the sea journey to their destination in Italy. The 92nd fought with distinction and divisiveness, and contributed to the eventual defeat of the Axis Powers.

After returning from his deployment, Sergeant Hunt returned home for a short time before returning to assignments throughout Europe. He was responsible for the food and logistics operations at various military installations. He continued his military service until retiring as a Sergeant First Class in 1963. A year after retirement, Sergeant Hunt accepted a position as a flight kitchen chef in Anchorage, AK. Sergeant Hunt and his wife Hanna owned many small businesses, including the Hof Brau and Sandwich Deck. He also served on several downtown merchant and municipal committees and councils, receiving numerous awards for his contributions to the Anchorage community. After his "second retirement", Sergeant Hunt worked with the Veterans Administration's Oral History project writers to create an autobiography of his life. His work formed what would later become his book *Buffalo Soldier: What I Did for My Country, What My Country Did for Me*.

Sergeant Hunt's leadership throughout his career has positively influenced his peers and superiors, soldiers, and civilians alike. As a hardworking and friendly man, he will be greatly missed by his family and those fortunate enough to have known him.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, I join my colleagues today in recognizing and commending SFC Ollen Hunt for his service to his country in the United States Army. We wish his wife, Hannelore, and their two children, Katherine and Ollen, all the best as they celebrate the life of this great man.●

REMEMBERING CLAUS-M. NASKE

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President. Dr. Claus-M. Naske, a giant in the field of history in Alaska, passed away on March 5, 2014. I would like to honor him and his accomplishments as an educator, historian and family man.

Claus emigrated to Alaska in 1954 and moved to Fairbanks in 1957 to attend the University of Alaska Fairbanks, graduating with double majors in political science and history. He obtained his doctorate from Washington State University and joined the Uni-

versity of Alaska Fairbanks faculty in 1969, starting his long and illustrious career as a teacher, mentor, researcher, author and administrator.

Claus was a professor of history at the University of Alaska Fairbanks until 2001. He not only taught, researched and wrote, he was the director of the University of Alaska Press until 2004. Managing the university's press office added to Dr. Naske's workload, but it was evidence of his love for scholarly work.

Claus authored and co-authored over a dozen books, including ones on two prominent political Alaskan political figures, Bob Bartlett and Ernest Gruening and several on Alaska's history. His book *Alaska: A History*, in its third edition, is considered the pre-eminent record of our great State. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Claus for his dedication and persistence as a historian, one who will long be remembered.

Claus received many well-deserved awards throughout his life, including the 2012 Distinguished Alumnus Award, the 2001 Usibelli Award for Research, the 1997 Alumni Award for Professional Excellence, and the 1995 Award of Merit by the Western History Association—to name a few.

Claus married Dinah in 1960 and had two children: Natalia-Michelle Nangeak and Nathaniel-Michael Noah. He and his wife have been generous to UAF, establishing a history scholarship and making regular donations to the campus public radio station.

Claus-M. Naske will go down in history with a sterling reputation as a scholar, teacher and father.●

TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL B. OLDEN

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to advise the Senate of the accomplishments of a fellow Mississippian, Mr. Samuel B. Olden of Yazoo City, on the occasion of his 95th birthday.

Mr. Olden is from Yazoo City, the "Gateway to the Mississippi Delta," where he was born in 1919, to a family of Mississippi planters. Throughout his youth, he read widely in the B.S. Ricks Memorial Library—the oldest privately-funded public library in the State—which greatly contributed to his personal development and admission into the University of Mississippi in Oxford. There, he received a B.A. and M.A., reportedly conversed with Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner, and was ultimately recruited to Washington, DC, to serve at the Department of State. Prior to American involvement in World War II, Mr. Olden was sent abroad as the Vice Consul at our embassy in Quito, Ecuador, from 1941 to 1943. Upon his return, Mr. Olden enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving from 1943 to 1946 at posts ranging from Shanghai, China, to Paris, France.

After the war Mr. Olden transited the North Atlantic on a Liberty ship. A fellow naval officer noted Mr. Olden's fortitude during this stormy passage. While tending to his ailing father back

in Mississippi, he received a letter from Washington asking him to consider defending our Nation's freedom, in a third essential way. Mr. Olden returned to the District of Columbia, where he was invited to join the newly formed Central Intelligence Group. Commencing in 1947, Mr. Olden spent 2 years in the group's Washington office, followed by 3 years in Vienna, Austria, where he defended freedom and democracy against Communist aggression.

Following a decade in public service, Mr. Olden entered the private sector, where he employed his experience abroad for a predecessor of Exxon Mobil. From 1952-1957, he was posted in East and West Nigeria, British and French Cameroon, the Congo, Chad, and Gabon. He joined Mobil's government relations department in 1957 and returned to New York. There, he attained observer status at the United Nations and strode the halls with Adlai Stevenson and Eleanor Roosevelt. Later, he went abroad once more to serve as general manager of Mobil's affiliates in Tunisia, Algeria, Peru, and Spain.

By 1974, Mr. Olden was fluent in English, French, German, and Spanish. He had connections around the world. And where did he go? He chose to retire to the finest place he had ever lived: Yazoo City. There, he owned and operated a cattle ranch for 15 years, while continuing to pursue his passion for the study of history. He was twice a board member and was elected president of the Mississippi Historical Society, served 15 years on the State committee for the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, and founded the Yazoo Historical Society's remarkable museum—housed in the same Triangle Center building where he had attended elementary school. Even in his nineties, he established and helped to fund the Yazoo Memorial Literary Walkway, which stretches between the Triangle Center and the B.S. Ricks Library. The walkway memorializes more than 100 Yazooan authors to include former House Minority Leader and Senator John Sharp Williams, literary critic and editor Henry Herschel Brickell, Gov. Haley Reeves Barbour, beloved writers Willie Morris, Teresa Nicholas, and Ruth Williams, and educator Henry Mitchell Brickell. His large collection of pre-Columbian ceramics is now on display in the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson.

This remarkable man has served his Nation as a diplomat, military officer, and emissary, during wars hot and cold. He served the world in the energy industry as a global businessman of distinction. He returned to his hometown and has continued to serve his State, his university, and his community as a historian, educator and philanthropist even into the 10th decade of his life. His friends across the Nation and around the world celebrate with him today.●

TRIBUTE TO PETE BALLARD

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Pete Ballard, a dear friend and a truly remarkable West Virginian who is known throughout the Mountain State and far past our borders for his many talents, especially for his global recognition of his still life paintings and historic period doll creations.

A native of Welch, located in the southern-most part of our State in McDowell County, Pete currently resides in Peterstown, an idyllic small town in the rolling emerald hills of Monroe County. Although Pete's career in the arts has taken him across the country and around the world, including Saudi Arabia, China and Vietnam, there has never been a doubt that Pete's roots are truly imbedded in West Virginia.

After receiving a degree in education from Concord University, Pete began teaching. However, it wasn't long before Pete's propensities steered him far beyond just a career in education, leading him to partake in many more professional ventures.

Today, as an award-winning educator, celebrated artist, renowned painter, nationally acclaimed costume designer, curator, historian, and famous doll creator, Pete's passion for the arts and creativity know no bounds.

Many of Pete's paintings are now displayed in museums and art galleries across the country. Today, three of Pete's exceptional paintings are displayed among the most celebrated collection of American Still Life paintings at The Butler Institute, which is America's first museum to collect American art. His work will forever be a part of such an extraordinary collection of America's best artwork.

In addition to his distinguished paintings, Pete has most recently been recognized across the country for his unique creation of 19th century fashion dolls. Pete creates each doll based on meticulously researched and authentic period fashion. Made from head to toe in papier-mâché, the dolls' figures range from approximately 3 to 5 feet tall and wear costumes that are designed in period clothing.

Due to Pete's painstaking attention to detail along with his fashion expertise, hard work and brilliant vision, he is no stranger to receiving prestigious awards. As Governor, I was honored to name Pete as a Distinguished West Virginian. He has also received the Grand Groundhog Watcher Award. Both of these awards were created to honor those who have contributed significantly to West Virginia and those who have brought positive attention to our great State. He was also named Concord University's Golden Alumnus, is among the Outstanding Educators in America, and has received the Order of the Arts and Historical Letters from the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. Pete's paintings and dolls have also been displayed in galas and exhibitions around West Virginia and across the country.

Despite his astounding success, Pete has never collected a dime for his work. After spending 12 hours a day, 7 days a week working on each piece of art, he merely donates every painting and every doll he doesn't hold for keep-sake to charity or to art galleries.

It has been an honor and privilege to know such a gifted West Virginian. Pete Ballard's imprint will always be marked by his brilliant creations and his countless contributions to the State of West Virginia. I join all West Virginians in celebrating his vast achievements, which will live on in our history books, atop the same shelves as some of the most distinguished artwork of our time and mounted on the walls of esteemed museums.

After all these years, I continue to look forward to viewing many more paintings and doll creations because at the age of 83, Pete continues to work on his art every day.●

TRIBUTE TO PHYLLIS RHODES

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to thank Phyllis Rhodes for her outstanding service to the Municipality of Anchorage, the Federal court system, and Identity, Inc. on the occasion of her retirement.

Born in Arizona and raised in Texas, Phyllis and her former husband moved to Alaska in 1967 with their young daughter Anne, making their home in Anchorage. A second daughter, Emily, made her appearance after the family relocated to Alaska. Since her arrival in Alaska Phyllis' contributions to the cause of equality for the LGBTQ community, and all Alaskans, has become legendary.

Phyllis started out as the volunteer coordinator for Identity, Inc. but with her usual passion and commitment, she started picking up speed, eventually becoming the unpaid executive director of the organization. Over the course of her 10 years as executive director of Identity, Inc. Phyllis has taken the organization from obscurity to high visibility in Anchorage and across Alaska. During Phyllis' tenure, Identity, Inc. expanded its programs and began outreach to new audiences. The creation of an advocacy team has led to open dialogues with Alaska businesses, churches, educational institutions and other organizations. Within the LGBTQ community, Phyllis is the recognized heart and soul of Identity, Inc.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Phyllis for her many years of advocating for equality. I wish the absolute best to her, her wife Pam, and her daughters Anne and Emily, as they begin this next stage in their lives.●

REMEMBERING COLONEL OLA LEE MIZE

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the passing of a great Alabamian, COL Ola Lee Mize, on March 12, 2014. Colonel Mize was a native of Marshall

County and an American hero. He embodied the ideals of service and courage that make our State proud.

Colonel Mize was born on August 28, 1931, in Marshall County, and dropped out of high school after ninth grade to provide for his family. He was rejected for enlistment by the Army numerous times because he was blind in one eye and they claimed he was too small. Eventually he was accepted and joined the 82nd Airborne Division.

He is perhaps best remembered by his defense of Outpost Harry when it was attacked during the Korean war. Colonel Mize bravely protected injured comrades and held opposition forces at bay, valiantly risking his life for others. For this intrepid gallantry, Colonel Mize earned a Medal of Honor, which remains on display in the Guntersville Museum.

Colonel Mize went on to join the Special Forces and served 3½ tours in Vietnam with the Green Berets and then served as an Active-Duty advisor to National Guard Special Forces units. Throughout the course of his military career, he was awarded the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and, of course, the Medal of Honor. Colonel Mize continued to be active in veterans' events and where he was known and honored by all. He retired in 1981 after 31 years of service.

Mary and I mourn his passing and send our condolences to his wife Betty, his daughter Teresa Peterson, and his six brothers and sisters. Alabama has lost a true hero and his legend will grow. I was honored to get to know him. He was a remarkable man whose courage on the battlefield extended to a determination to do the right thing in all aspects of life.●

REMEMBERING JOHN RICHARD MILLER, JR.

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the passing of a great Alabamian, John Richard Miller, Jr., who died on January 26, 1024. Mr. Miller was a native and longtime resident of Brewton, AL.

After graduating from Culver Military Academy in Culver, IN, he attended the University of Alabama. Mr. Miller served as a pilot in the U.S. Army Air Corps, 8th Air Force, in the European Theatre of Operation during World War II, receiving the Air Medal, E.T.O. Medal, and a Presidential Citation, and was discharged with the rank of major.

After his military service, he returned to Brewton where, like his father and grandfather, was employed by T.R. Miller Mill Company where he held various positions including chairman of the board from 1986 to 2009, and chairman emeritus until his death. He also served on many other boards and was a founding member of the Bank of Mobile. He was the third generation patriarch of this family and its businesses. He was also very committed to

his churches, the First United Methodist Church in Brewton and in Destin.

Mr. Miller was a lifelong member of the Brewton Rotary Club, served on the Brewton City School Board, the president's cabinet and the business school's Board of Visitors at the University of Alabama, and was awarded an honorary doctorate degree by the University of Alabama. He also received an honorary doctorate degree from Mobile College, now the University of Mobile. He was inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame, like his father before him, at the University of Alabama.

Mr. Miller was a great outdoorsman and excellent wing shot but also loved his fishing—particularly fishing Shipp Pond, Apalachicola Bay, and the Gulf of Mexico with family and friends.

Mr. Miller will always be remembered for his great humility, generosity, and love of his fellow man. He leaves behind his wife of 70 years, Virginia Earl Kersh Miller, and their four children, Nancy Miller Melton, John Richard Miller, III, David Earl Miller, and Jean Miller Stimpson, as well as many other family members and friends. They have been given a great legacy indeed.●

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES D. MCCRARY

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, along with my fellow Alabama colleague JEFF SESSIONS, I wish to pay tribute to Charles D. McCrary, who retired this month from his position as the president and chief executive officer of Alabama Power Company.

Mr. McCrary's involvement with Alabama Power extends back to the summer of 1970, when he joined the company following his freshman year at Auburn University. During a long and distinguished career, he assumed positions of increasing responsibility, rising from vice president for Southern Nuclear Operating Company, to president of Southern Company Generation, chief production officer of Southern Company and president of Southern Power Company. On October 25, 2001, Mr. McCrary became the tenth president and CEO of Alabama Power, which generates electricity for over 1.4 million Alabama customers.

A Birmingham native, Mr. McCrary attended Shades Valley High School and received his bachelor of science in mechanical engineering from Auburn University, followed by a juris doctor from Birmingham School of Law. He was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1979.

Mr. McCrary is married to the former Phyllis Brantley of Birmingham and is the father of two sons, Doug and Alex.

Throughout his tenure at Alabama Power, Mr. McCrary has served the company and its customers with the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. He also oversaw Alabama Power during some of our State's most severe natural disasters, including Hur-

ricane Ivan in 2004, which caused 825,701 outages, the largest number of outages in company history; Hurricane Katrina in 2005 with 636,891 outages; and the tornado disaster on April 27, 2011 with 412,000 outages. In the wake of these disasters, Mr. McCrary initiated the policy of publicizing when customers could expect their power to be restored. This practice of announcing utility restoration commitments has since become an industry standard.

