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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 2, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GLENN THOMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

GOP BUDGET AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, throughout American history, the path to prosperity has been infrastructure. It has been paving that path, building that road, constructing the transcontinental railroad, improving water systems, extending electrification to rural America, dams, flood control, and sewer systems.

Each and every one of these initiatives were key to improving the quality of life for Americans, enacting business opportunities, and putting millions of Americans to work.

They were all public-private partnerships primarily paid for with public investment. Creating these infrastructure marvels, which for most of our history were the envy of the world, put millions of Americans to work.

Sadly, that is no longer the case. The United States has fallen behind the global leaders. Our infrastructure is mediocre, according to expert reports. The American Society of Civil Engineers has given our infrastructure a D-plus rating and identified over $3.5 trillion of investments that are going to be necessary just to bring it up to standard by 2020.

That is how far we have fallen—a D-plus rating—and needing billions of dollars just to prevent further deterioration and decline.

The failure to act carries significant costs in and of itself. There is more wear and tear on vehicles. There is more delays and congestion. There are safety problems associated with inferior infrastructure and poor maintenance.

It is going to cost the average American family over $1,000 per year in actual damage and increased operating costs to say nothing of the millions of hours lost to congestion. It hits business especially hard. A 5-minute delay costs UPS $50 million in additional costs each year.

Ten years ago, there was a blue ribbon report to then-President Bush about transportation and transportation funding alternatives. It identified over $375 billion as necessary to fund an appropriate 6-year program. That was 10 years ago.

We are now spending at a rate, 10 years later, of about $275 billion a year at current levels, but the highway trust fund is only going to produce about $200 billion during that same period of time.

Both Chairman CAMP in his tax reform proposal and President Obama in his infrastructure proposal identified ways to close this gap to be able to fully fund a 6-year transportation reauthorization that would help meet America's funding needs for projects of national significance that are, in many cases, multistate and are part of a national system. We all depend upon the pieces of the system to be in place in good repair and working together.

Sadly, the Republican budget sentences us to decline and then locks in a 30 percent reduction from these current inadequate levels over the next 10 years.

It pretends the Federal commitment can be downsized and outsourced. Although I would note, in a letter signed by 31 executives of statewide chambers of commerce, they point out:

> Even with increased State revenues and innovative mechanisms such as public-private partnerships, there are projects of national significance that cannot be completed without Federal assistance.

I will be offering today a proposal in the Budget Committee to at least allow the capacity to respond to these needs, to meet the requests of 17 bipartisan governors, including Republicans from North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania and the 31 State chamber of commerce executives from Alabama, Arizona, and Arkansas, to Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin. We need these Federal partnerships.

While this proposal won't commit anybody to a specific path forward, it does provide the capacity to get us unstuck and out of this sad state of decline, in other words, a true path to prosperity, putting millions of people to work, jump-starting the economy, and strengthening communities from coast to coast, so that our families can be safe, healthy, and economically secure.

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IT IS TIME TO QUIT LEADING FROM BEHIND

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the crisis in Ukraine, Putin's rising aggression and intransigence in the face of increased international opprobrium, and the failure of American leadership that has allowed these recent events to transpire.

This is yet another example of Vladimir Putin looking at President Obama's foreign policy and making the calculation that he can do whatever he wants without fear that the White House will react with anything other than empty threats.

We have seen this time and time again, so much so that the President's lead from behind policy has not only eroded our influence and credibility around the world, it has hurt our relations with other countries, and it has shown tyrants like Putin, Assad, Maduro, Kim Jung Un, Khamenei, and the Castros that the U.S. lacks the courage of its convictions.

Putin has annexed Crimea, and we would be foolish to think that he will stop there as he seeks to reestablish Russia as more than just a regional power, and the Obama administration has misguidedly dismissed Putin and his provocations as those of a weakened Russia acting out.

This is an astonishing view to take and one that could seriously harm our U.S. national security interests if we continue to downplay these threats.

In 1994, the United States, along with Ukraine and Russia, signed the Budapest memorandum. In that agreement, all sides agreed to respect Ukraine's territorial sovereignty if Ukraine returned the nuclear weapons it inherited after the fall of the Soviet empire. We gave our guarantee to protect Ukraine's borders, a guarantee that we clearly did not keep.

What kind of message is the United States sending to the world again?

You can bet that Rouhani and Khamenei are sitting in Iran, and they are paying very close attention, Mr. Speaker. They are making the calculations right now, and they are betting that perhaps they will face no repercussions if they abandoned the negotiations and actively and openly pursue nuclear weapons.

President Obama's lack of leadership and strength has shown that the umbrella of U.S. security that so many have relied upon is not as wide nor as durable as they once thought.

The House and the Senate have acted to pass sanctions legislation against Putin over his actions in Crimea, but it is clear that Putin is not going to be deterred by this.

It may be a case of too little, too late because the administration failed to take decisive action from the get-go, just like it had in Iran and Syria before this and just like it is now failing to do in Venezuela.

While Obama threatens consequences for Putin over his Crimea provocations—and fails to act on these words—he hasn't even mustered up the fortitude to even feign strong condemnations for Maduro and his thugs in Venezuela, as they continue to brutally oppress the opposition in Venezuela, the opposition that is calling for reforms and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I have here a poster of Maria Corina Machado, a valiant human rights leader in Venezuela, and she is just one of the many victims of Maduro's thuggery.

There have been 30 people killed as a result of Maduro's violent attempts to oppress dissent, while opposition leaders like Leopoldo Lopez have been unjustly detained over a month now in military prison, and Maria Corina Machado has been stripped of her seat in the national assembly, thus revoking her immunity, her protection, suggesting that Maduro and his goons will soon be coming to take her away to a military prison.

Yet again, President Obama chooses to lead from behind. The administration has repeatedly said that we need to work with the Organization of American States to hold Maduro accountable, but that body is even more afraid to call out Maduro than this administration.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years of failed foreign policy from this administration is really coming home to roost, and that means dire consequences for the American people, for the people of Venezuela, for the people of Ukraine, and for freedom-seeking people throughout the world.

It is time for the administration to take an active role in foreign policy for the sake of American national security and for the sake of the future of democracy. It is time to quit this leading from behind. It is time to restore American leadership, and that is the only way to make the world a safer place.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET MORE OF THE SAME

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the baseball season begins this week, so I will quote the great Yogi Berra. ''It's déjà vu all over again.''

This year's Republican budget, which Chairman RYAN unveiled yesterday, is more of the same we have, unfortunately, come to expect. It is an exercise in partisan messaging, not a serious and honest attempt to invest in our priorities and pursue compromise toward a sustainable fiscal outlook.

Their budget rejects the balanced approach of spending reforms, new revenue, and investments in our economy called for by both the Bowles-Simpson and the Rivlin-Domenici Commissions, as well as by the Gang of Six in the United States Senate and by virtually every economist. The Ryan budget cuts $5 trillion without a single penny of new revenue, not even a hint of balance.

Moreover, Chairman RYAN's budget once again relies on the magic asterisk of hundreds of billions of dollars in spending cuts to important domestic programs. He doesn't say what programs we are going to cut; he simply says we are going to get the money.

He said that last year, of course, and it didn't happen. He gives virtually no details about the policies through which he expects to achieve these savings. To that extent, it is radically different from the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee's tax reform plan, which made real choices, showed real courage, and was a real document.

The Republican budget continues their obsession with repealing or undermining the Affordable Care Act, their 53rd attempt to do so. However, of course, they keep all the savings and revenues that the Affordable Care Act is scored as giving.

It would furthermore kick millions off their health insurance and turn Medicaid into a capped block grant, decimating the program and making life more difficult for all those millions who rely on it.

Once more, they are seeking to end the Medicare guarantee as we know it. They will say it is a choice, that at 55 you can make a choice whether you want to have private insurance with a voucher that you get from the Federal Government or go into Medicare. That's what they say.

□ 1015

The reality is, however, they would make traditional Medicare far, far, far more expensive, driving people out of that program and eliminating it over time.

Their budget, in addition, would make it very difficult, if not impossible, for Congress to invest in our economy and our people by driving domestic discretionary spending well below the sequester's harmful level.

The American people ought to be outraged but not surprised. We have seen this movie before, and it never ends well for Republicans or, tragically, does it end happily for the American people. The new plot twist in this year's budget is that Chairman RYAN is going where no budget chairman has gone before, relying on the spurious gimmickry of so-called ''dynamic scoring'' to pad his numbers with budget savings that simply do not exist.

We have talked about this a lot. The 1981 tax cuts were supposed to boom the economy. In fact, we increased the national debt by 187 percent. In 2001 and 2003, we were promised that the tax cuts would grow the economy. In fact, during those 8 years of the Bush administration, we had the worst economy that anybody in this Chamber has experienced and, indeed, I would presume, in the gallery as well.

While Chairman RYAN claims his budget balances in 10 years, in reality, his projection for revenues in 2024 is less than his projection for outlays. In other words, no balance. That is the simple budget math. The only way Chairman RYAN can pretend his math works is by using Republicans' dynamic scoring trick.

This is the same trick that paved the way for the Bush tax cuts to turn record surpluses into record deficits, as I have said. It is sort of like a family making its budget and projecting: well, we are going to get a big raise because the boss is going to be doing better, the economy is going to be doing better, and we will get a big raise, so we will budget as if we had already gotten the raise. What happens is you don't get that raise and you are deeply in the hole. Americans get that. It is a shame their Congress doesn't get that.

Republicans have a bill on the floor this week to force the nonpartisan CBO to use the Republican math. The virtue of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office was that it would give us honest numbers, but now the Republicans want to force them to give them their numbers that they want that make it easier for them to pretend that things are going to get better with their policies rather than putting their policies in place and then seeing if it does get better, and if it does, we have a bonus. Of course, if it doesn't, we run up large deficits as we did in the last administration, as we did in the Reagan administration, as we did in the first Bush administration, and, yes, slightly in the Clinton administration. But in the Clinton administration, over every Republican's objections, we balanced the budget for 4 years.

We need a budget, Madam Speaker, that reflects our real challenges and recognizes that we must compromise to make the difficult choices necessary to meet them. The American people deserve a budget that focuses not on gimmicks but one that promotes opportunity, growth, and security; compromise, not confrontation; pragmatism, not partisanship; what works, not what sounds good.

Our budget proposal should reflect our priorities and enable us to rise to meet our challenges. The Republican budget that is going to be voted on today in the Budget Committee does not do that.

The Wall Street Journal, Madam Speaker, wrote an editorial about the Ryan priorities, most of which I disagree with because I think their reliance, as RYAN does, on dynamic scoring is a ''fool's errand'' and has been proved to be such over the years that I have served in Congress over the last 33 years. But I do agree with their conclusion, and they say this:

> But the Ryan outline does the service of showing the policy direction in which Republicans would head if they regain control of the Senate next year.

I agree with that. I think this is a litmus test for the American people. They can review the Ryan budget. They can review its consequences to them, themselves, their families, their children, and their community. They can see the adverse consequences of a plan that will not work.

I predict, as I predicted last year, Madam Speaker, the Appropriations Committee, headed by HAL ROGERS, Republican chairman, will not bring appropriation bills to the floor that will pass on this floor that will implement the Ryan budget, notwithstanding the fact that RYAN's party controls this House. I predicted that last year, and I was right. As a matter of fact, no bills passed this House at the Ryan budget numbers last year—none, not one. Sadly, I think that is what is going to happen this year—sadly, for the American people; sadly, for this Congress; sadly, for our children.