Mr. McCrary also pioneered "Target Zero," a program for ensuring that employees are properly trained and equipped to do their jobs safely. This practice too has become a touchstone within the utility industry.

Mr. McCrary is a dynamic leader both in his community and throughout the State of Alabama, and serves as chairman of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama and on the boards of Regions Financial Corporation, Mercedes-Benz U.S. International Inc., Protective Life Corporation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Southern Research Institute, and the Auburn University Board of Trustees.

Committed to fostering economic development at both the regional and State levels, Mr. McCrary has advanced cooperative efforts between cities, counties, and business leaders in order to bring several industries, including automotive, aerospace, and steel manufacturers to Alabama.

Please join me and Senator SESSIONS in congratulating Charles on his retirement and in thanking him for his leadership at Alabama Power, for his dedication to improving his local community, and for his decades of service to the great State of Alabama. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:59 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. 1228. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 123 South 9th Street in De Pere, Wisconsin, as the "Corporal Justin D. Ross Post Office Building".

H.R. 1459. An act to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes.

At 2:10 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. 4278. An act to support the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4302. An act to amend the Social Security Act to extend Medicare payments to physicians and other provisions of the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1228. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 123 South 9th Street in De Pere, Wisconsin, as the "Corporal Justin D. Ross Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1459. An act to ensure that the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 applies to the declaration of national monuments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5011. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjustments to Civil Penalty Amounts" (16 CFR Part 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5012. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2013 Annual Report; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5013. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alternative Fuel Transportation Program; Alternative Fueled Vehicle Credit Program Modification and Other Amendments" (RIN1904-AB81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 21, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5014. A communication from the Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Regulations, Areas of the National Park System, Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, Bicycling" (RIN1024-AE12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5015. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "National Academies Review of DOE's Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Activities"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5016. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Third Party Payment of Qualified Health Plan Premiums" (RIN0938-AS28) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 18, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5017. 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 "Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2014-16) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5018. 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 "Correction to Revenue Procedure 2014-4" (Rev. Proc. 2014-19) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5019. 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 "Interim Guidance on Per Capita Distributions Made to Indian Tribe Members from Funds Held in Trust by the Secretary of the Interior" (Notice 2014-17) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 19, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5020. 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 "Information Reporting by Applicable Large Employers on Health Insurance Coverage Offered Under Employer-Sponsored Plans" ((RIN1545-BL26) (TD 9661)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5021. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the fiscal year 2013 report of the Department of Health and Human Services' Federal Coordinated Health Care Office; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5022. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Recovery Auditing in the Medicare and Medicaid Program for Fiscal Year 2012"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5023. A communication from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual management report relative to its operations and financial condition; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5024. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-5025. A communication from the Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to the Congress: Medicare Payment Policy"; to the Committee on Finance.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CARPER, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 994. A bill to expand the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to increase accountability and transparency in Federal spending, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-139).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. LANDRIEU for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Janice Marion Schneider, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

*Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife.

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Gregg Jeffrey Costa, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Tanya S. Chutkan, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

M. Hannah Lauck, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia.

John Charles Cruden, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Leo T. Sorokin, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

*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.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2164. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2165. A bill to enhance consumer access to electricity information and allow for the adoption of innovative products and services to help consumers manage their energy usage; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. KING):

S. 2166. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify provisions relating to determinations of full-time equivalent employees for purposes of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2167. A bill to establish a grant program for career education in computer science; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. KING):

S. 2168. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of large employer for purposes of applying the employer mandate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2169. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the rate of tax re-

garding the taxation of distilled spirits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 2170. A bill to free the private sector to harness domestic energy resources to create jobs and generate economic growth by removing statutory and administrative barriers; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2171. A bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2172. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to improve nonretaliation provisions relating to equal pay requirements; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2173. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide a permanent path for the direct enrollment of individuals in qualified health plans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2174. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide greater flexibility in offering health insurance coverage across State lines; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2175. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to enhance access for independent agents and brokers to information regarding marketplace enrollment; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2176. A bill to revise reporting requirements under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to preserve the privacy of individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2177. A bill to establish an Office of Forensic Science and a Forensic Science Board, to strengthen and promote confidence in the criminal justice system by ensuring scientific validity, reliability, and accuracy in forensic testing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 2178. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 2179. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to waive the minimum period of continuous active duty in the Armed Forces for receipt of benefits for homeless veterans, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish benefits for homeless veterans to homeless veterans with discharges

or releases from service in the Armed Forces under other than honorable conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2180. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend tax incentives to certain live theatrical performances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2181. A bill to authorize and strengthen the tsunami detection, forecast, warning, research, and mitigation program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WALSH (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2182. A bill to expand and improve care provided to veterans and members of the Armed Forces with mental health disorders or at risk of suicide, to review the terms or characterization of the discharge or separation of certain individuals from the Armed Forces, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 2183. A bill entitled "United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions"; considered and passed.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. COATS):

S.J. Res. 35. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service of the Department of the Treasury relating to liability under section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the shared responsibility payment for not maintaining minimum essential coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 400. A resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Great Alaska Earthquake, which struck the State of Alaska at 5:36 p.m. on Good Friday, March 27, 1964, honoring those who lost their lives in the Great Alaska Earthquake and associated tsunamis, and expressing continued support for research on earthquake and tsunami prediction and mitigation strategies; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 401. A resolution recognizing Easy Company, 2nd Battalion of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin):

S. Res. 402. A resolution expressing the regret of the Senate for the passage of section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 (34 Stat. 1228) that revoked the United States citizenship of women who married foreign nationals; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin):

S. Res. 403. A resolution condemning the actions of the Government of Turkey in restricting free expression and Internet freedom on social media; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 404. A resolution honoring the accomplishments and legacy of Cesar Estrada Chavez; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. THUNE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 15, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 84, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) 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. 526

At the request of Mr. BENNET, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 822

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 822, a bill to protect crime victims' rights, to eliminate the substantial backlog of DNA samples collected from

crime scenes and convicted offenders, to improve and expand the DNA testing capacity of Federal, State, and local crime laboratories, to increase research and development of new DNA testing technologies, to develop new training programs regarding the collection and use of DNA evidence, to provide post conviction testing of DNA evidence to exonerate the innocent, to improve the performance of counsel in State capital cases, and for other purposes.

S. 948

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 948, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage and payment for complex rehabilitation technology items under the Medicare program.

S. 958

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 958, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the tax on beer to its pre-1991 level, and for other purposes.

S. 975

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 975, a bill to provide for the inclusion of court-appointed guardianship improvement and oversight activities under the Elder Justice Act of 2009.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1333

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1333, a bill to reinstate funding for the Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan Program.

S. 1343

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1343, a bill to protect the information of livestock producers, and for other purposes.

S. 1695

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1695, a bill to designate a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Missouri

(Mrs. McCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor 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. 1925

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1925, a bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders.

S. 1998

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1998, a bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to reserve funds for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Tribal College or University adult education and literacy.

S. 2048

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2048, a bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 non-immigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2069

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 2069, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

S. 2091

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2091, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Sec-

retary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2127

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2127, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 relative to the powers of the Department of Justice Inspector General.

S. RES. 361

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 361, a resolution recognizing the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder.

S. RES. 364

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 364, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 369

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 369, a resolution to designate May 22, 2014 as "United States Foreign Service Day" in recognition of the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service of the United States, and to honor those in the Foreign Service who have given their lives in the line of duty.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 377, a resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2164. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as many in this Chamber know, I am very proud of the many ways my home State of Washington is leading the way. Our State is an economic leader. We are home to the American aerospace industry, we have a thriving agricultural sector, and dozens of compa-

nies creating new products and new jobs with cutting-edge technology. We are a leader in protecting the environment and educating our children. Washington State is also the place that tens of thousands of servicemembers and veterans call home.

Last, but not least, I could not be more proud of our State's history of protecting the rights of all of our citizens, including members of the LGBT community. We know in Washington State that it is wrong to discriminate against people. We know that a person's race, religion, or gender have nothing to do with their worth as a human being, and we know that actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity don't either. We get that in my home State of Washington, but we can't stop working until the same is true in all 50 States, and that is why I have come to the Senate floor today.

I want to share with everyone a story about a young man by the name of Kris. Kris will be the first to tell you he has not led the easiest of lives. After turning 18 years old and aging out of the foster care system in Texas, Kris found himself homeless at 18 years old in Houston and sleeping on whatever park bench or apartment roof was available to him that evening.

As luck would have it, one night while Kris was searching for a public restroom to use, he stumbled on an admissions fair for the University of Houston's downtown campus. Kris had always had ambitions to go to college, but because of his very unstable childhood and minimal income, pursuing higher education was never a priority. Once he learned that night that tuition for the school was waived for foster system alumni, this dream seemed more like a reality so Kris decided to enroll.

He went to school, declared his major in social work, and settled into college life. He made friends and participated in extracurricular activities on campus.

In fact, Kris got so involved that one of his good friends, Isaac, invited him to be his running mate for the upcoming student government election. Kris was very excited about that idea and realized it was his opportunity to make a real difference for many of the students on campus who had been through some of the same trying experiences he had.

Kris and Isaac kicked off their campaign and pursued elective office. Then 1 day—in fact 1 year ago this month—Kris was called into the dean of students office. Kris sat down and the dean reached into his briefcase and pulled out a stack of fliers with Kris's photo on each and every one of them with a big X across his picture. In big, bold letters across the top of the flier, it read: "WANT AIDS?" Across the bottom of that flier it read: "Don't Support the Isaac and Kris Homosexual Agenda." On the back of the flier—unbelievably—was a copy of Kris's official

private medical record displaying in plain view that Kris was HIV positive. Stunning. I am sure every one of you are as stunned as I was.

The dean then informed Kris that these had been found all over the campus. As if the situation couldn't get any worse, the dean told Kris that there is nothing the university or the administration could do about it—nothing.

At one point Kris said the administration even accused him of being responsible for these acts. Kris was told the administration's sole responsibility was to simply inform him this was going on and nothing more. They just had to make sure he knew about it.

Kris was told that words such as homosexual or AIDS were proper terms, protected speech, and not grounds for punishment.

As you can imagine, Kris was devastated. He didn't attend class for weeks after that. His friends, family, and loved ones started to seriously worry about his well-being.

In the meantime, the word of this and Kris's status as HIV positive, as you can imagine, spread like wildfire across the campus. While Kris had been out to a small group of friends, there was no going back once the local paper picked up on the story which eventually circulated in the national media.

Thankfully, there is a happy ending to this heartbreaking story. In yet another example of how the younger generation in our country is swiftly helping to turn the tide against intolerance, Kris and Isaac won that election, and Kris served a term as the student body vice president. Kris has now moved on to serve in a different but somewhat similar capacity, and that is as a congressional intern here in my office in Washington, DC. I am proud to say that Kris is here with us on the floor today. And just like the fate he found that one night in search of a public restroom, Kris now has another chance to be part of a life-changing experience because today I have come to the floor to reintroduce the Tyler Clemente Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act of 2014.

As many of you may remember, this legislation is named after Tyler Clemente. He was an 18-year-old freshman at Rutgers University. Back in 2010, without his knowledge, Tyler's roommate streamed video footage on the Internet of Tyler in his dorm room being intimate with another male. After his roommate and another student invaded his privacy in such a serious way and continued to harass him over the Internet, Tyler leapt off the George Washington Bridge and sadly took his own life.

When I sat down and spoke with Kris about this recently, he told me how his story was very close to ending just like Tyler's story. He didn't have anyone on campus to turn to. Since the administration said they were unable to do anything about this hate crime, Kris felt he had no opportunity for closure.

Kris told me:

For most young people, when things like that happen, we have got to have people who are going to be proactive in helping them. And not someone telling them there's nothing we can do to help you.

Quite shockingly, despite statistics telling us that LGBT students are nearly twice as likely to experience harassment when compared to their heterosexual peers, there is no Federal requirement that colleges and universities have policies to protect their students from harassment.

That is why I feel so strongly about this legislation.

The legislation I am introducing will require colleges and universities that receive Federal aid to establish anti-harassment policies for students no matter who they are or what they identify with, and they will be required to have the language of those policies easily accessible. It will recognize cyber bullying of all kinds as serious means of harassment. Finally, the Tyler Clemente act authorizes competitive grants for schools to initiate or expand programs to prevent these kinds of things from happening, to provide counseling for victims of the accused, and to train everyone on campus about how to prevent this in the future.

When I was back home last week in Spokane, I told Kris's story, just as I did today, and talked about the desperate need for these kinds of protections. I am sure, as with many of those listening, most of my constituents were pretty surprised to learn these policies aren't already in place at all of our institutions of higher learning. I couldn't agree more. Why aren't colleges and universities across our country all being proactive in establishing these programs and points of contact for students such as Tyler or Kris who have experienced or could experience such a life-changing event?

While many schools currently have successful prevention and counseling programs in place, students shouldn't have to take their health and safety into account when they decide where they are going to study in this country.

Kris recounted for me how each day during this horrible experience he would awaken, and there were 5 or 6 seconds where he would feel normal again, as if nothing had happened. But then reality would set in, and it felt as though a ton of bricks had fallen on top of him. Fortunately for Kris, he was able to lean on the campus LGBT community for support during this very trying time. But he said:

If I hadn't reached out to the community, I probably wouldn't be here today. Every day going to school felt like a battlefield.

Unfortunately, there are others similar to Kris who don't have that point of contact on campus—a supportive parent or a tight-knit group of friends who help them get through these kinds of experiences.

I am very proud to be here today, with the support of my outstanding cosponsor, Senator BALDWIN, to take a major step to change this.

I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to pay tribute to my friend Senator Frank Lautenberg and his staff for their tireless work to craft this original bill which serves as a tremendous honor to the life of Tyler Clementi. No student, whether they are gay or straight or Black or White or Christian or Muslim, should have to face discrimination and harassment in pursuit of their education. While I know it is impossible to eradicate all bad behavior from our society, we have to arm our campuses with the tools and resources necessary to not only efficiently and effectively support the victims but also to take action against those who have perpetrated such senseless crimes.

That is why I am here today. I am very proud to introduce this legislation.

I wish to thank Kris for his courage in speaking out and his ability to be here today to make sure no other student in our country ever has to go through what he did.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2177. A bill to establish an Office of Forensic Science and a Forensic Science Board, to strengthen and promote confidence in the criminal justice system by ensuring scientific validity, reliability, and accuracy in forensic testing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, from DNA to digital evidence, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and judges are becoming increasingly reliant on the collection and analysis of various forms of forensic evidence in a criminal investigation or prosecution. It is therefore all the more important that we strengthen our confidence in the criminal justice system, and the evidence it relies upon, by ensuring that forensic evidence and testimony is accurate, credible, and scientifically grounded.