Madam Speaker, we can do better. We can be real. We ought to do the job that the American people expect us to do and get this country on a fiscally sustainable path, not with smoke and mirrors but with sincerity and courage.

CONGRESSIONAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CAUCUS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, if you listen to probably the majority of the speeches provided on this House floor, they clearly indicate partisan bickering. If you listen to many of these speeches, it is pretty easy to find out what we disagree upon. There are some divides in beliefs and opinions. One of the things that is wonderful about this House is this is the people's House. It reflects a very diverse nation, and we have diverse opinions here on the House floor.

At the same time, there are individuals here that I work with, both sides of the aisle, that I think want to be problem solvers. They are willing to not talk about what we disagree about, because we don't even need to do that; we just turn on the news, and that is what is highlighted is what we disagree upon. But the fact is we do have individuals here that have the courage and willingness to come to the table, and that is step one; to sit at the table and define properly what the problem is, because without defining the problem, you really aren't going to come up with effective solutions that work; and third, be willing to state what do we agree upon, what can we agree upon and make that the beginning point, the foundation, for cost-effective solutions.

I am here today as part of a group that really does that. I rise today as cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus. This is a group of Members from both sides of the aisle, diverse routes of the United States, who care about investing in opportunities for individuals to be able to do better in life through education. My opinion is: it is not so important where you start in life; it is where you end up. The key to that stair or that ladder or that path is education.

The Career and Technical Education Caucus really, really focuses on that in a bipartisan way. It is about America's competitiveness. Because if America does not have a qualified and trained workforce, America doesn't have a future. So as appropriation season is upon us, we in the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus encourage our colleagues to continue this body's united commitment to ensuring that America remains competitive through an adequately trained workforce.

This can be achieved through an existing program. We don't have to create a new program. No need to reinvent the wheel. It is the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Perkins provides the principal source of Federal support for program improvement and helps to strengthen the integration of academic, career, and technical education at both the secondary and the postsecondary institutions.

Although deficit reduction must remain priority number one—it is one of our greatest threats for national security—during these fiscally challenging times, we must invest in CTE programs. We must also recognize that any reduction to Perkins funding would affect millions of career and technical educational students, the business community that relies on a qualified workforce, and the future competitiveness of this country.

Going into the fiscal year 2015, the Career and Technical Education Caucus is putting together a modest request for level funding for this program. I encourage my colleagues to support the efforts of the caucus and join in sending this important request to the Appropriations Committee.

LET'S PASS AN IMMIGRATION REFORM BILL

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Madam Speaker, on June 27, we will mark 1 year since our friends on the other side of the Hill in the United States Senate passed a bipartisan immigration reform bill.

Four Senators from each party worked together to get a bill introduced on April 16 of last year. By May, the Judiciary Committee was debating and marking it up, and by June, it was headed to the Senate floor. Then after debate and many, many, many amendments, it was voted on by the full Senate. Sixty-eight out of 100 Senators voted to replace illegal immigration with legal immigration, legalize millions of people who live and work in the U.S., and secure our immigration system in the workplace and, yes, at the border.

Madam Speaker, almost a year with no serious movement forward on immigration reform in the House, I am beginning to wonder whether Republicans will get serious about immigration before they run out of time. Well, I want to be helpful, so I have done a little calculating. Including today, we have 34 legislative days before the July 4 recess.

Madam Speaker, let's be honest. If Republicans have not gotten an immigration bill seriously rolling down the tracks by the time we break for Independence Day, Republicans might as well just fold up the tent they are always talking about. One thing is for sure: Republicans won't be pitching a tent at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue any time soon.

I talk to Republicans, and they know the truth: if Republicans don't work with Democrats and bring an immigration bill to the floor, they are giving up on a chance to stand for justice, a sense of peace, and fairness for immigrants until after the 2016 Presidential election. That means Republicans will have to head into the 2016 Presidential election as the party that blocked immigration reform that would have finally brought justice to immigrant communities across our Nation. You will have said ''no'' to the dreams of DREAMers and ''no'' to millions of families and ''no'' to communities in every city across our country.

Oh, and, Madam Speaker, if you think the Republican Party alone controls the future of 11 million undocumented immigrants, you will be sadly disappointed. If you don't act in the next 34 days, if you refuse to give the President a bill he can sign because you say you don't trust him to enforce immigration law even though he has spent more money and deported more people than any President before him, I believe he will act without you.

He has alternatives under existing law. There are concrete ways within existing laws to help keep families together and spare U.S. citizens from losing their wives, their husbands, and their children to deportation in spite of your lack of action, and I believe the President is going to use those tools. I saw it in his eyes when I met with him. He didn't run for office so that he could deport 2 million people and put thousands of American children in foster care. He is heartbroken by the pain deportation has caused.

Do you think he will simply sit by and do nothing because you refuse to act? The Republicans threaten lawsuits and even impeachment if the President acts to spare American families being broken apart by deportation; but this President will act if you refuse to, and the country will rally behind him because that is what Americans do in the face of humanitarian crisis.

The Republicans threaten to impeach the President? What is new, Madam Speaker? Look, you have got to remember, for the first 3 or 4 years he was President, leaders in the Republican Party—I mean Presidential candidates and entire cable TV networks—questioned the President's own immigration status. We had ''birthers'' denying the President was born in America. They questioned whether he was an undocumented immigrant himself. They demanded to see his papers. Now we have ''deportation deniers'' falsely suggesting President Obama is not enforcing the law. Oh, he is really not deporting people, they say. That is all fake, something Obama, Univision, and Telemundo cooked up.

The President knows the kind of pain that congressional inaction has caused for families and children.

□ 1030

The President wants to be an emancipator, not a deporter, and he will act if he has to. If you give him no choice, this President is going to take charge himself, as well he should.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we offer a lifeline to the Republicans. Let's work together to pass a bill before the President, faced with no other choice, takes action himself. You have 34 legislative days left until July 4, and you had better make good use of them. The American people are waiting.

SUPPORTING AUTISM AWARENESS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Autism Awareness Month. April is Autism Awareness Month, and today, April 2, is Autism Awareness Day.

Autism is serious. It does not discriminate. People in all racial, socioeconomic, and ethnic groups are impacted. One in 68 children is diagnosed with autism. Let me say it again: one in 68 children. This is a very disturbing statistic.

Mr. Speaker, Florida has a lot of great programs and resources for individuals with autism. The Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities, or CARD, all across the State of Florida will be offering resources and awareness month activities. The Partnership for Effective Programs for Students with Autism pairs teachers and schools with a professional from one of the many CARDs across Florida to assist students with autism. This program's motto is to ''provide quality educational programs to students with autism spectrum disorders.''

It is the graciousness and generosity of organizations like these and of the individuals involved with them that help in the fight against autism. It is important to raise awareness. It is important to provide programs to assist children and adults with disorders on the autism spectrum. Ultimately, through groups like these and through public and private partnerships, we can continue to work towards a cure.

I am committed to this cause, and I encourage my fellow Members on both sides of the aisle to get involved. This is an issue that truly overcomes partisan lines. The Light It Up Blue campaign draws awareness for autism as well. Today, thousands of businesses and landmarks will be lit blue. Together, we can shine the light on autism.

ANTHONY P. ''TONY'' REARDON

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Anthony P. ''Tony'' Reardon, Deputy Director of Legislative Liaison for the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. A command navigator from West Palm Beach, Florida, with 1,700 flying hours in the RF–4C, Tony Reardon has excelled both in the cockpit and at the Pentagon. I want to offer him my congratulations on his recent selection as Director of Strategy, Resources and Integration for the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs.

This recent promotion is no surprise to anyone who knows Tony. Throughout his life, he has displayed exceptional leadership and judgment. He graduated in 1977 from Forest Hill High School in West Palm Beach, and even then he was known for his intelligence, his loyalty, and his integrity. He was a drummer in the marching band, a pitcher for the baseball team, and a participant in the American Legion Boys State program, which encourages young people to grow into engaged and responsible citizens.

After graduating from Florida State University in 1981, Tony was selected to attend undergraduate navigator training at Mather Air Force Base in California. He quickly garnered the role of RF–4C instructor weapon systems officer in the 12th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas. Tony's talents were needed on the front lines of the cold war, and he was reassigned to Zweibrucken Air Base in Germany. Following the end of the cold war, Tony was transferred back to Bergstrom, where he continued to pass his wealth of knowledge and experience on to the next generation of weapon systems officers.

Realizing his talent for leadership, his commander transferred him to Air Combat Command Headquarters at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, where he excelled in the Plans and Programs Directorate. After a successful tour, he was once again sent overseas, this time as an air liaison officer at Camp Red Cloud, Korea. Later, he was assigned to Pacific Air Forces Headquarters, returning to the Plans and Programs Directorate at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. After 3 years in Hawaii, he began numerous assignments at Headquarters Air Force at the Pentagon.

As Deputy Director of Legislative Liaison for the Office of the Secretary of

the Air Force, Tony has supported Air Force leadership by engaging Congress on programs and weapon systems authorizations, constituent inquiries, and other congressional interests. Among some of his more notable accomplishments during his tenure as Deputy Director, Tony prepared the Air Force team for confirmation hearings for the Air Force Secretary, Under Secretary, Chief of Staff, and the Vice Chief of Staff, all in an unprecedented 2-year time frame. He also supported more than 1,500 Air Force senior leader visits to the Hill as well as over 1,000 wing commander Hill visits, more than 450 congressional delegation and congressional staff trips, over 200 congressional hearings, and countless other Air Force Hill engagements.

Today, I would like to wish Mr. Anthony P. ''Tony'' Reardon good luck and Godspeed in his next assignment as the Director of Strategy, Resources and Integration for the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs. We know that this next chapter of his distinguished career will be one of even more success.

On behalf of the Congress and of the United States of America, I thank Tony; his wife, Dee; and their children, Maggie and Trip, for their patriotism, commitment to country, and service to Nation.

PUERTO RICO: HOW STATEHOOD WOULD POTENTIALLY AFFECT SELECTED FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND REVENUE SOURCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, this week, the GAO published a report about the fiscal impact of Puerto Rico statehood on the Federal Government.

In a 2012 referendum, a majority of voters in Puerto Rico said they didn't want Puerto Rico to remain a territory, and more voters favored statehood than any other option. In January, at my initiative, a law was enacted to provide funding for the first federally-sponsored vote in Puerto Rico's history. Meanwhile, in the past year, Puerto Rico's longstanding economic problems have devolved into a crisis. Every week, 1,000 of my constituents move to the States in search of opportunity and equality. Thus, the GAO has released its report at a time when island residents are voting for statehood—at the ballot box and with their feet—in unprecedented numbers.

The momentum in favor of statehood continues to build with this report, which supports the conclusion that statehood will be beneficial to Puerto Rico and to the U.S. as a whole.

The report confirms that statehood will enhance the quality of life in Puerto Rico. As a territory, Puerto Rico is treated unequally under key Federal spending and tax credit programs. As a State, it will receive equal treatment. Based on the GAO's analysis and taking into account programs the GAO did not examine, it can be calculated that statehood will inject an additional $10 billion into Puerto Rico's economy each year. This underscores the scope and severity of the discrimination Puerto Rico faces as a territory.

The report also alleviates the concern that statehood would have an adverse impact on the U.S. Treasury. As the GAO explains, new Federal outlays to Puerto Rico will be significantly counterbalanced by new Federal revenues generated from the island, which could amount to $7 billion a year. As Puerto Rico prospers, collections will increase further.