I am proud to introduce today the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Reform Act. This legislation represents a comprehensive and commonsense approach toward guaranteeing the effectiveness and scientific integrity of forensic evidence used in criminal cases, and in ensuring that Americans can have faith in their criminal justice system. The bill is also bipartisan, and I am pleased that Senator CORNYN has agreed to be a cosponsor of this legislation.

Over the course of the past 5 years, my staff and I have spent countless hours talking to prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement officers, judges, forensic practitioners, academic experts, and many, many others to learn as much as we could about what is happening in the forensic sciences and what needs to be done. As this effort has progressed, I have been disturbed to learn about still more cases in which innocent people may have been convicted, and perhaps even executed, in part due to faulty forensic

evidence or the lack of valid forensic evidence. Since the first post-conviction DNA exoneration in the United States in 1989, there have been 314 DNA exonerations. These exonerees spent an average of 13.5 years in prison, amounting to an astounding total of 4,202 years. It is a double tragedy when an innocent person is convicted. An innocent person suffers, and a guilty person remains free, leaving us all less safe. We must do everything we can to avoid that untenable outcome.

It has also become abundantly clear through the course of this inquiry that the men and women who test and analyze forensic evidence do tremendous work that is vital to our criminal justice system. I remember their important contributions and hard work from my days as a prosecutor in Vermont, and the rapid development and expansion of the forensic science disciplines since that time has been extraordinary. So their work is even more important today, and we need to strengthen the field of forensics, and the justice system's confidence in it, so that their hard work can be consistently relied upon, as it should be.

Everyone recognizes the need for forensic evidence that is accurate and reliable. Prosecutors and law enforcement officers want evidence that can be relied upon to determine guilt and prove it beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law. Defense attorneys want strong evidence that can be used to exclude innocent people from suspicion. Forensic science practitioners want their work to have as much certainty as possible and to be able to testify in court with confidence and integrity. All scientists and all attorneys who care about these issues want the scientific analysis that is admitted as evidence in the courtroom to meet the same rigorous testing and research standards found in the laboratory.

There is general agreement that the forensic sciences can be improved through strong and unassailable research to test and establish the validity of the forensic disciplines, as well as the application of consistent and established standards in the field. There is also a dire need for well managed and appropriately directed funding for research, development, training, and technical assistance. It is a good investment that will lead to fewer trials and appeals, and will reduce crime by ensuring that those who commit serious offenses are promptly captured and convicted. There is also broad consensus that all forensic laboratories should be required to meet rigorous accreditation standards and that forensic practitioners should be required to obtain meaningful certification.

Finally, there is wide acknowledgment about the need for comprehensive legislation to address all of these issues. I first introduced a version of this legislation in 2011, after an extensive process of consultation with experts and stakeholders that included three Judiciary Committee hearings,

dozens of meetings with individuals and organizations, and multiple drafts and revisions of legislative proposals. We have continued to refine this bill over the past 3 years, and the legislation Senator CORNYN and I introduce today is the product of that ongoing conversation.

I have been encouraged by the efforts of the Department of Justice and National Institute of Standards and Technology, NIST, to implement administratively some of the basic structural reforms contained in our bill, pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding that led to the formation of the National Commission on Forensic Science. However, executive action is not enough. Congress must enact comprehensive forensic science reform legislation, and I look forward to working with the Department of Justice, NIST, the National Science Foundation, and others to make sure we implement the necessary reforms as expeditiously as possible.

This is not a partisan issue. Improving the reliability of forensic evidence does not advance the interests of just prosecutors or defendants, or of Democrats or Republicans. It is in the interest of justice. Senator CORNYN recognizes this, and I am proud to have him as a cosponsor of this important legislation. We will continue to work diligently with senators on both sides of the aisle, and I hope many other senators will join us to cosponsor this legislation, and work with me to ensure its passage.

I want to thank the forensic science practitioners, experts, advocates, law enforcement personnel, judges, and so many others whose input forms the basis for this legislation. Their passion for this issue and for getting it right gives me confidence that we will work together successfully to make much needed progress in implementing comprehensive forensic reform legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2177

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Reform Act”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.
- Sec. 3. Purpose.

TITLE I—STRUCTURE AND OVERSIGHT

- Sec. 101. Office of Forensic Science.
- Sec. 102. Forensic Science Board.
- Sec. 103. Committees.
- Sec. 104. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE II—ACCREDITATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORIES

- Sec. 201. Accreditation of forensic science laboratories.
- Sec. 202. Standards for laboratory accreditation.

Sec. 203. Administration and enforcement of accreditation program.

TITLE III—CERTIFICATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE PERSONNEL

- Sec. 301. Definitions.
- Sec. 302. Certification of forensic science personnel.
- Sec. 303. Standards for certification.
- Sec. 304. Administration and review of certification program.
- Sec. 305. Support and technical assistance for State and local laboratories.

TITLE IV—RESEARCH

- Sec. 401. Research strategy and priorities.
- Sec. 402. Research grants.
- Sec. 403. Oversight and review.
- Sec. 404. Public-private collaboration.

TITLE V—STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Sec. 501. Development of standards and best practices.
- Sec. 502. Establishment and dissemination of standards and best practices.
- Sec. 503. Review and oversight.

TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE AND THE FORENSIC SCIENCE BOARD

- Sec. 601. Forensic science training and education for judges, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel.
- Sec. 602. Educational programs in the forensic sciences.
- Sec. 603. Medicolegal death investigation.
- Sec. 604. Intergovernmental coordination.
- Sec. 605. Anonymous reporting.
- Sec. 606. Interoperability of databases and technologies.
- Sec. 607. Code of ethics.
- Sec. 608. Needs assessment.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **BOARD.**—The term “Board” means the Forensic Science Board established under section 102(a).

(2) **COMMITTEE.**—The term “Committee” means a committee established under section 103(a)(2).

(3) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the Office.

(4) **FORENSIC SCIENCE DISCIPLINE.**—The term “forensic science discipline” shall have the meaning given that term by the Director in accordance with section 102(h).

(5) **FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORY.**—The term “forensic science laboratory” shall have the meaning given that term by the Director in accordance with section 201(c).

(6) **NIST.**—The term “NIST” means the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(7) **OFFICE.**—The term “Office” means the Office of Forensic Science established under section 101(a).

(8) **RELEVANT PERSONNEL.**—The term “relevant personnel” shall have the meaning given that term by the Director in accordance with section 301(b).

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to strengthen and promote confidence in the criminal justice system by promoting standards and best practices and ensuring scientific validity, reliability, and accuracy with respect to forensic testing, analysis, identification, and comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

TITLE I—STRUCTURE AND OVERSIGHT

SEC. 101. OFFICE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established an Office of Forensic Science within the Office of the Deputy Attorney General in the Department of Justice.

(b) OFFICERS AND STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall include—
 (A) a Director, who shall have a background in science and be appointed by the Attorney General; and

(B) such other officers and staff as the Deputy Attorney General and the Director determine appropriate.

(2) LEADERSHIP ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR.—The Director shall have primary responsibility for establishing and implementing national policy regarding forensic science as used in the criminal justice system.

(3) DEADLINE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the initial appointment and hiring under paragraph (1) shall be completed.

(c) VACANCY.—In the event of a vacancy in the position of Director—

(1) the Attorney General shall designate an acting Director; and

(2) during any period of vacancy before designation of an acting Director, the Deputy Attorney General shall serve as acting Director.

(d) COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION WITH NIST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the appointment of the Director, the Director and the Director of NIST shall establish a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure collaboration and coordination in the implementation of this Act.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The Memorandum of Understanding required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) policies and procedures to ensure that, in implementing this Act, the Director and the Director of NIST—

(i) incorporate appropriately the priorities and expertise of law enforcement and forensic practitioners; and

(ii) establish structures designed to guarantee independent and objective scientific determinations; and

(B) agreements governing—

(i) selection of members of Committees and support by NIST of the Committees in accordance with section 103;

(ii) administration by NIST of grant programs described in section 402;

(iii) designation of a liaison at NIST to facilitate communication between the Office and NIST; and

(iv) any other appropriate collaboration or coordination.

(e) LIAISON FROM THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in consultation with the Director, shall designate a liaison at the National Science Foundation to—

(1) facilitate communication and collaboration between the Office and the National Science Foundation; and

(2) encourage participation by the National Science Foundation in implementing title IV of this Act.

(f) DUTIES AND AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall—

(A) assist the Board in carrying out all the functions of the Board under this Act and such other related functions as are necessary to perform the functions of the Board; and

(B) evaluate and act upon the recommendations of the Board in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director shall—

(A) establish, lead, and oversee implementation of accreditation and certification standards under titles II and III;

(B) establish a comprehensive strategy for scientific research in the forensic sciences under title IV;

(C) establish standards and best practices for forensic science disciplines under title V;

(D) define the term “forensic science discipline” for the purposes of this Act in accordance with section 102(h);

(E) establish and maintain a list of forensic science disciplines in accordance with section 102(h);

(F) establish Committees in accordance with section 103;

(G) define the term “forensic science laboratory” for the purposes of this Act in accordance with section 201(c);

(H) establish a code of ethics for the forensic science disciplines in accordance with section 607; and

(I) perform all other functions of the Office under this Act and such other related functions as are necessary to perform the functions of the Office described in this Act.

(3) CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon receiving a recommendation from the Board, the Director shall—

(i) give substantial deference to the recommendation; and

(ii) not later than 30 days after the date on which the Director receives the recommendation, determine whether to adopt, modify, or reject the recommendation.

(B) MODIFICATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Director determines to substantially modify a recommendation under subparagraph (A), the Director shall immediately notify the Board of the proposed modification.

(ii) BOARD RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Director provides notice to the Board under clause (i), the Board shall submit to the Director a recommendation on whether the proposed modification should be adopted.

(iii) ACCEPTANCE OF MODIFICATION.—If the Board recommends that a proposed modification should be adopted under clause (ii), the Director may implement the modified recommendation.

(iv) REJECTION OF MODIFICATION.—If the Board recommends that a proposed modification should not be adopted under clause (ii), the Director shall, not later than 10 days after the date on which the Board makes the recommendation—

(I) provide notice and an explanation of the proposed modification to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives; and

(II) begin, with regard to the proposed modification, a rulemaking on the record after opportunity for an agency hearing.

(C) REJECTION.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Director determines to reject a recommendation under subparagraph (A), the Director shall—

(i) provide notice and an explanation of the decision to reject the recommendation to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives; and

(ii) begin, with regard to the recommendation, a rulemaking on the record after opportunity for an agency hearing.

(g) WEB SITE.—The Director shall—

(1) establish a Web site that is publicly accessible; and

(2) publish and maintain on the Web site—

(A) a central repository of recommendations of the Board and all standards, best practices, protocols, definitions, and other materials established, accepted, or amended, by the Director under this Act; and

(B) a central repository of current and past forensic science research, which shall be—

(i) collected and catalogued in a manner that is easily accessible to the public; and

(ii) updated no less frequently than once every 2 years.

SEC. 102. FORENSIC SCIENCE BOARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established a Forensic Science Board to serve as an advisory board regarding forensic science in order to strengthen and promote confidence in the criminal justice system by promoting standards and best practices and ensuring scientific validity, reliability, and accuracy with respect to forensic testing, analysis, identification, and comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

(b) APPOINTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be composed of 17 members, who shall—

(A) be appointed by the President not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) come from professional communities that have expertise relevant to and significant interest in the field of forensic science.

(2) CONSIDERATION AND CONSULTATION.—In making an appointment under paragraph (1), the President shall—

(A) consider the need for the Board to exercise independent and objective scientific judgment; and

(B) consider, among other factors, membership on the National Commission on Forensic Science and recommendations from leading scientific organizations and leading professional organizations in the field of forensic science and other relevant fields.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The Board shall include—

(A) 11 voting members;

(B) 6 nonvoting members; and

(C) the ex officio members described in paragraph (7).

(4) VOTING MEMBER REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the 11 voting members—

(i) each shall have comprehensive scientific backgrounds;

(ii) not fewer than 6 shall have extensive experience and background in scientific research;

(iii) not fewer than 6 shall have extensive and current practical experience and background in forensic science; and

(iv) not less than 1 shall be a board certified forensic pathologist.

(B) MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS.—An individual voting member may meet more than 1 of the requirements described in clauses (ii) through (iv) of subparagraph (A).

(5) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—One nonvoting member shall come from each of the following categories:

(A) Judges.

(B) Prosecutors.

(C) State and local law enforcement officials.

(D) Criminal defense attorneys.

(E) Organizations that represent people who may have been wrongly convicted.

(F) State and local laboratory directors.

(6) FULFILLMENT OF MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS.—An individual who fulfills the requirements described in paragraph (4) may serve as a voting member even if that individual also fulfills a requirement described in paragraph (5).

(7) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Director, the Deputy Attorney General, and the Directors of NIST and the National Science Foundation, or their designees, shall serve as ex officio members of the Board and shall not participate in voting.

(8) APPOINTMENT OF BOARD CHAIRPERSON.—The President shall designate a voting member of the Board to serve as Chairperson of

the Board for the duration of that member's term.

(c) TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each voting and nonvoting member of the Board, excluding ex officio members, shall be appointed for a term of 6 years.

(2) EXCEPTION.—Of the members first appointed to the Board—

(A) 3 voting members and 2 nonvoting members shall serve a term of 2 years;

(B) 4 voting members and 2 nonvoting members shall serve a term of 4 years; and

(C) 4 voting members and 2 nonvoting members shall serve a term of 6 years.

(3) RENEWABLE TERM.—A voting or nonvoting member of the Board may be appointed for not more than a total of 2 terms, including an initial term described in paragraph (2).

(4) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In the event of a vacancy, the President may appoint a member to fill the remainder of the term.

(B) ADDITIONAL TERM.—A member appointed under subparagraph (A) may be reappointed for 1 additional term.

(5) HOLDOVERS.—If a successor has not been appointed at the conclusion of the term of a member of the Board, the member of the Board may continue to serve until—

(A) a successor is appointed; or

(B) the member of the Board is reappointed.

(d) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Board shall—

(1) make recommendations to the Director relating to research priorities and needs, accreditation and certification standards, standards and protocols for forensic science disciplines, and any other issue consistent with this Act;

(2) monitor and evaluate—

(A) the administration of accreditation, certification, and research programs and procedures established under this Act; and

(B) the operation of the Committees;

(3) review and update, as appropriate, any recommendations made under paragraph (1);

(4) identify, as appropriate, any additional issues that 1 or more Committees should consider; and

(5) perform all other functions of the Board under this Act and such other related functions as are necessary to perform the functions of the Board.