The report, thus, reinforces that statehood, which is so plainly in Puerto Rico's interest, is also in the national interest. This Nation will benefit when Puerto Rico's economy is strong, when its residents don't need to move to the States to achieve their dreams or vote for their national leaders, when individuals and businesses on the island flourish, and when the tax base expands. The U.S. will profit from the state of Puerto Rico's success, just as it currently pays an economic and a moral price for the territory's shortcomings.

The reaction to the report from politicians in Puerto Rico who favor the status quo has been dishonest. Their strategy is clear: if you cannot convince the public, try to confuse the public.

For example, they claim the report concludes that hardworking island residents would have a large Federal tax liability under statehood. The report says no such thing, and the assertion is false. A typical household in Puerto Rico will pay the same or less in total taxes under statehood than it pays now due to the application of Federal tax credits and the ability of the Puerto Rico Government to reduce its high local rates once it no longer needs to finance a disproportionate share of public services.

In any event, this inaccurate argument shows disrespect for the people of Puerto Rico, who will be proud to assume both the rights and responsibilities of statehood. Throughout history, men and women have fought and fallen for equality and dignity. These principles are priceless.

My colleagues who requested the GAO report should now schedule a hearing on it. Seventy-five days have passed since the enactment of the law authorizing Puerto Rico to hold a federally-sponsored referendum, and 132 Members of Congress have sponsored my legislation that calls for a referendum on Puerto Rico's admission as a State, which requires Federal action if a majority of voters chooses statehood. If the Governor of Puerto Rico believes his claim that the GAO report is somehow damaging to statehood, he should have the courage of his convictions to conduct a statehood admission vote with the available Federal funds without delay. His inaction speaks louder than his words.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Bryan Smith, First Baptist Church Roanoke, Roanoke, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Lord, we thank You for today, for the life that You have given to us, the riches of Your blessings, the freedoms we enjoy, and for Your gracious and tender mercies.

Forgive us for our transgressions against You, and help those gathered here today to work together in the knowledge of Your truth.

I thank You for these leaders who are here by Your authority. Please bless them and their families.

Give to them the wisdom, discernment, humility, and guidance they will need in fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities entrusted to them. May they be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.

May their weakness be the revenue for Your strength; may their purpose for gathering today be honorable in Your sight; and may the work that is accomplished promote Your righteousness and peace throughout our Nation.

In Your holy name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COURTNEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

WELCOMING DR. BRYAN SMITH

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to welcome Dr. Bryan Smith, a constituent of the Sixth Congressional District of Virginia and a friend who has offered the opening prayer today. I hope the doctor's prayer offers this body guidance and wisdom for the tasks before us.

Dr. Smith serves as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Roanoke, one of the largest congregations in Roanoke Valley. During his time at First Baptist, I have known Dr. Smith to be a man who believes in putting faith in action, working tirelessly to help others grow spiritually.

Dr. Smith and his wife, Mary, have served in ministry together for more than 25 years. They have two children. He is a graduate of Mobile College, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

I want to thank Dr. Smith for serving as guest chaplain in the House of Representatives today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

OBAMACARE 30-HOUR RULE

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about a young American and one of my constituents from McKinney, Texas, who is doing her best to make a way for herself.

Jillian, a college student, has worked part-time at a local grocery store to help pay for her school expenses. For many years, Jillian clocked between 30 and 40 hours a week until suddenly that was cut down to 15 to 18 hours a week. Jillian learned the cuts were due to ObamaCare.

The new definition of full-time employment is 30 hours instead of the traditional 40 hours. Fewer work hours not only mean less take-home pay, but also less experience and less opportunity.

That is not the America we know and love. That is not the America we want to leave to our children and grandchildren. That is why I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act, to restore the traditional 40-hour workweek and help millions of hardworking Americans like Jillian.

FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, it is here. We have been waiting with bated breath for the Ryan budget, perhaps some of the biggest and most immediate problems confronting our Nation, things that will put people back to work and boost the economy.

For me, number one is the exhaustion of the highway trust fund, meaning, as of October 1 or earlier, the Federal Government will end all new authorization for State highway projects and bridge replacement and transit for 8 to 10 months because the highway trust fund is depleted.

If you look through the Ryan budget, it is the subject of three pages of narrative and is screed full of blather, but a close reading gets to a blueprint for the future of the national transportation system. He has a simple solution. We will end it. We will end it.

The legacy of Dwight David Eisenhower and a coordinated approach to a national transportation system, in the Ryan budget, it ends. He will devolve it, devolve it to the States. The 50 States assembled and the territories will be responsible for funding their own transportation system, and somehow it will serve national needs.

Let's stop this madness.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S BACKDOOR GOVERNMENT ABORTION FUNDING

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the government's backdoor funding of abortions through grants to abortion provider Planned Parenthood. Forty-five percent of the organization's entire revenue, totaling roughly $540 million in 2013, was provided directly by the American taxpayer through government grants.

Planned Parenthood performed 327,000 abortions in 2012. Planned Parenthood states in its own budgetary report for 2013:

> We are the most effective advocate in the country for policies that protect access to abortion.

My constituents find the practice of abortion morally abhorrent and threatening to the social fabric of this country, and they should not be forced to subsidize abortions nationwide.

I call on this body to respect the conscience of millions of Americans by ending the practice of government funding for abortions.

RYAN BUDGET

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we learned the details of the Ryan budget, a proposal that would have devastating impacts on my western New York community.

For seniors, the Ryan budget would put Medicare on the road to privatization, handing older Americans a voucher and forcing them to fend for themselves to find quality health care.

This budget slashes Pell grants that provide young people the opportunity for a college education; ends AmeriCorps, a program filling a critical need in urban schools and neighborhoods; and eliminates all support for the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Ryan budget would gut domestic priorities such as infrastructure, education, and medical research, cutting nation-building here by $791 billion in less than a decade.

A budget is the clearest message of a nation's values. The Ryan budget abandons seniors, students, patients awaiting medical breakthroughs, and struggling families. This is not who we are as a nation.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Month of the Military Child, which is celebrated every April.

For generations, military children have supported those who serve by making their own sacrifices and persevering through tough times, especially those in families with parents on Active Duty or deployment.

For a child, there are few things more difficult than being apart from a mom or dad deployed overseas. Just since 2001, nearly 2 million military children have experienced a parental deployment. Currently, there are approximately 1.2 million children of Active Duty U.S. members worldwide.

Sometimes overlooked, military families move three times as often as nonmilitary families and share many of the hardships. Children and spouses in these circumstances also experience anxiety in higher rates than their nonmilitary counterparts and must worry about new housing, jobs, friends, and schools.

With a son and daughter-in-law in the military, I know life in the service can be trying, but we thank these soldiers and their families for keeping us safe.

Mr. Speaker, let us give praise to these soldiers and their families for their service and their sacrifice. They deserve as much.

CONNECTICUT PRE-ENGINEERING PROGRAM

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

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a group of five talented students from Danbury. These students, part of the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program at Danbury High School, won Best in State in the second annual Verizon Innovative App Challenge.

With the guidance of their teacher advisers, Jack Tracey and Linda Kimble, they created an app, Mediminder, that reminds people to refill their prescriptions and provides them with their doctor's contact information.

As a member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and as a cofounder of the congressional student app competition, I am a strong believer in hands-on opportunities like this. In fact, this weekend, I will be hosting an app workshop in Waterbury.

When students create and design their own app, they transform from passive consumers of technology into active innovators, problem solvers, and entrepreneurs.

Tommy, Anjali, Lexie, Steven, and Sameena, I applaud your innovative spirit. Congratulations on winning Best in State. I can't wait to see what you come up with next.

HONORING DR. FERNANDEZ FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICINE IN SOUTH FLORIDA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the contributions of Dr. Bernardo ''Bernie'' Fernandez to medicine in south Florida.

Dr. Fernandez will soon assume the post of CEO of Baptist Medical Health Group, and he is an accomplished doctor with a record of success as CEO of Cleveland Clinic Florida. His leadership in the field of medicine earned him the distinction of being named one of America's best doctors and the title of Fellow at the American College of Physicians and the Society for Vascular Medicine and Biology.

Dr. Fernandez has given back to the south Florida community by actively participating in charitable groups and supporting our shared alma mater, the University of Miami. However, none of this is done in a vacuum and is only accomplished with the love and support of his wife, Rosy, and their children, Steven and Cristina.

Again, I congratulate Bernie for his leadership, and I know that our south Florida community will continue to benefit from his more than 25 years of experience. Congratulations to Bernie.

HEALTH INSURANCE SIGN-UPS SURGE

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, these are heady days in the State of Connecticut where both the UConn men and women are in the Final Four, shocking the world.

Mr. Speaker, there has also been another team working hard in the State of Connecticut. That is the assisters, navigators, insurance agents, community health centers, faith-based groups, and call center employees who have been enrolling Connecticut citizens in the Affordable Care Act at a frantic pace.

As of Monday night, they had enrolled 197,000 Connecticut citizens. Even though the target that HHS gave last summer was only 100,000, they doubled the target that was given to the State of Connecticut. Why? Because these assisters, like Marianne Martinez, said:

> I heard a lot of stories from people who hadn't had insurance or seen a doctor in years. Some people came in expecting insurance would cost them $500 a month, and it turned out to be only $40 or $100. It was a breath of fresh air.

Congratulations to all those individuals who are helping, helping people in this country get access to health care.

And go, Huskies.

ADMINISTRATION RELEASES DANGEROUS CRIMINAL ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the administration claims historic record deportation numbers, but a recent report by the Center for Immigration Studies found that immigration agents only attempted to send home about one-fourth of the illegal immigrants they encountered in 2014, and 68,000 of those released back into our communities have criminal records.

When the administration puts criminal illegal immigrants back in our neighborhoods, it can have tragic results. Not only do these illegal immigrants take jobs from unemployed Americans, but they also pose a threat to the safety of innocent Americans.

These dangerous criminal illegal immigrants are likely to repeat their offenses. In 2012, the Congressional Research Service determined that over 26,000 illegal immigrants were rearrested almost 58,000 times. Suspected crimes included theft, robbery, and murder.

The President's immigration policy threatens the safety and lives of thousands of Americans.

□ 1215

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the severe impact of climate change across the United States.

On Sunday, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a new report, laying out the ways that climate change has already impacted our economy.

Climate change threatens our coastal communities through ocean acidification and sea level rise. It threatens our big cities by making extreme weather events, like Hurricane Sandy, more frequent and more intense. It threatens all of us who rely on rain to water our crops or on snow for our drinking water.

California faces a future where less snow and earlier snowmelt will strain our already scarce water resources. 2014 is already one of the driest years in our State's history. Who knows what 2015 will bring?

I call on all of my colleagues to come together in a meaningful and bipartisan way to tackle climate change.

RYAN BUDGET PROTECTS DEFENSE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, House Budget Chairman PAUL RYAN unveiled his vision of a budget, which will reduce Washington's out-of-control spending and will put our country back on a path to prosperity.

For years, the President has targeted our military in order to support his Big Government agenda. Last month, the administration announced plans to reduce the size of our Armed Forces to levels of those prior to World War II, putting American families at risk.

Chairman RYAN recognizes that our brave men and women in uniform, military families, and veterans are the ones who dedicate their lives to keeping us safe. His budget proposes to strengthen national security.

The primary function of the national government is to maintain a strong national defense. I appreciate Chairman PAUL RYAN for committing to ensuring the safety of every American at home and abroad.

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

RYAN BUDGET

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the draconian

budget proposal released by House Republicans yesterday.

In Las Vegas and across the country, Americans have made it clear that our budget should bolster a strong middle class and make serious investments in the next generation.

This Republican proposal, however, shrinks investments in infrastructure and education, cuts funding to research and development, eliminates the safety net for our most vulnerable citizens, and breaks the longtime promise to seniors by, once again, attacking the Medicare guarantee. These cuts undermine our short-term recovery, and they shortchange critical investments that will keep us competitive in the global economy.

In short, Republicans ignore solid American values, instead doubling down on inconsistent assumptions and budget gimmicks that just do not add up. This budget should have been released on Groundhog Day, but I guess that April Fool's Day is just as appropriate.

I say to you: Don't be fooled.

REMEMBERING RAY HUTCHISON—A TEXAS ICON

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Ray Hutchison, husband to our colleague, former Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, a great Texan and an even better friend.

Through his work in developing nearly every public works project in our area in the past 50 years, Ray Hutchison is leaving a lasting mark on the north Texas community. He was a driving force in creating the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, one of the largest airports in the country today, as well as developing the Dallas Area Rapid Transit system. He also contributed to several professional sporting facilities in the area. We can thank Ray Hutchison for moving the Washington Senators to Arlington in the early 1970s, giving us our beloved team, the Texas Rangers.

Ray's selflessness and abundant accomplishments are too great to list in just 1 minute, but I am proud to have known him. On behalf of the Texas delegation, I offer my sincerest condolences to former Senator Hutchison and to her children, Bailey and Houston.

DISCHARGE PETITION FOR BIPARTISAN, COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, last week, I signed the discharge petition on H.R. 15, the bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform bill.

Today, I stand with millions of families across our country to call upon Speaker BOEHNER to simply bring H.R. 15 to the floor of the House for a vote. This bill secures our borders, provides an earned pathway to citizenship, and increases economic opportunity for all Americans. We request a vote—no, we demand a vote. We demand a vote, Mr. Speaker.

We demand this vote because the American people are tired of living under a broken immigration system and seeing families broken apart. The American people know that passing this bill will save our country $900 billion over the next two decades. We know that the American people overwhelmingly support immigration reform with a path to citizenship.

Mr. Speaker, give the American people that vote.

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, not only is April National Autism Awareness Month, but more specifically, today, April 2, is World Autism Awareness Day. Today, we join with families all across the world in a sign of support, unity, and encouragement.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, nearly one in 68 babies born will be diagnosed with some degree of autism. Families dealing with autism are in all of our districts, and they are in our communities. They are our neighbors, and they are our families and friends. Yet far too little awareness and support occurs for these families that are raising an autistic child.

April is one more opportunity to spread the word and remind others about autism, and to raise awareness about the importance of research and advocacy for Americans who are living with developmental disabilities. Families dealing with autism bear their challenges admirably and lovingly, raising children into adults who contribute to our country in so many ways. Today, we celebrate those families and their many accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize April as National Autism Awareness Month.

RYAN BUDGET PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the Republicans released their budget blueprint to the American people.

Budgets are moral documents that reflect our priorities as a nation. Republicans have clearly outlined their priorities in this budget, which are: raising taxes on the middle class, cutting taxes for multimillionaires, and hurting seniors by ending Medicare as we know it. The budget plan introduced this week offers no real solutions.

If your thing is massive cuts to nutrition, health care, and other critical supports that give low-income children and families a decent chance at life, then the Ryan budget is your deal.

Instead of making these hits on the middle class, we should focus on improving education, investing in domestic manufacturing, and paving the way for a good future.

Also troubling is that the Ryan budget rejects the opportunity to enact immigration reform, to raise the minimum wage, and to extend unemployment insurance, which would create jobs and strengthen our economy.

As elected leaders, we owe it to the American people to invest in them, not to cut the safety net from under them.

MARFA, TEXAS

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, today, in my 23-in-1 journey, I would like to take you to a beautiful city in West Texas known as Marfa.

Established in 1883 as a water stop for the railroad, Marfa has become a cultural mixing bowl, with cowboys and artists alike. Located in the Trans-Pecos area at an altitude of over 4,800 feet and situated on what is known as the Marfa Plateau, it is surrounded by a beautiful landscape that has served as the backdrop to many notable movies, like the film ''Giant,'' starring James Dean and Elizabeth Taylor.

Despite having a population of only 2,000 people, Marfa has become a hidden cultural hub in the desert. It is a place filled with cowboys and art galleries, Mexican food and Texas barbecue.

In Marfa, you will find one of the most beautiful, historic courthouses in Texas. The antelope literally play amongst the rich outdoor art, and the tourists come to relax, surrounded by big city culture in a town with only one traffic light.

In Marfa, the old crashes with the new to form a harmony that is truly American. I am honored to represent a city so rich in art, cultural life, and history. Mr. Speaker, I invite everyone to Marfa.

AN AFFRONT TO DEMOCRACY

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court's conservative majority has decided the very wealthiest Americans should now be allowed to have even more influence in politics to advance their personal or political or business agendas.

The Court has allowed even more money into campaigns, and this threatens to drown out the voices of ordinary citizens.

Today's Supreme Court McCutcheon decision is the worst affront to democracy since Citizens United. Congress must take action.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, just give us a vote. Just give us a vote on comprehensive immigration reform.

The United States Senate passed a bill almost a year ago, in a bipartisan fashion, on comprehensive immigration reform. Americans want comprehensive immigration reform.

We have a bill, H.R. 15, which provides for comprehensive immigration reform. It would pass this House, but for some reason or another, the Republican majority will not bring it up. It will not allow the House to vote on it.

The Senate had the courage to vote on it. The House ought to bring this up and pass comprehensive immigration reform. It can be done this week or next week. Let's get it done. Just give us a vote.

FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the other week, I met with leaders of the San Diego medical research community, who had a unified message: we need to end the cuts in research that have slowed medical innovation for the last decade.

I am proud to be leading the bipartisan effort, along with nearly 200 of my colleagues, to push for over $32 billion in Federal funding for the NIH.

This is a very personal issue. Almost all of us know someone who is struggling with a disease for which the National Institutes of Health funding is used to find a cure. That person could be a mother, a father, a family friend or, even more heart-wrenching, a child. The disease could be cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, MS, or any of the other diseases that people face every day.

It is more than a matter of scientific research; it is a matter of economics. For a generation, California has been a world leader in life sciences innovation, and our State is home to the most jobs, to the most companies, to the world's greatest concentration of top-tier research institutions. It is time to reverse the budget cuts that threaten this ecosystem and to increase the NIH budget to $32 billion.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, all across America and around the world, the men and women in the United States military serve us and serve us well.

Would you wonder whether or not their families back home would be eligible for an increase in the minimum wage?

Their families may be blue-collar workers or workers in the service industries, and here they are, willing to sacrifice their lives, and we here in the United States Congress won't raise the minimum wage to $10.10. What an outrage. Even the possible compromise that is percolating around has the audacity to suggest that $7.25 is okay, that we will raise it just a little bit. But you don't understand the facts: $10.10 is over a 3-year period.

Then today, on the floor of the House, a brilliant idea. H.R. 2575, I believe is the name. This one wants to eliminate the opportunity of those who are working 30 hours a week to get health care. Across the way, in the Budget hearing, the Republican budget is cutting trillions of dollars in social services and Medicaid.

Raise the minimum wage. Take the American people off of social needs, social assistance. Stop the tomfoolery of turning this country backwards.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2575, SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 530 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 530

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2575) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) three hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 530 provides for consideration of a critical piece of legislation passed out of the Ways and Means Committee designed to address a critical flaw in the Affordable Care Act, which is causing workers to lose hours at their job and thus lose wages to help put food on their tables and feed their families and pay their utility bills to heat their homes in the winter and cool their homes in the summer.

H.R. 2575, the bipartisan Save American Workers Act of 2014, fixes this flaw by changing the newly created labor rule in the Affordable Care Act, which defines full-time work at 30 hours per week and places that definition back where the American public has always believed it to be, at 40 hours per week.

The rule before us today provides for 3 hours of debate. That is triple the standard hour of debate that most bills before this body receive. This is done in order to fully discuss this important labor issue affecting so many Americans.

To maintain this targeted focus—the exact kind of fix that the President claims he is interested in discussing with Republicans in order to make his law more workable—no amendments were made in order. This allows the House to fully debate this crucial issue without the possibility of unrelated issues being brought into the debate.

Indeed, this bill is so targeted, dealing with one single provision in the Affordable Care Act, that it does not repeal the Affordable Care Act—a charge I have no doubt we will hear several times over today—but in fact simply changes a definition in the bill.

Moreover, during the markup of this legislation in the Ways and Means Committee, no amendments were offered by either the majority or the minority. As always, the minority is afforded the customary motion to recommit on the bill.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Affordable Care Act's requirement that businesses with 50 or more employees provide health insurance coverage to those employees working 30 or more hours a week, employers across the Nation—from schools to universities to municipalities to restaurants—are being forced to cut workers' hours or face unsustainable employment costs to their businesses and organizations.

As we are seeing—and indeed, as many on this side predicted prior to the controversial and contentious passage of the Affordable Care Act—the bill fundamentally changed labor law in this country, creating a new standard called the 30-hour workweek, a standard 30-hour workweek, a shorter workweek than even imposed by the country of France.

As a result, workers' hours are being cut and productivity in this country, a country that has always prided itself on the work ethic of its citizens, will decrease over time. This is what an onerous government regulation can and will do—suppress innovation and disadvantage our businesses.

Many members of the Democratic Party have been outspoken in clamoring for an extension to long-term unemployment benefits, which would extend government assistance to unemployed Americans well beyond a year's worth of benefits; yet there is something that can be done today which will have the actual, practical effect of putting more money into people's pockets.

We have heard story after story, from every State in the Union, that employers are dropping workers from even 39 hours per week to 29 or fewer hours, potentially 10 work hours a week that workers won't see in their paychecks, which could mean hundreds or more dollars that men and women won't have to feed their families or pay their bills. Increasing workers' hours increases the money that people have in their disposable income.

The Affordable Care Act fundamentally changed labor law in this country, and the repercussions of this might not be felt for years to come. This is indeed the prototype of the dangerous, slippery slope.

What other labor laws will be reinterpreted to define full-time employment at 30 hours per week? Do people intend to impose overtime rules on employers who employ people for over 30 hours per week? It is yet another regulation which would only result in businesses cutting more hours.

What will the National Labor Relations Board reinterpret, knowing that the very fabric of labor law is based on a 30-hour workweek, instead of that previously established standard of 40 hours per week?

Prior to the passage of the Affordable Care Act, employers were already overwhelmingly providing health insurance to their employees working 40 hours a week.

Making the change contained in Mr. YOUNG's legislation will cause the least amount of disruption in the labor market, and I would submit, with the economy as it is today, making the least disruptive change in the labor market would be desirable.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the Affordable Care Act will reduce the total number of hours worked by about 1.5 percent to 2 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024. This is almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor.

Because of this, the Congressional Budget Office projects a decline in the number of workers of about 2 million in 2017, rising to about 2.5 million in 2024, all as a net result of the Affordable Care Act.

The latest Congressional Budget Office figures show that the Affordable Care Act will increase spending by almost $2 trillion—double the estimate from 2010. The Joint Committee on Taxation states that taxpayers will be on the hook for another $1.1 trillion over the next decade.

Americans earning as little as $25,000 a year will pay more because of the law, even after accounting for the $1 trillion in premium cost-sharing subsidies.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about what is happening here today. This bill before us does not repeal the President's takeover of health care in this country. It does not undermine the Affordable Care Act.

It does not take health insurance from a single person in the country. It is a fix to a fatal flaw contained within the law, similar to the seven fixes that have passed both Houses of Congress and were signed into law by the President.