(e) CONSULTATION.—The Board shall consult as appropriate with the Deputy Attorney General, the Director of NIST, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Director of the National Institute of Justice, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Director of the National Institutes of Health, senior officials from other relevant Federal agencies including the Department of Defense, and relevant officials of State and local governments.

(f) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall hold not fewer than 4 meetings of the full Board each year.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) NOTICE.—The Board shall provide public notice of any meeting of the Board in a reasonable period in advance of the meeting.

(B) OPEN MEETINGS.—A meeting of the Board shall be open to the public.

(C) QUORUM.—A majority of the voting members of the Board shall be present for a quorum to conduct business.

(g) VOTES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Decisions of the Board shall be made by an affirmative vote of not less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the members of the Board voting.

(2) VOTING PROCEDURES.—

(A) RECORDED.—All votes of the Board shall be recorded.

(B) REMOTE AND PROXY VOTING.—If necessary, a voting member of the Board may cast a vote—

(i) over the phone or through electronic mail or other electronic means if the vote is scheduled to take place during a time other than a full meeting of the Board; and

(ii) over the phone or by proxy if the vote is scheduled to take place during a full meeting of the Board.

(h) DEFINITION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE DISCIPLINE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall—

(A) develop a recommended definition of the term "forensic science discipline" for purposes of this Act, which shall encompass disciplines with a sufficient scientific basis that involve forensic testing, analysis, identification, or comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding;

(B) develop a recommended list of forensic science disciplines for purposes of this Act; and

(C) submit the recommended definition and proposed list of forensic science disciplines to the Director.

(2) CONSIDERATION.—In developing a recommended list of forensic science disciplines under paragraph (1)(B), the Board shall—

(A) consider each field from which courts in criminal cases hear forensic testimony or admit forensic evidence; and

(B) consult with relevant practitioners, experts, and professional organizations.

(3) EXCLUSION FROM LIST.—If the Board recommends that a field should not be included on the list submitted under paragraph (1) because the field has insufficient scientific basis on the date of the recommendation of the Board, the Board shall publish an explanation of the recommendation, which—

(A) shall be published on the Web site of the Board; and

(B) may include a finding that a field could be recognized as a forensic science discipline for purposes of this Act, based on additional research.

(4) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the recommendations of the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish a definition for the term "forensic science discipline", and shall establish a list of forensic science disciplines.

(5) ANNUAL EVALUATION.—On an annual basis, the Board shall—

(A) evaluate—

(i) whether any field should be added to the list of forensic science disciplines established under paragraph (4), including any field previously excluded; and

(ii) whether any field on the list of forensic science disciplines established under paragraph (4) should be modified or removed; and

(B) submit the evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A), including any recommendations, to the Director.

(i) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate a staff director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Board to perform the duties of the Board.

(2) COMPENSATION.—The Board may fix the compensation of the staff director and other personnel appointed under paragraph (1) without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed

the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(3) PERSONNEL AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any personnel of the Board who are employees shall be employees under section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, for purposes of chapters 63, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 89A, 89B, and 90 of that title.

(B) MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.—Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed to apply to members of the Board.

(4) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Board may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(5) VOLUNTARY SERVICES.—Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Board may accept and use voluntary and uncompensated services for the Board as the Board determines necessary.

(j) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to Congress a report describing the work of the Board and the work of each Committee, which shall include a description of any recommendations, decisions, and other significant materials generated during the 2-year period.

(k) APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) through (4), the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall apply to the Board.

(2) TERMINATION PROVISION.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Board.

(3) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Members of the Board shall serve without compensation for services performed for the Board.

(4) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Board.

(5) DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER.—In accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), the Director shall—

(A) serve as the designated Federal officer (as described in section 10(e) of such Act); and

(B) designate an Advisory Committee Management Officer (as described in section 8(b) of such Act) for the Board.

(1) TRANSFER AND CONSOLIDATION OF NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FORENSIC SCIENCE.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the first meeting of the Board occurs, the Attorney General or the Director of NIST, as the case may be, shall transfer to the Office, control, supervision, and any unobligated balances available for the operation of the National Commission on Forensic Science or any national commission that has a similar scope or responsibility to the Office.

SEC. 103. COMMITTEES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF COMMITTEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall issue recommendations to the Director relating to—

(A) the number of Committees that shall be established to examine research needs, standards and best practices, and certification standards for the forensic science disciplines, which shall be sufficient to—

(i) ensure that the Committees are representative of each forensic science discipline; and

(ii) allow the Committees to function effectively;

(B) the scope of responsibility for each Committee recommended to be established, which shall ensure that each forensic science discipline is addressed by a Committee;

(C) what the relationship should be between the Committees and any scientific working group, scientific area committee, guidance group, or technical working group that has a similar scope of responsibility; and

(D) whether any Committee should consider any field not recognized as a forensic science discipline for the purpose of determining whether there is research that could be conducted and used to form the basis for establishing the field as a forensic science discipline.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the recommendations of the Board under paragraph (1), the Director, in consultation with the Director of NIST shall—

(A) consider how to adapt and incorporate any scientific working group, scientific area committee, guidance group, or technical working group operating under the Department of Justice or NIST into a Committee;

(B) in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish—

(i) Committees to examine research needs, standards, best practices, and certification standards for the forensic science disciplines, which shall be not fewer than 1; and

(ii) a clear scope of responsibility for each Committee; and

(C) publish a list of the Committees and the scope of responsibility for each Committee on the Web site for the Office.

(3) ANNUAL EVALUATION.—The Board, on an annual basis, shall—

(A) evaluate whether—

(i) any new Committees should be established;

(ii) the scope of responsibility for any Committee should be modified; and

(iii) any Committee should be discontinued; and

(B) submit any recommendations relating to the evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A) to the Director.

(4) UPDATES.—Upon receipt of any recommendations from the Board under paragraph (3), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), determine whether to establish, modify the scope of, or discontinue any Committee.

(5) TRANSFER AND CONSOLIDATION OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the first meeting of a Committee occurs, the Attorney General or the Director of NIST, as the case may be, shall transfer to the Office, control, supervision, and any unobligated balances available for the operation of any scientific working group, scientific area committee, guidance group, or technical working group that has a similar scope or responsibility to the Committee.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Committee shall—

(A) consist of not more than 21 members—

(i) each of whom shall be a scientist with knowledge relevant to a forensic science discipline addressed by the Committee;

(ii) not less than 50 percent of whom shall have extensive experience and background in scientific research; and

(iii) not less than 50 percent of whom shall have extensive practical experience and background in the forensic sciences sufficient to ensure that the Committee has an adequate understanding of the factors and needs unique to the forensic sciences; and

(B) have a membership that represents a variety of scientific disciplines, including the forensic sciences.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “scientist” includes—

(A) a statistician with a scientific background; and

(B) a board certified physician or forensic pathologist with expertise in forensic sciences.

(c) APPOINTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIST, in close coordination with the Board and the Director and pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding required under section 101(d), shall appoint the members of each Committee.

(2) CONSIDERATION.—In appointing members to a Committee under paragraph (1), the Director of NIST shall consider—

(A) the importance of analysis from scientists with academic research backgrounds in both basic and applied sciences; and

(B) the importance of input from experienced and actively practicing forensic practitioners, including individuals who participated in scientific working groups, scientific area committees, guidance groups, or technical working groups.

(3) VACANCIES.—In the event of a vacancy, the Director of NIST, in consultation with the Board and the Director, may appoint a member to fill the remainder of the term.

(4) HOLDOVERS.—If a successor has not been appointed at the conclusion of the term of a member of the Committee, the member of the Committee may continue to serve until—

(A) a successor is appointed; or

(B) the member of the Committee is reappointed.

(d) TERMS.—A member of a Committee shall serve for renewable terms of 4 years.

(e) SUPPORT AND OVERSIGHT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding required under section 101(d), the Director of NIST, in consultation with the Director, shall provide support and staff for each Committee as needed.

(2) DUTIES AND OVERSIGHT.—The Director of NIST, in consultation with the Director, shall—

(A) perform periodic oversight of each Committee; and

(B) report any concerns about the performance or functioning of a Committee to the Board and the Director.

(3) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If a Committee fails to produce recommendations within the time periods required under this Act, the Director of NIST, in consultation with the Director, shall work with the Committee to assist the Committee in producing the required recommendations in a timely manner.

(f) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A Committee shall have the duties and responsibilities set out in this Act, and shall perform any other functions determined appropriate by the Board.

(2) COMMITTEE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A Committee shall submit recommendations and all recommended standards, protocols, or other materials developed by the Committee to the Board for evaluation.

(B) PROHIBITION OF MODIFICATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Any recommendations of a Committee and any recommended standards, protocols, or other materials developed by a Committee may be approved or disapproved by the Board, but may not be modified by the Board.

(C) APPROVAL OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the Board approves a recommendation or recommended standard, protocol, or other material submitted by a Committee under subparagraph (A), the

Board shall submit the recommendation or recommended standard, protocol, or other material as a recommendation of the Board, to the Director for consideration in accordance with section 101(f)(3).

(D) DISAPPROVAL OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—If the Board disapproves of any recommendation of a Committee or recommended standard, protocol, or other material developed by a Committee—

(i) the Board shall provide in writing the reason for the disapproval of the recommendation or recommended standard, protocol, or other material;

(ii) the Committee shall withdraw the recommendation or recommended standard, protocol, or other material; and

(iii) the Committee may submit a revised recommendation or recommended standard, protocol, or other material.

(g) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A Committee shall hold not fewer than 4 meetings of the full Committee each year.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) NOTICE.—A Committee shall provide public notice of any meeting of the Committee a reasonable period in advance of the meeting.

(B) OPEN MEETINGS.—A meeting of a Committee shall be open to the public.

(C) QUORUM.—A majority of members of a Committee shall be present for a quorum to conduct business.

(h) VOTES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Decisions of a Committee shall be made by an affirmative vote of not less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the members of the Committee voting.

(2) VOTING PROCEDURES.—

(A) RECORDED.—All votes taken by a Committee shall be recorded.

(B) REMOTE AND PROXY VOTING.—If necessary, a member of a Committee may cast a vote—

(i) over the phone or through electronic mail if the vote is scheduled to take place during a time other than a full meeting of the Committee; and

(ii) over the phone or by proxy if the vote is scheduled to take place during a full meeting of the Committee.

(i) APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to a Committee.

(2) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—Members of a Committee shall serve without compensation for services performed for the Committee.

(3) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of a Committee shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Committee.

SEC. 104. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated, including from any unobligated funds appropriated to the Department of Justice and the National Institute of Standards and Technology for the operation of a scientific working group, scientific area committee, guidance group, or technical working group transferred under section 103(a)(5), and including any unobligated funds appropriated to strengthen and enhance the practice of forensic sciences under any other provision of law, \$8,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019 for the operation and staffing of the Office, Board, and Committees.

TITLE II—ACCREDITATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORIES

SEC. 201. ACCREDITATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE LABORATORIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—On and after the date established under subsection (b)(2)(E), a forensic science laboratory may not receive, directly or indirectly, any Federal funds, unless the Director has verified that the laboratory has been accredited in accordance with the standards and procedures established under this title.

(b) PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITATION.—

(1) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director—

(A) a comprehensive strategy to enable forensic science laboratories to obtain and maintain accreditation;

(B) recommended procedures for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories that are consistent with the recommended standards developed by the Board under section 202;

(C) recommended procedures for the periodic review and updating of the accreditation status of forensic science laboratories;

(D) recommended procedures for the Director to verify that laboratories have been accredited in accordance with the standards and procedures established under this title, which shall include procedures to implement, administer, and coordinate enforcement of the program for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories; and

(E) a recommendation regarding the dates by which forensic science laboratories should—

(i) begin the process of laboratory accreditation; and

(ii) obtain verification of laboratory accreditation to be eligible to receive Federal funds.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the recommendations of the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish—

(A) procedures to implement a comprehensive strategy to enable forensic science laboratories to obtain and maintain accreditation;

(B) procedures for the accreditation of a forensic science laboratory;

(C) procedures for the Director to verify that laboratories have been accredited in accordance with the standards and procedures established under this title;

(D) the date by which a forensic science laboratory shall begin the process of accreditation; and

(E) the date by which a forensic science laboratory shall obtain verification of laboratory accreditation to be eligible to receive Federal funds.

(3) CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In determining, recommending, and establishing the dates under paragraphs (1) and (2), the Board and Director shall consider whether funding has been appropriated pursuant to section 305 and other relevant Federal grant programs to sufficiently assist and support laboratories in obtaining accreditation under this Act.

(c) DEFINITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall recommend to the Director a definition of the term “forensic science laboratory” for purposes of this Act, which shall include any laboratory that conducts forensic testing, analysis, identification, or comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the recommendation of the Board

under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish a definition for the term “forensic science laboratory”.

(d) APPLICABILITY TO FEDERAL AGENCIES.—On and after the date established by the Director under subsection (b)(2)(E), a Federal agency may not use any forensic science laboratory, including any services, products, analysis, opinions, or conclusions provided by the forensic science laboratory, during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding unless the forensic science laboratory meets the standards of accreditation and certification established by the Office under this Act.

SEC. 202. STANDARDS FOR LABORATORY ACCREDITATION.

(a) STANDARDS.—

(1) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall, in consultation with qualified professional organizations, submit to the Director recommendations regarding standards for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories, including quality assurance and quality control standards, to ensure the quality, integrity, and accuracy of any testing, analysis, identification, or comparisons performed by a forensic science laboratory for use during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the recommendations of the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish standards for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In recommending or establishing standards under paragraph (1) or (2) the Board and the Director shall—

(A) consider—

(i) whether any relevant national or international accreditation standards that were in effect before the date of enactment of this Act would be sufficient for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories under this Act;

(ii) whether any relevant national or international accreditation standards that were in effect before the date of enactment of this Act would be sufficient for the accreditation of forensic science laboratories under this Act with supplemental standards; and

(iii) the incorporation of relevant national or international accreditation standards that were in effect before the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) include—

(i) educational and training requirements for relevant laboratory personnel;

(ii) proficiency and competency testing requirements for relevant laboratory personnel; and

(iii) maintenance and auditing requirements for accredited forensic science laboratories.