Does anyone miss the 1099 paperwork regulation, which was repealed early on after the passage of the Affordable Care Act? Does anyone legitimately miss the CLASS Act, which was repealed on the very last day of the last Congress?

I think not. Had I not reminded you of those two parts of the bill, I doubt you would remember them.

This is no different from those 37 unilateral fixes that the President and his Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Treasury have made on their own, with no input from either legislative body. It is a fix to stop legislation that will cause people to lose their work.

If all sides cannot agree to fix a provision within the Affordable Care Act that is preventing people from working, then it is simply empty rhetoric to claim that the President or the other body or this body is interested in any fixes at all.

I encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise against the 52nd closed rule and the 52nd attempt to dismantle the ACA, the Affordable Care Act.

Once again, my colleagues in the Republican Party are standing on the wrong side of history. In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed an ambitious program called Social Security in order to ensure that America's seniors had a measure of financial safety in their old age, a floor through which they could not fall; yet as it was being debated in the halls of Congress, Republicans and their allies in the business community tried to portray Social Security as something far more sinister.

Representative Daniel Reed of New York predicted that, under Social Security, Americans would feel ''the lash of the dictator,'' while Republican Senator Daniel Hastings of Delaware declared that Social Security would ''end the progress of a great country.''

Republican Congressman John Taber even said of the proposed law:

> Never in the history of the world has any measure been brought here so insidiously designed as to prevent business recovery and to enslave workers.

Thirty years later, these same arguments are being used to decry the creation of Medicare as the beginning of socialized medicine, and it was strictly with the votes of Democrats that the legislation to create Medicare was passed out of the Ways and Means Committee and the Rules Committee before being brought to the floor.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, we have been through this same story many times. A cynical person might believe that one of the reasons that the ACA has been fought so hard, as this is the third time Republicans failed to come up with any program that would help Americans either achieve independence or security in their old age, is that since every one of them voted against it, it is in their best interest that it fail.

All those claims that were made were absolutely untrue; and today, despite the current majority's attempts to portray the Affordable Care Act as another law that will steal personal freedoms, destroy the economy, and hurt American workers, the facts are once again proving them wrong.

Instead, it is quickly becoming clear that the Affordable Care Act will stand alongside Social Security and Medicare as an enduring commitment to the welfare of our fellow citizens.

Mr. Speaker, when we passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010, our Nation had reached the depths of a crisis that was decades in the making.

In fact, Presidents dating back as far as Harry Truman, including Republicans like Richard Nixon and Democrats like Bill Clinton, saw the urgent need to reform our health care system and expand coverage to every American, yet each time that a President tried to act, their efforts failed.

As a result, by 2010, our Nation was spending 17.6 percent of the Nation's gross domestic product on health care, and yet a record high number of 49.9 million Americans had no care at all.

With the health care crisis more acute than ever, President Obama and Democrats in Congress decided that we had to act. In fact, the percentage of GDP that health care was consuming

was rising beyond 18 percent, causing a serious threat to our economy. Thus began one of the most comprehensive legislative debates in history, a debate that included the views of both Democrats and Republicans, since they occupy all committees, and a debate conducted in full view of the American people.

The House held nearly 100 hours of hearings and 83 hours of committee markups. We heard from 181 witnesses, and 239 amendments from both Democrats and Republicans were considered in the three committees of jurisdiction, and 121 of them were adopted.

□ 1245

Finally, the bill was available for 72 hours before Members were asked to vote on it on the House floor. Despite this thorough and collaborative process, not a single member of the Republican Party on this floor voted for the historic law, true to their pattern of decades.

Today, thanks exclusively to the votes of Democrats, the numbers of Americans with access to health care is going up, and most importantly, the cost to providing health care to our citizens is slowing down. We have seen the slowest growth in the rise of health care in these last 2 years than we have in 50 years.

We all know that 7.2 million Americans registered for health insurance this year through the online health care exchanges—and even more in State exchanges, and we don't have that number yet. Indeed, RAND put out a report this week stating that 20 million Americans are benefiting, including the number of children under 26 who are on their parents' health care insurance. So, this week, in addition to that, the Los Angeles Times said at least 9.5 million previously uninsured Americans now have health insurance because of the ACA.

For those of us who have been carrying health insurance and been lucky enough to have it from our employers, each of our policies have cost $1,000 more because of what we were having to pay for uncompensated care for those who had no health insurance. That alone is one measure that is going to reduce the cost of insurance.

In the face of its success, it is not surprising the majority has come here today with a 52nd attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act. After unanimously opposing its passage, spending millions of dollars campaigning against it, the majority has firmly planted their feet on the wrong side of history. Their only way forward is to dismantle the ACA as quickly as possible and prevent the American people from seeing more benefits under the law.

Mr. Speaker, even though the majority may claim that today's legislation is an attempt to fix the Affordable Care Act, it is, in fact, a fiscally irresponsible attempt to undermine the law. First, the legislation is not paid for, which flies in the face of the rules of all the Republicans in the House. The bill costs $74 million, and there is no hint at all of how that is going to be paid for. In fact, the Rules Committee last night, as it may, waived the rules of the House that require a pay-for, despite denying countless similar waiver requests in the past.

According to analysis by the Congressional Budget Office, this legislation would increase the deficit by $74 billion and force 1 million people to lose their sponsored health care coverage and increase the number of uninsured. It is not true that under this piece of legislation no one would lose their health care.

Over the next few hours, we will surely hear many claims about how much we care about the American worker. And I have no doubt that each claim contains a measure of truth because, after all, those American workers are our constituents. Words, no matter how moving, are only as powerful as the actions that are taken to back them up. It is the vote we take, not the speeches we make, that will show how much we care for the well-being of the American people.

Will we continue the progress being made under the Affordable Care Act, progress that is providing millions of Americans with access to health care for the very first time, or will we vote to try and undermine the progress with a bill that is before us today?

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on today's rule and the underlying legislation. The facts become clearer every day. The Affordable Care Act is delivering on its promise of lower cost, greater access to lifesaving health care for millions of Americans. Millions, Mr. Speaker, for the first time, have health care because they had been born with a preexisting condition which no longer hampers their having health care.

It is time the majority stop playing political games and start supporting the historic law that will benefit Americans now and for generations to come. As I have pointed out many times on the floor during a rule, running the House of Representatives of the Congress costs $24 million a week. This is again another week where we do nothing to earn that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds for a response.

Of course, the President did come out for a big photo op and press conference in the Rose Garden yesterday and talked about a number of 7 million. Discounted in that is the 6 million people who lost their health insurance in October, November, and December of last year who have now, thankfully, reclaimed insurance.

So, the actual numbers, we will see those posted later in the year; but isn't it interesting, the President can have a press conference, but they cannot provide our committee with the actual detail on those numbers, which we have been asking for for months.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend from Texas for yielding.

I rise in strong support of the rule and on, also, the underlying bill, the Save American Workers Act.

Four years after ObamaCare's passage, this law's implementation is a patchwork of delays stitched together with miles of bureaucratic red tape. Unfortunately, the arbitrary delays and the exemptions this administration has granted help only a small segment of workers and businesses. Part-time workers have been among those most deeply affected by ObamaCare, yet this administration has shown little interest in providing the relief to these folks that is extended to unions and favored business entities.

It was said just a moment ago that this is the 52nd time that we are doing something like this, but I will say this: I will stand on the side of history that says for 52 times it will stand to stand against something that is wrong. I will stand in this well 52 more times when it is wrong and hurting the American people. Right is right, and this bill is wrong.

The underlying bill seeks to help moms and dads, businesses understand what we have always known. ObamaCare's 30-hour definition of full-time employee demonstrates how little the authors of the bill know about running a business. The vast majority of American employers and employees have understood full time as being 40 hours a week for nearly a century. It is time to replace ObamaCare's definition of full-time employee with one that makes sense and will help American workers meet their financial goals.

As an original cosponsor of the Save American Workers Act, I stand with all those in Georgia's Ninth District whose livelihood has been impacted by ObamaCare's definition of a full-time employee. These include employees of the City of Gainesville, which is limiting workers' hours to avoid ObamaCare's employer mandate. Reduced hours make a tremendous impact on the household budgets of the men and women serving the people of Gainesville. While many of these folks have had the option of working additional hours to make ends meet in the past, they must now seek employment elsewhere or find a second job.

Mr. Speaker, this is a situation that is not unique. We have heard similar stories from both the private and public sector told in this Chamber. It is time for this administration and its allies to stop writing off these realities as lies or untruths being circulated for political purposes.

Those who still stand by ObamaCare need to spend some time face-to-face with the workers whose hours have been cut because of this law. It is time for them to look in the eyes of a mom and dad who won't have as much time with their children this year because

they will have to take on yet another job to make ends meet.

I hope my fair-minded colleagues on both sides of the aisle will come together to support this commonsense legislation and provide some relief to the folks who deserve it most—America's working men and women.

The gentlewoman from New York is right; it is about our votes, not our speeches. The American people can look to the Republican majority and they can see whom we stand with. We stand with the people who have been hurt, who are suffering, who are having to work extra jobs. It is about those moms and dads. It is not about the exemptions and special privileges given to friends of this administration on the delays and a whim and a notice.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my fellow New Yorker, Mr. BISHOP.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak with respect to the previous question. I would urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we could vote on H.R. 1010, a bill that would raise the minimum wage to $10.10 per hour over a 3-year period.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I don't get it. I don't understand what the problem is. We are the people's House. More than 70 percent of the American people have indicated that they support an increase in the minimum wage. This isn't a partisan issue. Majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and unaffiliateds all support an increase in the minimum wage by overwhelming numbers.

There are studies that indicate that if we increase the minimum wage, we will pump $35 billion into the economy over a 3-year span of phasing it in. That is $35 billion worth of economic activity without spending a dime of Federal money. That economic activity, it is estimated, would create 85,000 jobs.

Again, I will say, I don't get it. This Congress ought to be about creating jobs. Here is an opportunity to do that without spending a dime of Federal money, and yet we can't even get a vote.

While we're here in this Chamber, the so-called Ryan budget, the Republican budget resolution, is being marked up. That budget resolution seeks to cut $135 billion out of the SNAP program over the next 10 years. In order for that cut to be effective, if it were to ever take on the force of law, millions of people would lose their SNAP eligibility.

But get this, if we raise the minimum wage, it has been estimated that we would save $4.6 billion a year, in other words, roughly $50 billion over 10 years in SNAP costs because people would be making more money and, thus, have their eligibility for SNAP reduced. Isn't it preferable to help people earn more money and reduce their dependence on Federal programs?

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman another 1 minute.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, wouldn't it be vastly preferable to reduce Federal expenditures for a safety net program by virtue of lifting the economic status of the people that received them? Isn't that what we should be doing, trying to lift people up and give them opportunity as opposed to taking away from them benefits that they very badly need and benefits that they need because the jobs they have are such low-wage jobs?

All we are asking for is a vote. We simply want a vote. The previous speaker said that we were sent here to vote. That is right. We were sent here to vote. This is a very simple, straightforward provision. It used to get passed with bipartisan support. All we are asking for is a vote. If Members don't support the measure, vote against it. Let the American people know where they stand. But if Members do support it, they should have the opportunity to vote for it; and hopefully, giving us that opportunity, we will pass it so that we can help lift people up without spending a dime of Federal money.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the chairman of the Rules Committee.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, really, today's legislation is simple. It is about protecting American workers from job-destroying regulations contained in the Affordable Care Act. As written, ObamaCare establishes a definition of full-time employees as anyone working 30 hours per week and requires that business provide each of these workers with employer-sponsored health care or to pay a penalty.