(b) REVIEW OF STANDARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 5 years—

(A) the Board shall—

(i) review the scope and effectiveness of the accreditation standards established under subsection (a);

(ii) submit recommendations to the Director relating to whether, and if so, how to update or supplement the standards as necessary to—

(I) account for developments in relevant scientific research, technological advances, and new forensic science disciplines;

(II) ensure adherence to the standards and best practices established under title V; and

(III) address any other issue identified during the course of the review conducted under clause (i); and

(B) the Director shall, as necessary and in accordance with section 101(f)(3), update the accreditation standards established under subsection (a).

(2) PROCEDURES FOR OPEN AND TRANSPARENT REVIEW OF STANDARDS.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall establish procedures to ensure that the process for developing, reviewing, and updating accreditation standards under this section—

(A) is open and transparent to the public; and

(B) includes an opportunity for the public to comment on proposed standards with sufficient prior notice.

SEC. 203. ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.

(a) ADMINISTRATION AND OVERSIGHT OF ACCREDITATION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall determine whether a forensic science laboratory is eligible to receive, directly or indirectly, Federal funds under section 201(a).

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall, in consultation with the Board and as appropriate, identify 1 or more qualified accrediting bodies with significant expertise relevant to the accreditation of forensic science laboratories, the accreditation of a forensic science laboratory by which shall constitute accreditation for purposes of section 201(a).

(B) OVERSIGHT.—The Director shall periodically—

(i) reevaluate whether accreditation by a qualified accrediting body identified under subparagraph (A) is adequate to ensure compliance with the standards and procedures established under this title; and

(ii) recommend updates to the standards and procedures used by 1 or more qualified accrediting bodies, as necessary.

(C) REPORTING.—The Director shall provide to the Board, and publish on the Web site of the Office, regular reports regarding—

(i) the accreditation of forensic science laboratories by qualified accrediting bodies identified under subparagraph (A); and

(ii) reevaluations of accreditation by qualified accrediting bodies under subparagraph (B).

(b) REVIEW OF ELIGIBILITY.—Not less frequently than once every 5 years, the Director shall evaluate whether a forensic science laboratory that has been determined to be eligible to receive Federal funds under section 201(a) remains eligible to receive Federal funds, including whether any accreditation of the forensic science laboratory by a qualified accrediting body identified under subparagraph (A) is still in effect.

(c) WEB SITE.—The Director shall develop and maintain on the Web site of the Office an updated list of—

(1) the forensic science laboratories that are eligible for Federal funds under section 201(a);

(2) the forensic science laboratories that have been determined to be ineligible to receive Federal funds under section 201(a); and

(3) the forensic science laboratories that are awaiting a determination regarding eligibility to receive Federal funds under section 201(a).

TITLE III—CERTIFICATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE PERSONNEL

SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.

(a) COVERED ENTITY.—In this title, the term “covered entity” means an entity that—

(1) is not a forensic science laboratory; and

(2) conducts forensic testing, analysis, investigation, identification, or comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

(b) RELEVANT PERSONNEL.—

(1) RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director a recommended definition of the term “relevant personnel”, which shall include all individuals who—

(A) conduct forensic testing, analysis, investigation, identification, or comparisons, the results of which may be interpreted, presented, or otherwise used during the course of a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding; or

(B) testify about evidence prepared by an individual described in subparagraph (A).

(2) DEFINITION.—After the Director receives the recommendation of the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), define the term “relevant personnel” for purposes of this title.

SEC. 302. CERTIFICATION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE PERSONNEL.

Except as provided in section 304(c)(2), on and after the date established under section 304(c)(1), a forensic science laboratory or covered entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, any Federal funds, unless all relevant personnel of the forensic science laboratory or covered entity are certified under this title.

SEC. 303. STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION.

(a) RECOMMENDED STANDARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which all members of a Committee have been appointed, the Committee shall make recommendations to the Board relating to standards for the certification of relevant personnel in each forensic science discipline addressed by the Committee.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing recommended standards under paragraph (1), a Committee shall—

(A) consult with qualified professional organizations, including qualified professional organizations that accredit forensic science certification programs;

(B) consider relevant certification standards and best practices developed by qualified professional or scientific organizations;

(C) consider whether successful completion of a certification program accredited by a qualified professional organization would be sufficient to meet the certification requirements for relevant personnel under this Act;

(D) consider whether and under what circumstances internal certification programs by accredited laboratories would be sufficient to meet the certification requirements for relevant personnel under this Act;

(E) consider any standards or best practices established under title V; and

(F) consider—

(i) whether certain minimum standards should be established for the education and training of relevant personnel;

(ii) whether there should be an alternative process to enable relevant personnel who were hired before the date established under section 304(c)(1), to obtain certifications, including—

(I) testing that demonstrates proficiency in a specific forensic science discipline that is equal to or greater than the level of proficiency required by the standards for certification; and

(II) a waiver of certain educational and training requirements;

(iii) whether and under what conditions relevant personnel should be allowed to perform an activity described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of section 301(b)(1) for a forensic science laboratory or covered entity while the individual obtains the training and education required for certification under the standards developed under this title; and

(iv) whether certification by recognized and relevant medical boards, or other recognized and relevant State professional boards, should be sufficient for relevant personnel to meet the standards developed under this title.

(b) APPROVAL OR DENIAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Board shall approve or deny any recommendation submitted by a Committee under subsection (a) in accordance with section 103(f)(2).

(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS.—After the Director receives recommendations from the Board under subsection (b), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish standards for the certification of relevant personnel.

(d) REVIEW OF STANDARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 5 years, a Committee shall—

(A) review the standards for certification established under subsection (c) for each forensic science discipline within the responsibility of the Committee; and

(B) submit to the Board recommendations regarding updates, if any, to the standards for certification as necessary—

(i) to account for developments in relevant scientific research, technological advances, or changes in the law; and

(ii) to ensure adherence to the standards and best practices established under title V.

(2) BOARD REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which a Committee submits recommendations under paragraph (1)(B), the Board shall, in accordance with section 103(f)(2)—

(A) consider the recommendations; and

(B) submit to the Director recommendations of standards and best practices for each forensic science discipline.

(3) UPDATES.—After the Director receives recommendations from the Board under paragraph (2), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), update the standards for certification of relevant personnel.

(e) PUBLIC COMMENT.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall establish procedures to ensure that the process for establishing, reviewing, and updating standards for certification of relevant personnel under this section—

(1) is open and transparent to the public; and

(2) includes an opportunity for the public to comment on proposed standards with sufficient prior notice.

SEC. 304. ADMINISTRATION AND REVIEW OF CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DETERMINATION.—The Director shall determine whether a forensic science laboratory or covered entity is eligible to receive, directly or indirectly, Federal funds under section 302.

(2) PROCEDURES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish policies and procedures to implement, administer, and coordinate enforcement of the certification requirements established under this title, including requiring the periodic recertification of relevant personnel.

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After consultation with the Board, the Director may identify 1 or more qualified professional organizations with significant expertise relevant to the certification of individuals in a particular forensic science discipline, the certification of an individual by which shall constitute certification for purposes of section 302.

(2) OVERSIGHT.—The Director shall periodically reevaluate whether certification by a qualified professional organization identified under paragraph (1) is adequate to ensure compliance with the standards established under this title.

(3) REPORTING.—The Director shall provide regular reports to the Board regarding the certification of relevant personnel by qualified professional organizations identified under paragraph (1) and reevaluations of certification by qualified professional organizations under paragraph (2), which shall be published on the Web site of the Office.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—After consultation with the Board, the Director shall establish the date by which forensic science laboratories and covered entities shall be in compliance with the certification requirements of this title.

(2) GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION.—The Director shall, in consultation with the Board and the relevant Committee, establish policies and procedures to enable the gradual implementation of the certification requirements that—

(A) include a reasonable schedule to allow relevant personnel to obtain certifications;

(B) allow for partial compliance with the requirements of section 302 for a reasonable period of time after the date established under paragraph (1); and

(C) allow for consideration of whether funding has been appropriated pursuant to section 305 and other relevant Federal grant programs to sufficiently assist and support forensic science laboratories and covered entities in complying with the certification requirements of this title.

(d) REVIEW OF CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—The Director shall establish policies and procedures for the periodic review of the implementation, administration, and enforcement of the certification requirements established under this title.

SEC. 305. SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR STATE AND LOCAL LABORATORIES.

(a) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the National Institute of Justice, in consultation with the Director, shall develop a plan for assisting and supporting forensic science laboratories and covered entities in obtaining accreditation under title II and certifications for relevant personnel under this title.

(b) AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF COVERDELL AND BYRNE JAG GRANTS.—The Attorney General, in consultation with the Director and the Director of the National Institute of Justice, and consistent with the implementation plan developed under subsection (a), may make grants under part BB of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797j et seq.) and subpart 1 of part E of such Act (42 U.S.C. 3750 et seq.), and provide technical assistance to forensic science laboratories and covered entities, to ensure that forensic science laboratories and covered entities are able to—

(1) obtain accreditation under title II;

(2) obtain certifications for relevant personnel under this title; and

(3) effectively fulfill their responsibilities during the process of obtaining accreditation under title II and certifications for relevant personnel under this title.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCES IMPROVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM.—Section 2804(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797m(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) To assist forensic science laboratories and covered entities, as those terms are defined in sections 2 and 301, respectively, of the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Reform Act, in obtaining accreditation under title II of such Act and certifications

for relevant personnel under title III of such Act, in accordance with section 305 of such Act.”.

(2) EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 501(a)(1) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3751(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “(H) Assistance to forensic science laboratories and covered entities, as those terms are defined in sections 2 and 301, respectively, of the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Reform Act, in obtaining accreditation under title II of such Act and certifications for relevant personnel under title III of such Act, in accordance with section 305 of such Act.”.

TITLE IV—RESEARCH

SEC. 401. RESEARCH STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES.

(a) COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH STRATEGY AND AGENDA.—

(1) RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall recommend to the Director a comprehensive strategy for fostering and improving peer-reviewed scientific research relating to the forensic science disciplines, including research addressing issues of validity, reliability, and accuracy in the forensic science disciplines.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives recommendations from the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish a comprehensive strategy for fostering and improving peer-reviewed scientific research relating to the forensic science disciplines.

(3) REVIEW.—

(A) BOARD REVIEW.—Not less frequently than once every 5 years, the Board shall—

(i) review the comprehensive strategy established under paragraph (2); and

(ii) recommend any necessary updates to the comprehensive strategy.

(B) UPDATES.—After the Director receives recommendations from the Board under subparagraph (A), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), update the comprehensive strategy as necessary and appropriate.

(b) RESEARCH FUNDING PRIORITIES.—

(1) RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall recommend to the Director a list of priorities for forensic science research funding.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—After the Director receives the list from the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish a list of priorities for forensic science research funding.

(3) REVIEW.—Not less frequently than once every 2 years, the Board shall—

(A) review—

(i) the list of priorities established under paragraph (2); and

(ii) the findings of the relevant Committees made under subsection (c); and

(B) recommend any necessary updates to the list of priorities, incorporating, as appropriate, the findings of the Committees under subsection (c).

(4) UPDATES.—After the Director receives the recommendations under paragraph (3), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), update as necessary the list of research funding priorities.

(c) EVALUATION OF RESEARCH NEEDS.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which all members of a Committee have been appointed under section 103, and periodically thereafter, the Committee shall—

(1) examine and evaluate the scientific research in each forensic science discipline within the responsibility of the Committee;

(2) conduct comprehensive surveys of scientific research relating to each forensic

science discipline within the responsibility of the Committee;

(3) examine the research needs in each forensic science discipline within the responsibility of the Committee and identify key areas in which further scientific research is needed; and

(4) develop and submit to the Board a list of research needs and priorities.

(d) CONSIDERATION.—In developing the initial research strategy, research priorities, and surveys required under this section, the Board and the Director shall consider any findings, surveys, and analyses relating to research in forensic science disciplines, including those made by the Subcommittee on Forensic Science of the National Science and Technology Council.

SEC. 402. RESEARCH GRANTS.

(a) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a nonprofit academic or research institution;

(B) an accredited forensic science laboratory; and

(C) any other entity designated by the Director of NIST.

(2) PEER-REVIEW RESEARCH GRANTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding required under section 101(d), the Director of NIST may, on a competitive basis and using funds appropriated to NIST for forensic science purposes, make grants to eligible entities to conduct peer-reviewed scientific research.

(B) CONSIDERATION.—In making grants under this paragraph, the Director of NIST shall—

(i) ensure that the grants are made for peer-reviewed scientific research in areas that are consistent with the research priorities established by the Director under section 401(b);

(ii) take into consideration the research needs identified by the Committees under section 401(c);

(iii) if made before the identification of research priorities under section 401(b) and research needs under section 401(c), consider any findings, surveys, and analyses relating to research in forensic science disciplines, including those made by the Subcommittee on Forensic Science of the National Science and Technology Council; and

(iv) encourage and, if appropriate, provide incentives for partnerships between nonprofit academic or research institutions and accredited forensic science laboratories.

(3) DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES.—Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding required under section 101(d), the Director of NIST may, on a competitive basis, make grants to eligible entities to conduct peer-reviewed scientific research to develop new technologies and processes to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and accuracy of forensic testing procedures.

(4) COORDINATION WITH DIRECTOR.—In making grants under this subsection, the Director of NIST shall coordinate with the Director to ensure implementation of the plan established under section 404.

(5) COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—The Director of NIST shall consult and coordinate with the National Science Foundation to ensure—

(A) the integrity of the process for reviewing funding proposals and awarding grants under this subsection; and

(B) that the grant-making process is not subject to any undue bias or influence.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—The Director of NIST shall, on an annual basis, submit to the Board and the Director a report that describes—

(i) the application process for grants under this section;

(ii) each grant made under this section in the fiscal year before the report is submitted; and

(iii) as appropriate, the status and results of grants previously described in a report submitted under this subsection.

(B) PUBLICATION.—The Director shall publish the report submitted under subparagraph (A) on the Web site of the Office.

(2) EVALUATION.—The Board and the Director shall evaluate each report submitted under paragraph (1) and consider the information provided in each report in reviewing the research strategy and priorities established under section 401.

SEC. 403. OVERSIGHT AND REVIEW.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which the first grant is awarded under paragraph (2) or (3) of section 402(a), and not later than 2 years after the date on which the first report under section 402(b) is submitted, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice, in coordination with the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce, shall submit to Congress a report on the administration and effectiveness of the grant programs described in section 402(a).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall evaluate—

(1) whether any undue biases or influences affected the integrity of the solicitation, award, or administration of research grants; and

(2) whether there was any unnecessary duplication, waste, fraud, or abuse in the grant-making process.

SEC. 404. PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION.

(a) RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director a recommended plan for encouraging collaboration among universities, nonprofit research institutions, State and local forensic science laboratories, private forensic science laboratories, private corporations, and the Federal Government to develop and perform cost-effective and reliable research in the forensic sciences, consistent with the research priorities established under section 401(b)(2).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan recommended under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) incentives for nongovernmental entities to invest significant resources into conducting necessary research in the forensic sciences;

(2) procedures for ensuring the research described in paragraph (1) will be conducted with sufficient scientific rigor that the research can be relied upon by—

(A) the Committees in developing standards under this Act; and

(B) forensic science personnel; and

(3) clearly defined requirements for disclosure of the sources of funding by nongovernmental entities for forensic science research conducted in collaboration with governmental entities and safeguards to prevent conflicts of interest or undue bias or influence.

(c) ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—After receiving the recommended plan of the Board under subsection (a), the Director shall establish, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), and implement a plan for encouraging collaboration among universities, nonprofit research institutions, State and local forensic science laboratories, private forensic science laboratories, private corporations, and the Federal Government to develop and perform cost-effective and reliable research in the forensic sciences, consistent with the research priorities established under section 401(b)(2).

(d) OVERSIGHT.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall periodically evaluate and, as necessary, update the plan established under subsection (c).

TITLE V—STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES

SEC. 501. DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES.

(a) COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date on which all members of a Committee have been appointed under section 103, the Committee shall develop and recommend to the Board standards and best practices for each forensic science discipline addressed by the Committee, including—

(A) validated protocols;

(B) quality assurance standards; and

(C) standards to be applied in reporting, including reports of identifications, analyses, or comparisons of forensic evidence that may be used during a criminal investigation or criminal court proceeding.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the standards and best practices under paragraph (1), a Committee shall—

(A) as appropriate, consult with qualified professional organizations;

(B) consider existing validated protocols and best practices;

(C) develop standards and best practices that are designed to ensure the quality and scientific integrity of data, results, conclusions, analyses, and reports that are generated for use in the criminal justice system; and

(D) develop standards and best practices that afford laboratories appropriate operational flexibility, including appropriate flexibility as to specific instruments, equipment, and methods.

(b) BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which a Committee submits recommended standards and best practices under subsection (a), the Board shall, in accordance with section 103(f)(2)—

(1) consider the recommendations; and

(2) submit to the Director recommendations of standards and best practices.

SEC. 502. ESTABLISHMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—After the Board submits standards or best practices for a forensic science discipline under section 501(b), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish and disseminate standards and best practices for the forensic science discipline.

(b) PUBLICATION.—The Director shall publish the standards and best practices established under subsection (a) on the Web site of the Office.

SEC. 503. REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT.

(a) REVIEW BY COMMITTEES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 3 years, each Committee shall review and, as necessary, recommend to the Board updates to the standards and best practices established under section 502 for each forensic science discipline within the responsibility of the Committee.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In reviewing, and developing recommended updates to, the standards and best practices under paragraph (1), a Committee shall consider—

(A) input from qualified professional organizations;

(B) research published after the date on which the standards and best practices were established, including research conducted under title IV; and

(C) any changes to relevant law made after the date on which the standards and best practices were established.

(b) BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which a Com-

mittee submits recommended updates to the standards and best practices under subsection (a), the Board shall, in accordance with section 103(f)(2)—

(1) consider the recommendations; and

(2) recommend to the Director any updates, as necessary, to the standards and best practices established under section 502.

(c) UPDATES.—After the Director receives recommended updates, if any, under subsection (b), the Director shall, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), update and disseminate the standards and best practices for each forensic science discipline as necessary.

(d) PROCEDURES.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall establish procedures to ensure that the process for developing, reviewing, and updating the standards and best practices—

(1) is open and transparent to the public; and

(2) includes an opportunity for the public to comment on proposed standards with sufficient prior notice.

TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE AND THE FORENSIC SCIENCE BOARD

SEC. 601. FORENSIC SCIENCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR JUDGES, ATTORNEYS, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) RECOMMENDATION.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director a recommended plan for—

(A) supporting the education and training of judges, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel in the forensic sciences and fundamental scientific principles, which shall include education on the competent use and evaluation of forensic science evidence; and

(B) developing a standardized curriculum for education and training described in subparagraph (A).

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—Upon receipt of the recommendation from the Board under paragraph (1), the Director shall establish, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), and implement a plan for—

(A) supporting the education and training of judges, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel in the forensic sciences and fundamental scientific principles, which shall include education on the competent use and evaluation of forensic science evidence; and

(B) developing a standardized curriculum for education and training described in subparagraph (A).

(3) OVERSIGHT.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall periodically evaluate and, as necessary, update the plan established under paragraph (2).

(b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TRAINING, AND EDUCATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Institute of Justice may, in consultation with the Director—

(A) provide technical assistance directly or indirectly to judges, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel in the forensic sciences and fundamental scientific principles, including the competent use and evaluation of forensic science evidence; and

(B) make grants to States and units of local government and nonprofit organizations or institutions to provide training to judges, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel about the forensic sciences and fundamental scientific principles, including the competent use and evaluation of forensic science evidence.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—On and after the date on which the Director establishes the plan for supporting the education and training of judges, attorneys, and law enforcement per-

sonnel in the forensic sciences and fundamental scientific principles under subsection (a)(2), the Director of the National Institute of Justice shall administer the grant program described in paragraph (1) in accordance with the plan.

SEC. 602. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN THE FORENSIC SCIENCES.

(a) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director—

(1) a recommended plan for supporting the development of undergraduate and graduate educational programs in the forensic science disciplines and related fields; and

(2) recommendations as to whether the development of standards or requirements for educational programs in the forensic science disciplines and related fields is appropriate.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—Upon receipt of the recommendation from the Board under subsection (a), the Director shall establish, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), and implement—

(1) a plan for supporting the development of undergraduate and graduate educational programs in the forensic science disciplines and related fields; and

(2) any standards or requirements for education programs in the forensic science disciplines and related fields determined by the Director to be appropriate.

(c) EXISTING QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In recommending, establishing, and implementing the plan and standards described in subsections (a) and (b), the Board and the Director shall consider the role of qualified professional organizations that accredit forensic science education programs, and any standards developed by such qualified professional organizations.

(d) OVERSIGHT.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall—

(1) oversee the implementation of any standards or requirements established under subsection (b); and

(2) periodically evaluate and, as necessary, update the plan, standards, or requirements established under subsection (b).

SEC. 603. MEDICOLEGAL DEATH INVESTIGATION.

(a) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director—

(1) a recommended plan to encourage the Federal Government and State and local governments to implement systems to ensure that qualified individuals perform medicolegal death investigations and to encourage qualified individuals to enter the field of medicolegal death investigation; and

(2) recommendations on whether and how the requirements, standards and regulations established under this Act should apply to individuals who perform medicolegal death investigations.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—Upon receipt of the recommendations from the Board under subsection (a), the Director shall establish, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), and implement—

(1) a plan to encourage the Federal Government and State and local governments to implement systems to ensure that qualified individuals perform medicolegal death investigations and to encourage qualified individuals to enter the field of medicolegal death investigation; and

(2) any specific or additional standards or requirements for individuals who perform medicolegal death investigations determined by the Director to be appropriate.

(c) OVERSIGHT.—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall—

(1) oversee the implementation of any standards or requirements established under subsection (b)(2); and

(2) periodically evaluate and, as necessary, update the plan, standards, and requirements established under subsection (b).

SEC. 604. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION.

The Board and the Director shall regularly—

(1) coordinate with relevant Federal agencies, including NIST, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health, as appropriate, to make efficient and appropriate use of research expertise and funding;

(2) coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security and other relevant Federal agencies to determine ways in which the forensic science disciplines may assist in homeland security and emergency preparedness; and

(3) coordinate with the United States intelligence community to make efficient and appropriate use of research and new technologies suitable for forensic science.

SEC. 605. ANONYMOUS REPORTING.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall develop a system for any individual to provide information relating to compliance, or lack of compliance, with the requirements, standards, and regulations established under this Act, which may include a hotline or Web site that has appropriate guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality and protections for whistleblowers.

SEC. 606. INTEROPERABILITY OF DATABASES AND TECHNOLOGIES.

(a) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director a recommended plan to require interoperability among databases and technologies in each of the forensic science disciplines among all levels of Government, in all States, and where permitted by law, with the private sector.

(b) **ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.**—Upon receipt of the recommendation from the Board under subsection (a), the Director shall establish, in accordance with section 101(f)(3), and implement a plan to encourage interoperability among databases and technologies in each of the forensic science disciplines among all levels of Government, in all States, and where permitted by law, with the private sector.

(c) **OVERSIGHT.**—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall evaluate and, as necessary, update the plan established under subsection (b).

SEC. 607. CODE OF ETHICS.

(a) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall submit to the Director a recommended code of ethics for the forensic science disciplines.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In developing a recommended code of ethics under paragraph (1), the Board shall—

(A) consult with relevant qualified professional organizations; and

(B) consider any recommendations relating to a code of ethics or code of professional responsibility developed by the Subcommittee on Forensic Science of the National Science and Technology Council.

(b) **ESTABLISHMENT AND INCORPORATION.**—Upon receipt of the recommendation from the Board under subsection (a), the Director shall—

(1) in accordance with section 101(f)(3), establish a code of ethics for the forensic science disciplines; and

(2) as appropriate, incorporate the code of ethics into the standards for accreditation of forensic science laboratories and certification of relevant personnel established under this Act.

(c) **OVERSIGHT.**—The Director, in consultation with the Board, shall periodically evaluate and, as necessary, update the code of ethics established under subsection (b).

SEC. 608. NEEDS ASSESSMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall conduct a needs assessment of State and local forensic service providers, including law enforcement agencies and medicolegal death examiners, in order to evaluate the capacity and resource needs of those providers. Such a needs assessment shall address the technology, equipment, personnel, recruitment, training, education, and research needs of those State and local forensic service providers.

(b) **DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL STRATEGY.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall develop a national strategy for developing the capacity and resources of State and local forensic science providers and for addressing the needs identified in the assessment conducted pursuant to subsection (a).

(c) **UPDATE OF ASSESSMENT AND NATIONAL STRATEGY.**—Not less frequently than once every 5 years, the Director shall update the assessment conducted under subsection (a) and the national strategy developed under subsection (b).

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 2183. A bill entitled “United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions”; considered and passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2183

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) The Russian Government has deliberately blocked the Ukrainian people’s access to uncensored sources of information and has provided alternative news and information that is both inaccurate and inflammatory.

(2) United States international programming exists to advance the United States interests and values by presenting accurate and comprehensive news and information, which is the foundation for democratic governance.

(3) The opinions and views of the Ukrainian people, especially those people located in the eastern regions and Crimea, are not being accurately represented in Russian dominated mass media.

(4) Russian forces have seized more than five television stations in Crimea and taken over transmissions, switching to a 24/7 Russian propaganda format; this increase in programming augments the already robust pro-Russian programming to Ukraine.

(5) United States international programming has the potential to combat this anti-democratic propaganda.

(b) **PROGRAMMING.**—Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Incorporated, and the Voice of America service to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) provide news and information that is accessible, credible, and accurate;

(2) emphasize investigative and analytical journalism to highlight inconsistencies and misinformation provided by Russian or pro-Russian media outlets;

(3) prioritize programming to areas where access to uncensored sources of information is limited or non-existent, especially populations serviced by Russian supported media outlets;

(4) increase the number of reporters and organizational presence in eastern Ukraine, especially in Crimea;

(5) promote democratic processes, respect for human rights, freedom of the press, and territorial sovereignty; and

(6) take necessary preparatory steps to continue and increase programming and content that promotes democracy and government transparency in Russia.

(c) **PROGRAMMING SURGE.**—RFE/RL, Incorporated, and Voice of America programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) prioritize programming to eastern Ukraine, including Crimea, and Moldova, and to ethnic and linguistic Russian populations, as well as to Tatar minorities;

(2) prioritize news and information that directly contributes to the target audiences’ understanding of political and economic developments in Ukraine and Moldova, including countering misinformation that may originate from other news outlets, especially Russian supported news outlets;

(3) provide programming content 24 hours a day, seven days a week to target populations, using all available and effective distribution outlets, including—

(A) at least 8 weekly hours of total original television and video content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages, not inclusive of live video streaming coverage of breaking news, to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional television affiliates by the Voice of America; and

(B) at least 14 weekly hours the total audio content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional radio affiliates of RFE/RL, Incorporated;

(4) expand the use, audience, and audience engagement of mobile news and multimedia platforms by RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, including through Internet-based social networking platforms; and

(5) partner with private sector broadcasters and affiliates to seek and start co-production for new, original content, when possible, to increase distribution.

(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2014, in addition to funds otherwise made available for such purposes, up to \$10,000,000 to carry out programming in the Ukrainian, Balkan, Russian, and Tatar language services of RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, for the purpose of bolstering existing United States programming to the people of Ukraine and neighboring regions, and increasing programming capacity and jamming circumvention technology to overcome any disruptions to service.

(e) **REPORT.**—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall submit to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Foreign Relations and Appropriations of the Senate a detailed report on plans to increase broadcasts pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself,

Mr. HATCH, and Mr. COATS):

S.J. Res. 35. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service of the Department of the Treasury relating to liability under section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the

shared responsibility payment for not maintaining minimum essential coverage; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the joint resolution be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the joint resolution was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. J. RES. 35

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Internal Revenue Service of the Department of the Treasury relating to liability under section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the shared responsibility payment for not maintaining minimum essential coverage (published at 78 Fed. Reg. 53646 (August 30, 2013)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 400—RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE, WHICH STRUCK THE STATE OF ALASKA AT 5:36 P.M. ON GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1964, HONORING THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE GREAT ALASKA EARTHQUAKE AND ASSOCIATED TSUNAMIS, AND EXPRESSING CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH ON EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI PREDICTION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 400

Whereas on Good Friday, March 27, 1964, the Great Alaska Earthquake struck the State of Alaska;

Whereas the Great Alaska Earthquake measured 9.2 on the moment magnitude scale, making it the largest recorded earthquake in United States history and the second-largest earthquake ever recorded using modern instruments;

Whereas the Great Alaska Earthquake was felt as far away as Seattle and was registered by water-level recorders in 47 States;

Whereas the Great Alaska Earthquake spawned tsunamis that devastated communities in Alaska and impacted the States of Washington, Oregon, California, and Hawaii, as well as Canada and Japan;

Whereas the Great Alaska Earthquake and associated tsunamis resulted in 131 fatalities, including 4 fatalities in Oregon and 12 fatalities in California, and an estimated \$3,750,000,000 in property losses in today's dollars;

Whereas the wealth of data collected during the Great Alaska Earthquake led to major breakthroughs in the scientific understanding of subduction zone earthquakes and earthquake hazards, resulting in improved earthquake mitigation strategies;

Whereas the study of the tsunamis associated with the Great Alaska Earthquake resulted in improved tsunami prediction and warning capabilities; and

Whereas the Great Alaska Earthquake spurred the United States Geological Survey, in cooperation with earthquake-impacted States, to install extensive earthquake monitoring networks across the United States and establish the National Center for Earthquake Research; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) mourns the lives lost due to the Great Alaska Earthquake and associated tsunamis that occurred on Good Friday, March 27, 1964;

(2) recognizes the improved understanding of earthquakes and tsunamis and the scientific and technological advancements that resulted from the study of data collected during the Great Alaska Earthquake;

(3) commends the efforts of scientists and engineers from the United States Geological Survey, as well as those in Alaska, California, and other earthquake-impacted States, to improve earthquake and tsunami prediction and hazard mitigation strategies and protect the well-being of United States citizens threatened by these hazards;

(4) supports continued research, education, and outreach about earthquakes and other natural hazards; and

(5) encourages participation in the Great Alaska ShakeOut earthquake drill scheduled to occur on March 27, 2014.