Mr. Speaker, what we are here for is not the minimum wage today; that is another time. I am sure that as the other body debates this and as the administration trots around the country opportunities to sell their end of that, the American people will get that message. Today, this is about a group of people who are arbitrarily losing and having diminished from 40 hours down to 30 hours their work, their job, directly as a result of ObamaCare.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in testimony before the House of Representatives, there was discussion about a Hoover Institution study that was done by Dr. Chen. Dr. Chen specifically went and looked at the impact that the Affordable Care Act was having upon employers and employees. This really was put into context when we realized that this is a net $74 billion change in the law—$74 billion that the administration was counting on American people paying into the Affordable Care Act to support this by diminishing the amount of hours that a person works.

So, what did Dr. Chen say? Dr. Chen took just one part of our marketplace—education. Here is what he said:

The final reason I argue the 30-hour rule must be addressed is because of the negative impact it is having—in this case—on school districts, colleges, and universities. The analysis of vulnerable workers referenced earlier was that we focused on 225,000 workers who have a history of working in the education industry.

And they found out that, because of the 30-hour rule, that over 100 school districts across the country, including dozens in Indiana, which is where the study took place, would have either cut workers' hours or outsourced jobs to avoid the Affordable Care Act's employee mandate.

□ 1300

What we are saying is that the Federal law—which is not a mistake; it is on purpose—was specifically designed to bring $74 billion to the Affordable Care Act by diminishing the hours that the American worker can have. And when we bring this to the floor, they are arguing, oh, my gosh; Republicans, they want to have a $74 billion higher deficit. It could not be further from the truth. This is money that comes from American workers, $74 billion. And this commonsense legislation that we are handling today will say that we are going to turn back the clock to where there will not be a penalty for having a 40-hour workweek in America.

Today, the Democratic Party and President Obama want to reduce the number of hours that an American worker will have and take $74 billion off, diminishing what would be in their pockets, to move it directly to the Federal Government.

No doubt you will see other Democrats come to the floor, just as we saw the gentleman from New York, arguing not about the substance of this bill but talking about why we ought to do a minimum wage bill. Yet their same arguments are, we should have a government that allows people to keep more money in their pockets. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are doing today.

We are with a commonsense bill on the floor of the House of Representatives. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) carefully, thoughtfully went and sold this bill across this body, a bipartisan bill to say that the $74 billion impact on the middle class of this country—in particular, universities, those in education, those workers who needed jobs—will lose, in essence, one-fourth of the hours that they have worked because of the Affordable Care Act, President Barack Obama, NANCY PELOSI, and HARRY REID, who jammed this bill down the American people's throats. And now Republicans are taking it on one at a time. This is our 51st slice at explaining to the American people why this is a bad bill.

Mr. Speaker, the $74 billion belongs to the American worker, not to bigger government. The $74 billion is exactly why the Republican Party is here today. And I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), who has worked not only on the Rules Committee but also in Energy and Commerce, for taking his private sector experience as a doctor to Washington, D.C. Having a doctor in the House, as

Dr. BURGESS has done, makes a huge difference. That is why the Republican Party is on the floor today saying, let's pass this piece of legislation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. I thank the gentlewoman for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act hit a significant milestone yesterday: over 7 million people signed up for health care. I was very proud of it. I voted for the Affordable Care Act.

I suffered a debilitating illness when I was 5 years old, and my father was a doctor, but, beyond that, just knowing human beings and the need for health care, it was so important for me to see that people got health care. Fifty million Americans don't have it.

It was a great day when we gave the opportunity to these 7 million people, plus the many people that got Medicaid extended to them in States where the Governors were responsible and are accepting money to provide health care to people who needed it, while some other States are not, and the children who are able to stay on their parents' health care until they are 26. We are talking over 7 million people. When you add in the children and the Medicaid folks, it is a lot more people. It is a day America should be celebrating. It boggles my mind to see the other side bringing, for the 51st or 52nd time, a bill to repeal what is an effort to give 10 million Americans, or more, health care. We should be celebrating.

What you do unto the least of these, you do unto me. Health care is an essential basic element of life, and if you don't have health care, you are not going to have a fruitful and long life.

So I celebrate the passage of the bill and am in bewilderment at the fact that the Republicans are proudly having a 51st or 52nd opportunity to attack what is a bill that gives health care to people; gives parents the knowledge that their children are getting health care; gives children the relief that their parents, when they have illnesses, will be treated; and that nobody will be shut out because they have a preexisting condition. Being a woman won't be treated as a preexisting condition, and insurers will not be allowed to deny them health care because of their gender. The doughnut hole will be filled. This is a day to celebrate.

Above the Speaker's rostrum, DANIEL WEBSTER says: Let's do something great in our time here. Well, we did it, and we need to be proud of it.

Mr. BURGESS. I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, a very important point of what we are doing here today—look, when the junior Senator from my State stands up back home and says that he wants to repeal every syllable of ObamaCare, I will stand on my chair and cheer because I think that is the right approach.

But that is not what we are doing today. We are fixing a problem, as it exists in the body of the law, that is redefining full-time work as 30 hours per week. We are fundamentally reestablishing the relationship that occurs with America's working class.

Now, I would submit that in Politico magazine, on March 26, 2014, there was an opinion piece written, ''How to Fix the Affordable Care Act.'' And who was this opinion piece written by? Well, it was written by Members of the other body, Democratic Senators who had voted in favor of the passage of the Affordable Care Act in the first place. But they have proposals that they put forward in an opinion piece on how to fix the Affordable Care Act.

One of the things they say is, maybe we ought to allow selling across State lines. Maybe we ought to allow for a catastrophic policy to be sold again because that has, after all, been prohibited under the Affordable Care Act. They are valid suggestions. They are trying to fix the problems contained within the Affordable Care Act because they recognize it is unsustainable and unmanageable. Perhaps they are a little bit embarrassed because each one of them was the 60th vote that allowed the Affordable Care Act to come back over to the House and be passed.

Now, today we are talking about a fix to a problem within the Affordable Care Act that allows full-time employment to be reestablished and redefined at 40 hours per week.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire if my colleague has more speakers?

Mr. BURGESS. Your colleague always has more speakers as long as he is seated in the House. But I see no one else waiting, so we can proceed.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Then I am prepared to close and yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we heard, again, today that the Affordable Care Act has caused a lot of job loss, which simply flies in the face of reality because since the bill was passed, 8.6 million new jobs have been created in the United States. And every time we see one of those ads where somebody says, oh, I couldn't do this, I couldn't do that because of the health care bill, we have discovered that, generally, oftentimes people have been paid to say that on ads or that they have, unfortunately, been mistaken.

Now, today's rule grants 3 hours of debate on a bill going nowhere because we don't have anything else to do. We all know that the Senate will never take up this legislation, and if it did, the President has already said he would veto it. So instead of wasting 3 hours of debate on a 52nd attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act, I urge my colleagues to finally hold a vote to reform our immigration system, renew unemployment benefits, raise the minimum wage, or create jobs.

This economy would be roaring if we could pass some of our bills. We have 48 bills ready to go that would create new jobs that we can't put on the floor because of our single occupation here of trying to dismantle the Affordable Care Act.

So if we defeat the previous question today—and I hope everybody will vote ''no'' on it—it will give us a chance to do something that cries out to be done.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up legislation to raise the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour. The American people are calling for an economy that works for everyone, not just for those at the top.

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' to defeat the previous question, vote ''no'' on the underlying bill, and yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, to the issue of jobs created in the last 5 years, let me point out that the State of Texas has been responsible for the creation of about one-third of those jobs. It is our robust oil and gas business and the manufacturing sector in the State of Texas that have been responsible for that job growth.

So when the President comes in front of a joint session of Congress for the State of the Union address and wants to talk about the jobs created since he became President, my belief is, he should say in the next statement, May God bless Texas, because Texas is responsible for that job growth, and it had nothing to do with the Affordable Care Act.

Let me talk briefly about why we are here today. Of course the gentlelady mentioned about the passage of the Affordable Care Act. She mentioned the detailed analysis that was done by Democrats, who were then in the majority, how they pored over every word in the legislation.

Let me read you the paragraph that is under question today. I am reading from section 1513 of the consolidated Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: ''The number of full-time employees for any month otherwise determined include for such month a number of employees determined by dividing the aggregate number of hours of service of employees who are not full-time employees for the month by 120.'' Period, end of sentence.

What does that mean, Mr. Speaker? Well, fortunately, we don't have to wonder what it means because we have a rule that was promulgated by the Department of the Treasury which came out this past February. It is about a 55-page rule based upon what I just read

to the House. It is a long recitation. It contains a lot of things, but here is the bottom line: For employees who average at least 30 hours of service per week during a measurement period, who thus must be treated as full-time employees during an associated 6-month stability period. That is the bottom line.

I don't know how we went from 120 per month to 30 hours per week, but they figured it out at the Department of Treasury at some great expense, I rather suspect, because here is this rule that came to the American people in February of this year when the actual law was passed almost 4 years prior. Nevertheless, we have the rule, and people are welcome to read it in the Federal Register. It was published on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, 2 days before Valentine's Day. We love you, America.

Mr. Speaker, the rule that governs the debate on this bill before us today keeps that fundamental contract with employers and their workers that full-time employment will be 40 weeks. If you accept the definition from the Department of Labor that it is now 30 weeks and an employer is trying to reduce the cost of providing employment, they may make the logical assumption that if someone only works 28 or 29 hours, then they are not full-time; therefore, they do not need to be providing health insurance.

And what we have done is, we have shifted that entire equation and robbed people of 10 hours of employment every week. That is a significant change in their take-home pay.

Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for consideration of a critical bill to ensure that Americans are not forced to work fewer hours than they otherwise would without these draconian labor laws included in the Affordable Care Act.

□ 1315

I want to thank Mr. YOUNG for his thoughtful legislation, working across the aisle to offer a bill that both Republicans and Democrats have accepted in the committee by passing it through the committee with no amendments. He has bipartisan cosponsors, and he has public support.

I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2575, the so-called "Save American Workers Act of 2014," which represents the 52nd attempt by House Republicans to impede the Affordable Care Act and deny Americans the security that comes from having access to affordable, high-quality health care.

I oppose this bill because its effect would be to deny employer provided health insurance to hard working employees who work more than 30 hours but less than 40 hours per week.

If this bill were to become law in its current form, the health security of 10.2 percent of the workforce, or approximately 19.8 million workers, would be placed at risk.

I offered two amendments to H.R. 2575 that would prevent this travesty but regrettably neither was made in order by the Rules Committee.

Jackson Lee Amendment #1 would have improved this bad bill by amending the bill's 40 hour work week definition to include the employee's average commuting time in the computation of hours worked for purposes of determining "full-time employment."

Commuting time has become a major issue for those who work hourly wage jobs because their workday is much longer.

According to the Bureau of the Census nearly 8.1% of American workers commute 60 minutes or longer.

In 2011, almost 600,000 full-time workers had "mega-commutes" of at least 90 minutes and travel 50 miles or more from their homes. The daily average one-way travel to work for employees nationally is 25.5 minutes, and 1 out of 4 workers cross county lines to reach their jobs.

Jackson Lee Amendment #2 would have amended the bill by delaying the effective date of the bill until the first month after there has been two consecutive quarters in which the national unemployment rate is below 5 percent, which would indicate the nation has reached a full employment economy.

Our nation has taken a momentous step in creating a mindset that health insurance is a personal responsibility with the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. The law did not automatically enroll all citizens into the program because it was specifically designed to be an opt-in process.