SENATE RESOLUTION 401—RECOGNIZING EASY COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION OF THE 506TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 401

Whereas Easy Company, 2nd Battalion comprised part of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army;

Whereas Easy Company was immortalized by the heroic actions of its soldiers during World War II;

Whereas the book and miniseries, “Band of Brothers”, introduces a new generation of people of the United States to the valorous deeds of Easy Company;

Whereas Easy Company engaged in critical combat missions during World War II, including the Battle of Normandy, Operation Market Garden, the Battle of Bastogne, and the Allied capture of Hitler's Eagles Nest;

Whereas Easy Company was originally comprised of 140 soldiers, 12 of whom were natives of the State of Pennsylvania;

Whereas the Pennsylvania heroes who helped to form Easy Company were Richard D. “Dick” Winters, Thomas Meehan III, Harry F. Welsh, Jack Edward Foley, Joseph D. Toye, William J. Guarnere, Forrest L. Guth, Edward James Heffron, Albert Blithe, Carl L. Fenstermaker, Roderick G. Strohl, and Joseph A. Lesniewski;

Whereas Easy Company lost 49 soldiers, including Thomas Meehan III, who paid the ultimate price for freedom during World War II; and

Whereas with the passing of William J. Guarnere, also known as “Wild Bill”, on March 8, 2014, all of the Pennsylvania natives who served in Easy Company, except for Roderick G. Strohl, have passed away: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes—

(1) the impact of Easy Company and the bravery of all of the heroes who have served in the company; and

(2) the brave Pennsylvania natives who served in Easy Company.

SENATE RESOLUTION 402—EXPRESSING THE REGRET OF THE SENATE FOR THE PASSAGE OF SECTION 3 OF THE EXPATRIATION ACT OF 1907 (34 STAT. 1228) THAT REVOKED THE UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP OF WOMEN WHO MARRIED FOREIGN NATIONALS

Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 402

Whereas throughout the history of the United States, women have made and continue to make invaluable contributions to society that strengthen the political, social, and economic fabric of the Nation and improve the lives of countless individuals;

Whereas women in the United States have been and continue to be leaders in promoting justice and equality during times of great difficulty for the Nation;

Whereas women in the United States have played a pivotal role in ensuring freedom and security in the United States;

Whereas section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 (34 Stat. 1228) left thousands of women born in the United States, such as Elsie Knutson Moren from Minnesota and Theresa Rosella Schwan from Wisconsin, stateless and without a nationality after marrying a foreign national;

Whereas section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 caused thousands of United States women, such as Lorella Martorana from Pennsylvania who lost her citizenship and was not able to vouch for her husband during his naturalization proceedings, and Lena Weide Demke from South Dakota who lost her citizenship and was almost deported during World War I, to have their loyalties questioned, face harassment, and be subject to deportation for various legal infractions;

Whereas section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 affected numerous women, such as Florence Bain Gual, a New York City school teacher whose tenure was stripped after 15 years of teaching because she married a foreign national, causing them to face difficulties providing for their families because they lost, or were not able to gain, public employment after marrying a foreign national;

Whereas section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 prevented women in the United States, such as Ethel MacKenzie from California who was unable to register to vote because she married a foreign national, from participating in the political process and casting ballots in various elections;

Whereas section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 is similar to discriminatory State laws that criminalized or nullified marriages between individuals of different races;

Whereas the revocation of citizenship restricted the ability of numerous women in the United States to own houses and real estate;

Whereas an acknowledgment of the actions of the Senate that have contributed to discrimination against women will not erase the past, but will highlight the injustices of the national experience and help build a better, stronger, and more equal Nation; and

Whereas the Senate recognizes the importance of addressing the error of section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 in order to educate the public and future generations regarding the impact of this law on women and to prevent a similar law from being enacted in the future: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907 (34 Stat. 1228) is incompatible with and antithetical to the core principle that all persons, regardless of gender, race, religion, or ethnicity, are created equal;

(2) expresses sincere sympathy and regret to the descendants of individuals whose citizenship was revoked under section 3 of the Expatriation Act of 1907, who suffered injustice, humiliation, and inequality, and who were deprived of constitutional protections accorded to all citizens of the United States; and

(3) reaffirms the commitment to preserving civil rights and constitutional protections for all people of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 403—CONDEMNING THE ACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY IN RESTRICTING FREE EXPRESSION AND INTERNET FREEDOM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 403

Whereas an independent, unfettered media and freedom of expression, including on the Internet and social media sites, are essential elements of democratic, open societies;

Whereas infringement of press freedom in Turkey is a serious concern, with more journalists currently imprisoned in Turkey than in any other country;

Whereas millions of people in Turkey, including senior members of the Government of Turkey, use Twitter and other social media sites to communicate on a daily basis;

Whereas the Government of Turkey imposed a country-wide ban on access to Twitter on March 20, 2014, blocking the use of the communications platform to engage in political speech;

Whereas respected nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, and Freedom House have condemned the decision to block Twitter as an attack on Internet freedom and freedom of expression in Turkey;

Whereas the President of Turkey, Abdullah Gul, defied the ban to send out a series of tweets questioning the government's actions;

Whereas the Turkish Bar Association argued that the ban is unconstitutional and in violation of Turkish and European human rights laws; and

Whereas, on March 26, 2014, the district court in Ankara, Turkey, blocked implementation of the ban because it may restrict the freedoms of expression and communication, which are protected by the Turkish Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of Turkey's restrictions on freedom of the press, freedom of expression, and Internet freedom;

(2) recognizes the critical role that technology and social media sites play in helping independent journalists and the general public to communicate and access information;

(3) reaffirms the centrality of Internet freedom to efforts by the United States Government to support democracy and promote good governance around the world; and

(4) calls on the Government of Turkey to immediately end its restrictions on media freedom, including social media, and restore access to Twitter.

SENATE RESOLUTION 404—HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LEGACY OF CESAR ESTRADA CHAVEZ

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. REID, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BENNET, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 404

Whereas César Estrada Chávez was born on March 31, 1927, near Yuma, Arizona;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez spent his early years on a family farm;

Whereas at the age of 10, César Estrada Chávez joined the thousands of migrant farm workers laboring in fields and vineyards throughout the Southwest after a bank foreclosure resulted in the loss of the family farm;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez, after attending more than 30 elementary and middle schools and achieving an eighth grade education, left school to work full-time as a farm worker to help support his family;

Whereas at the age of 17, César Estrada Chávez entered the United States Navy and served the United States with distinction for 2 years;

Whereas in 1948, César Estrada Chávez returned from military service to marry Helen Fabela, whom he had met while working in the vineyards of central California;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez and Helen Fabela had 8 children;

Whereas as early as 1949, César Estrada Chávez was committed to organizing farm workers to campaign for safe and fair working conditions, reasonable wages, livable housing, and outlawing child labor;

Whereas in 1952, César Estrada Chávez joined the Community Service Organization, a prominent Latino civil rights group, and worked with the organization to coordinate voter registration drives and conduct campaigns against discrimination in East Los Angeles;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez served as the national director of the Community Service Organization;

Whereas in 1962, César Estrada Chávez left the Community Service Organization to establish the National Farm Workers Association, which eventually became the United Farm Workers of America;

Whereas under the leadership of César Estrada Chávez, the United Farm Workers of America organized thousands of migrant farm workers to fight for fair wages, health care coverage, pension benefits, livable housing, and respect;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez was a strong believer in the principles of non-violence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez effectively used peaceful tactics that included fasting for 25 days in 1968, 25 days in 1972, and 38 days in 1988 to call attention to the terrible working and living conditions of farm workers in the United States;

Whereas through his commitment to non-violence, César Estrada Chávez brought dignity and respect to organized farm workers and became an inspiration to and a resource for individuals engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world;

Whereas the influence of César Estrada Chávez extends far beyond agriculture and provides inspiration for individuals working to better human rights, empower workers, and advance the American Dream, which includes all individuals of the United States;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez died on April 23, 1993, at the age of 66 in San Luis, Arizona, only miles from his birthplace;

Whereas more than 50,000 people attended the funeral services of César Estrada Chávez in Delano, California;

Whereas César Estrada Chávez was laid to rest at the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America, known as Nuestra Señora de La Paz, located in the Tehachapi Mountains in Keene, California;

Whereas since the death of César Estrada Chávez, schools, parks, streets, libraries, and other public facilities, as well as awards and scholarships, have been named in his honor;

Whereas more than 10 States and dozens of communities across the United States honor the life and legacy of César Estrada Chávez each year on March 31;

Whereas March 31 is recognized as an official State holiday in California, Colorado, and Texas, and there is growing support to designate the birthday of César Estrada Chávez as a national day of service to memorialize his heroism;

Whereas during his lifetime, César Estrada Chávez was a recipient of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Prize;

Whereas on August 8, 1994, César Estrada Chávez was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom;

Whereas on October 8, 2012, President Barack Obama authorized the Secretary of the Interior to establish a César Estrada Chávez National Monument in Keene, California;

Whereas President Barack Obama honored the life and service of César Estrada Chávez by proclaiming March 31, 2013, to be "César Chávez Day" and by asking all people of the United States to observe March 31 with service, community, and education programs to honor the enduring legacy of César Estrada Chávez; and

Whereas the United States should continue the efforts of César Estrada Chávez to ensure equality, justice, and dignity for all people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the accomplishments and example of César Estrada Chávez, a great hero of the United States;

(2) pledges to promote the legacy of César Estrada Chávez; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to commemorate the legacy of César Estrada Chávez and to always remember his great rallying cry: "¡Sí, se puede!", which is Spanish for "Yes, we can!"

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2871. Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2872. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2867 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) to the bill H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2873. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2867 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) to the bill H.R. 4152, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2871. Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin submitted an amendment intended to

be proposed by him to the bill S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 5, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(10) to support reform efforts by the Government of Ukraine to enact legislation related to greater accountability for government officials, procurement, protection of private property, protection of classified information and military equipment, and transparency of government funds;

On page 9, line 22, insert after “Ukraine” the following: “, including greater accountability for government officials, procurement, protection of private property, protection of classified information and military equipment, and transparency of government funds”.

On page 13, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(c) LIMITATION.—None of the amounts authorized to be appropriated under this section may be obligated or expended for assistance to the Government of Ukraine for fiscal years 2016 or 2017 until the Secretary of State certifies that the Government of Ukraine has made sufficient progress in enacting anti-corruption legislation relating to greater accountability for government officials, procurement, protection of private property, protection of classified information and military equipment, and transparency of government funds.

On page 15, lines 3 and 4, insert “or the Government of Ukraine” after “official of the Government of the Russian Federation”.

SA 2872. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2867 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) to the bill H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10 of the amendment, strike lines 5 through 9 and insert the following:

(4) assist in diversifying Ukraine’s economy, trade, and energy supplies (including through the use of energy efficiency measures), including at the national, regional, and local levels;

(5) strengthen democratic institutions and political and civil society organizations in Ukraine, including through exchanges and collaborations with sister city and partner civil society organizations in the United States;

SA 2873. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2867 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER)) to the bill H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. 11. TERMINATION OF GLOBAL SECURITY THROUGH SCIENCE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Global Security through Science Partnerships program of the Department of Energy is terminated.

(b) TRANSFER OF CRITICAL FUNCTIONS.—If, before the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Energy, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, determines that

any function of the Global Security through Science Partnerships program is critical to the national security of the United States, and the Comptroller General of the United States certifies that such function is critical and is not being carried out by any other agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government, the Secretary may transfer the responsibility for such function to another office within the Department of Energy.

(c) TERMINATION OF FUNCTIONS.—All functions of the Global Security through Science Partnerships program, other than any functions transferred pursuant to subsection (b), are terminated effective on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) RESCISSION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all unobligated Federal funds available for the Global Security through Science Partnerships program in appropriated discretionary unexpired funds are rescinded.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Carolyn Hessler Radelet, to be the Director of the Peace Corps, dated March 27, 2014.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on April 1, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Access to Justice: Ensuring Equal Pay with the Paycheck Fairness Act.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Sarah Cupp of the committee staff on (202) 224-5363.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 9, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Indian Education Series: Indian Students in Public Schools—Cultivating the Next Generation.”

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 27, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MENENDEZ. 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 March 27, 2014, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, on March 27, 2014, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “MAP-21 Reauthorization: State and Local Perspectives on Transportation Priorities and Funding.”

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. MENENDEZ. 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 March 27, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Strengthening the Federal Student Loan Program for Borrowers.”

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 27, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 27, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., to hold an African Affairs subcommittee hearing entitled, “Powering Africa’s Future: Examining the Power African Initiative.”

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, FEDERAL RIGHTS, AND AGENCY ACTION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Oversight, Federal Rights, and Agency Action, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 27, 2014, at 3 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Access to Justice for Those Who Serve."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kristopher Sharp, a fellow in Senator MURRAY's office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today's session.

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

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Hope Jarkowski, a member of Senator CRAPO's staff.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION DISCHARGED

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session and the commerce committee be discharged from further consideration of PN1059; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; 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.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

KATHRYN B. THOMSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING TO UKRAINE AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS

Mr. KING. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2183, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2183) entitled "United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate has been asked to take up and pass by unanimous consent House legislation on U.S. international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions. This House bill directs the Broadcasting Board of Governors to increase programming in the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Ukrainian, Balkan, Russian, and Tatar language services, and authorizes up to an additional \$10,000,000 in fiscal year 2014 for this purpose.