This week all over the nation, over 4 millions of Americans took the first step toward taking control of their lives by purchasing their first personal or family health insurance policy.

Over the course of the sign-up process for the Affordable Care Act tens of thousands of visitors each day shopped the website and over 7.1 million people were added to private insurance roles as customers or have enrolled into Medicaid.

Despite problems with the initial rollout of the online health insurance registration process, people were patient and persistent about getting coverage for themselves and their families.

I have held many events in my District to inform and connect people with Navigators and Community Health Centers to support the message that it was time to get health insurance for yourself and your family.

Why with 60 legislative days remaining in the Second Session of the 113th Congress before the end of the 2014 fiscal year, we are still seeing attempts to end the Affordable Care Act is a mystery to the American public who are voting with their own healthcare dollars for Obamacare.

H.R. 2575 proposes to amend the Internal Revenue Code by redefining a full time employee for purposes of providing health insurance to only those workers who work a 40-hour workweek.

Mr. Speaker, few hourly workers in low-wage jobs work a 40-hour work week. These employees often rely on government assistance, which amounts to a hidden tax break to employers.

Low wageworkers often rely upon public housing assistance, SNAP, WIC or Medicaid to make ends meet.

Health insurance should not be used as a status symbol, but a basic right for people who live in the world's most prosperous nation.

I know that many predicted that the Affordable Care Act would cause havoc on the nation's health care system, but it is not the ACA that is causing havoc—it is a small vocal minority within the majority part that is causing headaches and heartaches to doctors and their patients.

I ask that my colleagues to join me in protecting workers by voting down this rule and the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 530 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER OF NEW YORK

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

Sec. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1010) to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

Sec. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1010.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

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

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

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

Mr. BURGESS. I yield back the balance of my time and I move the previous question on the resolution.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of House Resolution 530, if ordered, and approval of the Journal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 229, nays 194, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 152]

YEAS—229

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

NAYS—194

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

NOT VOTING—8

Capuano
Clark (MA)
Coffman
Conyers
Lynch
McAllister
Miller, Gary
Peters (MI)

□ 1347

Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. SINEMA, Messrs. CARNEY, OWENS, CROWLEY, and SCHRADER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. STIVERS and SESSIONS changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 152 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The question is on the resolution.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 186, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 153]

YEAS—236

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney

Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stewart
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—186

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

NOT VOTING—9

Capuano
Clark (MA)
Conyers
Fortenberry
Lynch
Miller, Gary
Perlmutter
Peters (MI)
Stivers

□ 1355

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

Ms. SINEMA and Mr. RICE of South Carolina changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 153, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, on April 2, 2014, I was traveling with President Obama for his address at the University of Michigan and unable to vote on the rule for H.R. 2575. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 262, nays 157, answered ''present'' 2, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 154]

YEAS—262

Aderholt
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Becerra
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clay
Cleaver
Coble
Cole
Collins (NY)
Cook
Cooper
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis (CA)
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foster
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Granger
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Horsford
Huffman
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Moran
Mullin
Nadler
Napolitano
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perry
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (WI)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thornberry
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vela
Wagner
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Womack
Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (IN)

NAYS—157

Amash
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brownley (CA)
Bucshon
Burgess
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Connolly
Costa
Cotton
Crowley
Cummings
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Dent
DeSantis
Duckworth
Duffy
Edwards
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fitzpatrick
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Garcia
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibson
Gowdy
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Gutiérrez
Hall
Hanna
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Herrera Beutler
Holding

Holt	McGovern	Sánchez, Linda T.
Honda	Meehan	Sarbanes
Hoyer	Meeks	Schakowsky
Hudson	Miller (FL)	Schiff
Huelskamp	Miller, George	Schock
Huizenga (MI)	Moore	Sewell (AL)
Israel	Mulvaney	Shea-Porter
Jackson Lee	Murphy (FL)	Sires
Jeffries	Murphy (PA)	Slaughter
Jenkins	Neal	Smith (MO)
Johnson (OH)	Negrete McLeod	Stivers
Jones	Nolan	Stockman
Jordan	Palazzo	Stutzman
Joyce	Pallone	Terry
Keating	Pastor (AZ)	Thompson (CA)
Kilmer	Paulsen	Thompson (MS)
Kind	Payne	Thompson (PA)
Kinzinger (IL)	Pearce	Tiberi
Kirkpatrick	Peters (CA)	Tipton
Lance	Peterson	Turner
Lee (CA)	Pittenger	Upton
Levin	Pitts	Valadao
Lewis	Poe (TX)	Vargas
LoBiondo	Price (GA)	Veasey
Lowey	Rahall	Velázquez
Lummis	Reed	Visclosky
Maffei	Reichert	Walberg
Maloney, Carolyn	Renacci	Weber (TX)
Maloney, Sean	Rigell	Wittman
Marchant	Ros-Lehtinen	Woodall
Matheson	Rush	Yoder
McDermott	Ryan (OH)	Young (AK)
	Salmon	

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Gohmert	Owens

NOT VOTING—10

Capuano	Grijalva	Peters (MI)
Clark (MA)	Lynch	Webster (FL)
Conyers	Miller, Gary	
Garamendi	Perlmutter	

□ 1402

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 154, I was unavoidably detained and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3717

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor from H.R. 3717, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2013.

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

There was no objection.

SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT OF 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 530, I call up the bill (H.R. 2575) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 530, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, is adopted. The bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 2575

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Save American Workers Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF 30-HOUR THRESHOLD FOR CLASSIFICATION AS FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE FOR PURPOSES OF THE EMPLOYER MANDATE IN THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND REPLACEMENT WITH 40 HOURS.

(a) FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS.—Paragraph (2) of section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by repealing subparagraph (E), and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS TREATED AS FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES.—Solely for purposes of determining whether an employer is an applicable large employer under this paragraph, an employer shall, in addition to the number of full-time employees for any month otherwise determined, include for such month a number of full-time employees determined by dividing the aggregate number of hours of service of employees who are not full-time employees for the month by 174.''.

(b) FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES.—Paragraph (4) of section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by repealing subparagraph (A), and

(2) by inserting before subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'full-time employee' means, with respect to any month, an employee who is employed on average at least 40 hours of service per week.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 90 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 2575.

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

There was no objection.

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

Today, I rise in support of restoring Americans' work hours so they can see bigger paychecks and more opportunities.

ObamaCare places an unprecedented government regulation on workers, changing the definition of ''full-time work'' from 40 hours per week to 30 hours. As a direct result, Americans across the country are having their hours cut at work, and they are seeing smaller paychecks. At a time when the costs of groceries, gas, and health care keep increasing, lower paychecks are simply unacceptable.

The bill we have before us today, the Save American Workers Act, would repeal ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek definition of ''full-time employment'' and would restore the traditional definition of a 40-hour workweek. Today, we are voting to restore hours and wages and to give businesses and their workers some relief from the burdens of ObamaCare. This is a critical step in creating an America that works.

I hear about the effects of ObamaCare from workers and employers across mid-Michigan. Recently, Central Michigan University was forced to cut back student employees' hours. As one student said:

> Students use that money to pay for finances and school, and I think it's going to become increasingly harder for them to pay for school when we can only work 25 hours.

A faculty member at a community college in my district wrote to me recently, and said:

> I hold two part-time positions . . . Today, I was informed I cannot continue to do both jobs because of ObamaCare laws. Beginning in August, I will no longer be advising and will lose approximately one-third of my income. Last year, I bought a house, a house I now fear I will no longer be able to afford.

By forcing employers to shift workers from full time to part time, the 30-hour rule is destroying hardworking Americans' abilities to earn more during these tough economic times. At a time when the President is calling on Congress to increase wages, it is his health care law that is forcing Americans to see smaller paychecks. ObamaCare is putting full-time work and the potential to earn more wages out of the reach of millions of Americans. Those who are hit the hardest are low-income Americans who are already struggling in these tough economic times. According to a Hoover Institution study, 2.6 million Americans making under $30,000 a year are most at risk of having their hours and wages cut as a result of the 30-hour rule. Of that, over 60 percent are women, and 90 percent do not have a college degree.

The administration has made exceptions and has implemented delays for big businesses and political allies. Why not American workers and job creators?

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office confirmed the bill we are considering today will reduce ObamaCare's unacceptable burden on job creators and will increase wages for American workers. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Save American Workers Act will increase cash wages for American workers by $75 billion, repeal $63.4 billion in ObamaCare tax increases, and reduce the number of employers subject to penalties related to ObamaCare.

I applaud Congressman TODD YOUNG, a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, for his work on this legislation.

It is time to vote in support of Americans who are facing higher bills and smaller paychecks. I urge my colleagues to join me in a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) to control.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). Without objection, the gentleman from Indiana will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the Senate continues to push for a 25 percent increase in the Federal minimum wage, they continue to ignore that millions of hourly workers face as much as a 25 percent pay cut as a result of ObamaCare. Because of the 30 hours is full time provision buried in the employer mandate, many employees face the prospect of being limited in their work hours. When they are not allowed to work more than 29 hours, they simply aren't able to generate the income they need to support themselves and their families.

It is worth noting that an employee who sees his hours cut from 39 to 29 is losing 10 hours a week, which, over the course of a month, is an entire week's worth of wages. The employees we are talking about are the people who most depend on getting every hour and every bit of wages that they can. We are talking about custodians, cafeteria workers, and substitute teachers at your child's school. We are talking about the waitresses and busboys at your favorite restaurant, about the cashier who rings you out at the grocery store, and about the guys on the assembly line who help make your car. In my district, we are also talking about adjunct professors at places like Ivy Tech Community College and Indiana University.

These are all Americans who want to work, but they are dealing with the unintended consequences—and I do believe they are unintended—of this health care law, ObamaCare. Some of these provisions are limiting their hours and pay, and this needs to be fixed. So I introduced the Save American Workers Act because I want to help these hardworking Hoosiers and other Americans who are just trying to make ends meet. By simply repealing this provision and restoring the traditional 40-hour workweek, we can help make an America that works.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill. I commend my colleagues on the other side who have already signed on as cosponsors.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

My colleagues on the Republican side in the House are so blinded by their ideology that they will not or cannot see reality or hear other voices. So here is the reality:

7-plus million people have enrolled in private plans through the ACA marketplaces. The ACA is working; millions have new coverage under Medicaid; up to 129 million Americans with preexisting health conditions, including 17 million children, no longer have to worry about being denied coverage or about being charged higher premiums due to their health status; 3.1 million young adults have gained health coverage because they can now, up to age 26, stay on their parents' health plans. That is the reality of ACA.

There is more. There is also the reality of what this legislation would do, and I want to emphasize this because I don't think it has been accurately stated to date.

It would force 1 million people out of employer-based health insurance. According to the CBO, 1 million people would be forced out of employer-based health insurance. It would increase the number of uninsured by about a half a million people, also according to the CBO. So they are bringing this up at the same time that 7 million people have enrolled in private plans through the marketplace and when millions now have coverage under Medicaid. They essentially want to go in reverse in terms of health coverage, and they don't face up to this.

I think it has also been misdescribed. This bill would add $74 billion to the deficit, according to the CBO, when there is no offset.

□ 1415

That is $74 billion, and you are coming forth here, the day after we receive the latest information about ACA and all that has happened beneficially and now coming and saying knock people off of employer-based insurance and add $74 billion to the deficit.

If any of those figures are wrong, I would like someone to stand up and say so.

Also, there has been much discussion about the impact in terms of part-time employment. I want to read what the CBO said definitively in February. In CBO's judgment:

> There is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA.