We all support Ukraine's democracy and territorial integrity, and want to provide credible news and information to people in Ukraine whose access to uncensored information has been blocked by the Russian Government. I intend to ensure that current programming for Ukraine, Russia, and neighboring regions is not reduced in fiscal year 2014. But I want to remind Senators, as well as Members of the House of Representatives, that the Congress already enacted the fiscal year 2014 funding level for U.S. international broadcasting to Ukraine and other regions of the world.

The House bill we are adopting today does not appropriate additional funds. Nor does it provide offsets for the cost of additional broadcasting to Ukraine, Russia or the other regions specified. As drafted it is an unfunded mandate, which as a practical matter has no effect unless we are to reduce broadcasting to other critical countries or regions, such as Burma and Tibet, which I doubt Senators of either party would support.

Consequently, this bill should be interpreted as authorizing funds to be appropriated for the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to Ukraine and neighboring countries, consistent with the role of the House authorizing committee from which it originated. As Chairman of the Department of State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee that funds international broadcasting programs, I will work with the Broadcasting Board of Governors to ensure that additional funds are appropriated for these language services in fiscal year 2015 to enable them to sustain and strengthen critical broadcasts and programming to Ukraine, Russia, and neighboring regions.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2183) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2183

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) The Russian Government has deliberately blocked the Ukrainian people's access to uncensored sources of information and has provided alternative news and information that is both inaccurate and inflammatory;

(2) United States international programming exists to advance the United States interests and values by presenting accurate and comprehensive news and information, which is the foundation for democratic governance;

(3) The opinions and views of the Ukrainian people, especially those people located in the eastern regions and Crimea, are not being accurately represented in Russian dominated mass media;

(4) Russian forces have seized more than five television stations in Crimea and taken over transmissions, switching to a 24/7 Russian propaganda format; this increase in programming augments the already robust pro-Russian programming to Ukraine;

(5) United States international programming has the potential to combat this anti-democratic propaganda.

(b) PROGRAMMING.—Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Incorporated, and the Voice of America service to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) provide news and information that is accessible, credible, and accurate;

(2) emphasize investigative and analytical journalism to highlight inconsistencies and misinformation provided by Russian or pro-Russian media outlets;

(3) prioritize programming to areas where access to uncensored sources of information is limited or non-existent, especially populations serviced by Russian supported media outlets;

(4) increase the number of reporters and organizational presence in eastern Ukraine, especially in Crimea;

(5) promote democratic processes, respect for human rights, freedom of the press, and territorial sovereignty; and

(6) take necessary preparatory steps to continue and increase programming and content that promotes democracy and government transparency in Russia.

(c) PROGRAMMING SURGE.—RFE/RL, Incorporated, and Voice of America programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions shall—

(1) prioritize programming to eastern Ukraine, including Crimea, and Moldova, and to ethnic and linguistic Russian populations, as well as to Tatar minorities;

(2) prioritize news and information that directly contributes to the target audiences' understanding of political and economic developments in Ukraine and Moldova, including countering misinformation that may originate from other news outlets, especially Russian supported news outlets;

(3) provide programming content 24 hours a day, seven days a week to target populations, using all available and effective distribution outlets, including—

(A) at least 8 weekly hours of total original television and video content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages, not inclusive of live video streaming coverage of breaking news, to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional television affiliates by the Voice of America; and

(B) at least 14 weekly hours the total audio content in Ukrainian, Russian, and Tatar languages to be distributed on satellite, digital, and through regional radio affiliates of RFE/RL, Incorporated;

(4) expand the use, audience, and audience engagement of mobile news and multimedia platforms by RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, including through Internet-based social networking platforms; and

(5) partner with private sector broadcasters and affiliates to seek and start co-production for new, original content, when possible, to increase distribution.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2014, in addition to funds otherwise made available for such purposes, up to \$10,000,000 to carry out programming in the Ukrainian, Balkan, Russian, and Tatar language services of RFE/RL, Incorporated, and the Voice of America, for the purpose of bolstering existing United States programming to the people of Ukraine and neighboring regions, and increasing programming capacity and jamming circumvention technology to overcome any disruptions to service.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall submit to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Foreign Relations and Appropriations of the Senate a detailed report on plans to increase broadcasts pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

MILITARY AND VETERANS CAREGIVER MONTH

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 395.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 395) designating the month of April 2014 as "Military and Veterans Caregiver Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 395) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of Tuesday, March 25, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Republican leader, pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, Public Law 107-228, and Public Law 112-75, appoints the following individuals to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Mary Ann Glendon of Massachusetts, and M. Zuhdi Jasser of Arizona.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 31, 2014

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate

completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m., Monday, March 31, 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 proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4302 under the previous order; that at 5 p.m. the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the Owens nomination, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. KING. Mr. President, there will be at least two rollcall votes on Monday at 5:30 p.m.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING. Mr. President, if there is no business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn following the remarks of the Senator from Alaska, Ms. MURKOWSKI.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

GRID SECURITY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, first, I thank my friend from Maine and appreciate the conversations we have had in this past week. He has taken a journey to the north that most of us only dream about. He is engaged in issues I care deeply about as it relates to the Arctic. Although I know that was not the discussion my colleague was speaking to earlier, I just wanted to note while my friend from Maine was still on the floor that I look forward to working on these issues of great importance not only to my State but truly to our entire Nation and Arctic Nation.

I come to the floor this evening to speak very briefly about the physical security of our Nation's power grid, which is a very important subject. Recently, there were stories in the Wall Street Journal about an attack on the California Metcalf substation that happened last April and has drawn considerable attention. While those stories about that attack highlighted potential vulnerabilities, my principal focus will be to highlight not only the safeguards that are already in place to protect the Nation's bulk power system but also to announce a step that I believe is now necessary to prevent the undue release of sensitive nonpublic information.

First and foremost—and I think this is important for people to recognize—it is important to remember that during the Metcalf incident, the PG&E system did not lose power. In fact, it was an

incident that many didn't know had taken place until months after because there was no loss of power. I think this fact emphasizes the grid's resiliency and the importance of building redundancy into the bulk power system.

As usual, the electric industry has learned from and responded to—appropriately responded—the California incident. At the end of last year the Departments of Energy and Homeland Security—along with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, or NERC, along with the Federal Regulatory Commission, or FERC, and the FBI began a cross-country tour of 10 cities in order to brief utility operators and local law enforcement on the lessons that were learned from Metcalf. Government officials discussed mitigation strategies and meeting participants were able to develop some pretty important relationships between first responders and the industry.

In fact, as a result of the mandatory requirements of the 2005 Energy Policy Act, the electric industry has invested significant resources to address both physical and cyber security threats and vulnerabilities. Through partnerships with various Federal agencies, the industry is keenly focused on preparation, prevention, response, and recovery.

For example, NERC holds yearly security conferences and a grid exercise which tests and prepares industry on physical and cyber security events. Yet former FERC Chairman Jon Wellinghoff was quoted in the Wall Street Journal calling the Metcalf incident "the most significant incident of domestic terrorism involving the grid that has ever occurred."

In my view, comments such as these are certainly sensational. Depending on the factual context, they can actually be reckless.

Although the topic of physical security warrants discussion and debate—we have to be prudent about information for the public sphere. Many government leaders are privy to confidential and sensitive information that if not treated carefully could provide a roadmap to terrorists or other bad actors about our vulnerabilities. At a minimum, government officials have a duty to safeguard sensitive information that they learn in their official capacity.

A story that appeared in the Wall Street Journal on March 13 was, I believe, shocking because it included sensitive information about the Nation's energy infrastructure that the newspaper said came from documents that were created at FERC. Although the Wall Street Journal did not name specific facilities at risk, it did detail the geographic regions and the number of facilities that if simultaneously disabled could cause serious harm. The March 13 article claimed the potential for a national blackout.

I want to commend FERC Chair Cheryl LaFleur for her statement regarding the publication of this information. I thank Commissioner Tony Clark as well for his statement about the matter.

I think it is fortunate our current FERC Commissioners are an independent lot. I understand that the Commission is looking into this matter, including the question of how sensitive internal FERC documents made their way into a very high-profile news article. I urge FERC to be very diligent in this matter and truly leave no stone unturned.

I have grave questions about the irresponsible release of nonpublic information that unduly pinpoints potential vulnerabilities of our Nation's grid. If this conduct is not already illegal, I have suggested it should be. The source of the leaked information appears to be someone with access to highly sensitive, narrowly distributed FERC documents. Releasing this sensitive information for publication has put the Nation potentially at greater risk and potentially endangered lives, including those of the many good people who are faithfully working every day to maintain and to protect the grid.

In order to learn what has happened and to determine how better to safeguard critical information as steps are being taken to make the grid less vulnerable, my colleague, the chairman of the energy committee, Senator LANDRIEU, and I have written to the inspector general of the Department of Energy whose oversight includes FERC.

It is our understanding that the IG has already begun an inquiry into this matter. We have asked him to conclude his inquiry as soon as possible. We have also asked for his immediate assurance that if the inquiry must ripen into an investigation, that he will—as we have every confidence he would—follow the information he learns wherever it leads.

We are eager to receive recommendations to improve the safeguard of keeping sensitive information from disclosure. We have also asked the IG to look into the obligations of current and former FERC Commissioners and employees with respect to nonpublic information. I would certainly hope the inspector general's inquiry leads to the identification of the person or persons who provided this sensitive, nonpublic information to the media, but even if it does not, even if we learn the leak of this information could have been accomplished without the violation of any disclosure restrictions, we will consider introducing legislation to make sure that in the future the disclosure of nonpublic information about our energy infrastructure that puts our Nation at risk is a violation of Federal law. We must remember that the possibility of a physical attack that disables key parts of the grid has always been a risk. Again, in this instance, though, with the Metcalf instance, our system worked and no power was lost. There-

fore, I urge a measured approach when evaluating our next steps in response to Metcalf. Erecting barriers at every transmission substation and surveillance of every inch of transmission is not feasible. I am concerned these types of measures will potentially cost billions of dollars with little impact. There must also be a balance between the measures related to physical security and the costs that would likely be passed through to consumers.

On March 7, the FERC used the grid reliability framework that Congress established in the 2005 Energy Policy Act by directing NERC to establish standards addressing physical vulnerabilities to better protect our Nation's power grid. NERC has 90 days to develop its proposed standards through a collaborative process. The proposed standard will then be reviewed independently before it is submitted to the FERC.

Our Energy Policy Act standards are foundational. Constant information sharing between government and industry, coupled with alerts for rapid response, are also key tools for dealing with the changing state of security.

As policymakers we must include physical security as a key issue in our decisions. We must also take measured steps to protect the grid, but we shouldn't sensationalize the threat. I commend NERC and FERC for starting the standard-setting process, and I urge all of the participants to strike this balance between measures related to physical security and costs and benefits for electric customers and the broader public as a whole.

Again, I thank the chairman of the energy committee for her willingness to join me on this letter which again I feel is very important as we begin this review through the inspector general. I know the Presiding Officer, as a valued member of the energy committee, is very keenly aware of these issues when we talk about our grid reliability threats to not only the physical security of our infrastructure but most certainly the cyber security threats we face as well.

I appreciate the indulgence of the Chair this evening.

I ask unanimous consent that the letter I referenced in my remarks be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, March 27, 2014.

HON. GREGORY FRIEDMAN,
Inspector General, Department of Energy,
Washington, DC.

DEAR INSPECTOR GENERAL FRIEDMAN: The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is responsible for oversight of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (the Commission, FERC) and has jurisdiction over the laws the Commission administers, including the Federal Power Act (FPA). In the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress amended the FPA, adding section 215, to establish the framework for ensuring that the nation's bulk power system (BPS or electric grid) is reliable.

Recent reports in The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) about grid security (see attached) were shocking in their detail and appear to have been based upon highly sensitive, narrowly distributed FERC documents that may have pinpointed vulnerabilities of the BPS. In the wrong hands, such documents potentially could provide a roadmap for those who would seek to harm the nation by intentionally causing one or more power blackouts.

We are writing to respectfully request that the Department of Energy Office of Inspector General (OIG) conduct a full and thorough inquiry regarding the apparent leak to the WSJ of sensitive information regarding physical threats to the electric grid. As part of this effort we ask not only that the OIG review the past, but also provide recommendations regarding how to avoid a repeat of this very unfortunate incident in the future.

We understand that your office has initiated a preliminary review of this matter on its own initiative and we commend you for doing so. We are also aware that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is conducting its own investigation. We commend the FERC for this action, as well. However, we note that it can be difficult for agencies to effectively investigate their own actions which is why we are making this request to the OIG.

The internal FERC documents regarding grid security that appear to have been disclosed to the WSJ, are sufficiently sensitive and potentially harmful to grid security that we believe it would not be prudent to highlight specifically the issues they raise at this time as part of this letter. For the same reason, many of the questions that we request that OIG answer also should not be made public. Consequently, we will provide to OIG on a non-public basis associated questions.

We do not know if the FERC documents that apparently form the basis of the news reports are credible, but in any case, disclosing and sensationalizing them, as it appears was the work of the person who gave them to the newspaper, is highly irresponsible or worse.

Even if your inquiry does not lead to the identification of the person who provided this sensitive non-public information to the media (and we hope it will), if you conclude that the unauthorized disclosure of this information could have been accomplished without the violation of any disclosure restrictions, legislation could well be necessary. In that event, we will consider introducing legislation to make sure that the unauthorized disclosure of non-public information about energy infrastructure that puts our nation at risk is a violation of federal law.

We ask you to conclude your inquiry as soon as possible. We have every confidence that you will follow the information you uncover wherever it leads. Nevertheless, we seek your immediate assurance that if the results of your initial inquiry indicate that applicable Federal law and regulations may have been violated by any current or former Federal employee or official that you would then initiate a formal investigation using all the powers of your office.

We are eager to receive recommendations concerning the preparation, handling and proper treatment of the sensitive information that forms the basis of the news reports and any related information. We also ask you to examine the legal or regulatory obligations of current and former FERC commissioners and employees with respect to nonpublic information, especially of the type covered by this letter and the associated non-public attachment.

Thank you for your consideration. We intend to be fully supportive of your inquiry.

Again, we look forward to having the benefit of your findings as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

MARY LANDRIEU,
Chairwoman.
LISA MURKOWSKI,
Ranking Member.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
MARCH 31, 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate now stands in adjournment until Monday, March 31, 2014, at 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:19 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 31, 2014, at 2 p.m.

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination by unanimous consent and the nomination was confirmed:

KATHRYN B. THOMSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 27, 2014:

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MATTHEW H. TUELLER, OF UTAH, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

KATHRYN B. THOMSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.