So as we heard in testimony, a community college came forth and said they had reduced the hours of teachers in order to avoid paying health insurance. Somebody in the education came forth and said that is their policy.

I suggest, instead of foregoing their responsibility as employers, they ought to go into the marketplace and see what they can do to bring more coverage for the people who are working hard.

Essentially, what you are doing here today is saying to many, many people who are working hard and who need insurance that this bill will knock you off your employer-based insurance and increase the number of uninsured by half a million, while increasing the deficit by $74 billion. Ideology is indeed blind when this kind of a proposition is put forth.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting this bill would decrease by $63 billion the amount of taxes on our employers during the worst economy, some will say, since the Great Depression. It will cause our wage earners around the country to realize an additional $75 billion in wage income.

I take the fiscal condition of this country very seriously. I find it very hard to believe, though, that anyone—a Member of this body—would desire to pass a national health care law that is paid for on the backs of our hourly workers, those who can least afford to absorb lower wages, fewer hours, and perhaps losing their job altogether.

I think that is essentially the argument I hear from the other side when I hear the $75 billion figure put forward.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BUCHANAN. I want to thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, there is no issue today that is more important in this body than growing the economy and creating jobs.

The Wall Street Journal noted that there are fewer jobs today than since the recession began back in 2007.

The gentleman from Michigan mentioned we need to go in the marketplace. I have been in the marketplace for 30 years, as someone who created a lot of jobs, and I can tell you this health care mandate that has employees looking at 30 hours or less a week unless they get health care is a big issue. The 30-hour requirement is forcing businesses to reduce working hours and cut wages.

I had a gentleman in my congressional district last week that has three restaurants and 291 employees. He has mentioned to me numerous times that he is going to have to cut quite a few employees from 40 hours to 29 hours.

He has even suggested that, in many cases, to reduce his health care costs, he is going to have to push some people down even more hours, so he can bring down his health care costs.

The fact is that health care costs in my district are as much as $1,500 to $2,000 an employee, so it is a big issue.

Another employer in our area—one of our larger employers—is going to be moving hundreds of employees from 40 hours to 29 hours a week, so it is a very big issue in my congressional district in Sarasota.

With that, I would ask my colleagues for quick passage. We need to move this bill quickly.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

The evidence is clear that more people would have their hours reduced if this bill passed than might be true under the present ACA.

I said what the CBO has said in terms of reduced hours of work. Once again, you are just not facing the reality. Changing this to 40 hours will hurt all around.

I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Ranking Member LEVIN, for yielding.

We speak a lot in this body about the freedoms that we as Americans have been endowed with by our forefathers and that are enshrined in the Constitution, whether it is the freedom of speech, the freedom of religion, or our Second Amendment freedoms.

I think we all understand and know—unfortunately, too many Americans know firsthand—that when you are sick and lying in a hospital bed or at home and have a child that you can't afford to take to the doctor, those freedoms mean very little.

For someone who couldn't get health insurance, whose life is spiraling downward, who can't afford to make their car or mortgage payment, how much are those freedoms worth when their life is spiraling downward because they can't afford health care anymore?

The fact is one of the greatest things that the Affordable Care Act has done is allowed more Americans to be able to enjoy the freedoms that all of us here in Congress fight so hard to protect for the American people.

A few of the troubling things about this bill is that up to a million people would lose their health care coverage if this piece of legislation was enacted. As Congressman LEVIN mentioned, it would cost $74 billion to the American people, adding to our debt and deficit.

What is also interesting is that just about every bill that is now allowed to pass through the House of Representatives requires a pay-for. In other words, the Republican majority does not allow a piece of legislation to be passed unless it is paid for by cutting something else.

What is different about this piece of legislation is that there is no question that it would cost $74 billion, and yet there is absolutely no pay-for in this bill.

I would also note, as was mentioned, that this would cost American business some money. Well, a few things; first, many, many American businesses don't define the workweek as 40 hours. They define it as 32 hours or, sometimes, lower. Sometimes, it is 30.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. So this is inconsistent even with how millions of American businesses define full-time employment, and I would also point out this: we know that, as our economy has started to rebound from the worst recession that we have had since the Great Depression, many American businesses are doing well.

Wall Street is hitting all-time highs, and the stock market has soared. That is a good thing for America. We certainly don't begrudge any company or business that, but small businesses are already exempted from the ACA requirements, so this is about more sizable companies.

In an economy where business is doing well, why should we say to all of these workers—people who are going to work every day, who have incredible work ethic, who are powering our economy—that they don't deserve health insurance?

I was in San Antonio—and I know it happened in many cities—and we had long lines on Monday to enroll in the Affordable Care Act. People's faces lit up because, for the first time in many of their lives, they were going to be able to afford health care coverage. Many of them had their kids with them. There were teenagers and senior citizens there.

This is a milestone in people's lives, and this bill would take that away from a million people.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I know my good colleague spoke with a great deal of sincerity and earnestness when he talked about pay-fors.

It is worth noting, once again, that the attempt to pay for this Affordable Care Act—ObamaCare, as it is popularly known—on the backs of our hourly workers strikes me as unconscionable and something that none of us ought to be contemplating, which is why this is a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the distinguished majority whip.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act.

Mr. Speaker, working on an hourly wage is tough. I know this. I worked every single job in a deli I started 25 years ago. Working an hourly wage is an opportunity to start, to work hard, to impress, and to be able to move up; but in today's world, it is a little different.

Today, because of ObamaCare, you don't have the opportunity to work the extra hours. You don't have the opportunity to expand.

Mr. Speaker, I listened to another colleague on this floor who said small businesses up to 50 employees were exempt, so now, our law is saying: you have to stay small, you can't grow, you can't have that American Dream to be something bigger.

Mr. Speaker, this affects business, but it also affects the public sector as well. In every single district across this country, this is having a great deal of effect.

In my own hometown in Kern County, the board of supervisors no longer allows seasonal workers, such as seasonal firefighters, because they can't go beyond the time allowed.

My community college in my district no longer has that extra job for the students. The students packed the boardroom and wanted to know why we could no longer do this. They pointed to one bill, ObamaCare.

Those are the stories you hear, the stories you know about, but numbers don't lie.

So what have the numbers shown since this law has gone into effect?

Last December, the Department of Labor showed low wage workers clocked the shortest workweek on record, only 27.4 hours a week. That is lower than during the recession.

Today, we have an opportunity to change that. Today, we have an opportunity to unshackle this, so an individual can work more hours. An individual that maybe owns a business can give other people opportunities; and, yes, the barrier will not be there to make sure you are only small, but you can have the American Dream. You can grow.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all to join us and make it a bipartisan bill, when individuals have cosponsored this bill, to move America forward.

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

It is too bad that we don't have a position called fact-checker on the floor. We could yield to the fact-checker every time something is misstated. If there were such a position here today, that person would be immensely busy.

For example, I think it is correct that student workers are exempted from the count, so to come here and talk about students, I think, misstates the facts.

The same is true of the story about the ACA would hurt workers, when the truth of the matter is this shift from 30 to 40 would indeed have a major impact in terms of people.

□ 1430

Let me read to you from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, dated October 12, 2013:

> Moreover, raising the law's threshold for full-time work from 30 hours a week to 40 hours would make a shift toward part-time employment much more likely, not less so. That's because only a small share of workers today, less than 8 percent, work 34 hours a week and, thus, are more at risk of having their hours cut below health reform's threshold.
>
> In comparison, 43 percent of employees work 40 hours a week, and another several percent 41 to 44 hours a week. Thus, raising the threshold to 40 hours would place more than five times as many workers at risk of having their hours reduced.

That is the reality. And to come here and to say that what would happen if we don't pass this bill is that more people would have their hours reduced than if we pass the bill, that simply is not correct.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the House majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for his leadership in bringing this bill forward, the Save American Workers Act. It is today that I rise in support of the Save American Workers Act.

Mr. Speaker, every working American deserves a fair shot at climbing the economic ladder of success, and every wage earner deserves a chance to

live the American Dream. However, over the past few months, we have watched the President's health care law wreak havoc on working families and squeeze the middle class, who are already struggling to make ends meet.

As we all know, millions of people have seen their premiums and deductibles go up under the President's health care law, while others have been forced off the very plans they were promised they could keep. But that is not the full picture. Because of the 30-hour workweek provision in ObamaCare, wage earners could see their hours reduced, resulting in a 25 percent cut to their pay.

Now, let me just take a moment to explain exactly who might see their paychecks shrink. According to a study by the Hoover Institution, there are 2.6 million Americans especially at risk of having their wages cut. Of those 2.6 million, 59 percent are younger workers between the ages of 18 and 34, many of whom may be trying to save for college or for their first home; 63 percent are women, many of them single moms trying to support their children. The median household income for families most at risk from harm under this ObamaCare regulation is just over $29,000. That is the median household income most at risk.

The bottom line is this: the workers most affected by these cuts are those who earn the least. For someone who currently earns $10 an hour and works 40 hours a week, being cut to 29 hours means a loss of $110 each and every week. Three out of four Americans are already claiming they are working paycheck to paycheck. A 25 percent cut to their income would have a devastating effect. This is not how America should work.

While this rule will impact Americans in all different industries, those who are most likely to be affected work in retail, restaurants, manufacturing, and even America's education sector.

In my hometown of Richmond, many school districts have begun to limit part-time workers to less than 30 hours a week to avoid added costs imposed by the advent of this health care law and would thus strain their budgets.

A substitute teacher named Amy, from Chesterfield County, Virginia, was asked by the Richmond Times-Dispatch about the burdens of this rule under ObamaCare, and she said: ''The people that it is going to affect are the people that need or want to work every single day.''

So why is the government punishing those who are looking to earn an honest wage?

This administration believes that they can hide the reality of the wage cuts with an increase in the minimum wage. But that proposal, which the nonpartisan experts say will result in 500,000 lost jobs, is not the answer. The answer is restore the 40-hour workweek and let people work.

We have known for a long time that the President's health care law was broken, but now it is beginning to break the backs of American workers. Our constituents don't deserve this broken law or more broken promises. They deserve a fair shot at success without the government standing in the way.

Today, we have an opportunity to unclench this middle class squeeze and restore the 40-hour workweek so that wage earners don't have to worry about smaller paychecks. So let's stand together, in a bipartisan fashion, and take a big step towards creating an America that works again—and works again for everyone.

I would like to thank Chairman CAMP, Representative YOUNG, and the rest of the Ways and Means Committee for their hard work on this issue, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support working families by passing this legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I shall consume.

I knew the majority would come here and talk about the middle class. They are trying to escape from their failure to help take action to provide jobs for middle class Americans.

They also, by the way, so far haven't helped out to provide the continuation of the unemployment insurance for hundreds of thousands of people, so many in the middle class, who have lost their jobs.

Look, I quoted from CBO, and I guess I will have to quote again. This is in February. ''In CBO's judgment, there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA.''

I will quote again from this study of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and it is headed this way: ''Health reform not causing significant shift to part-time work, but raising threshold to 40 hours a week would make a sizable shift likely.''

I quoted why they say that because the number of people who are working 40 hours or thereabouts, that number is so much larger than those who are working 30 hours or thereabouts; and so any employer who wanted, essentially, to shift the burden from them to others, they are more likely to do it under this bill than under the present circumstance. That is the reason why it has been said by CBO that it would force 1 million people out of employer-based health insurance, and it would add $74 billion to the deficit since it is not offset.

You haven't refuted a single one of those statements. If they are not true, I would like you to say so. I would like you to say CBO is wrong, and also wrong when they say it would increase the number of uninsured by half a million people.

Those are three CBO statements. They stand here to refute the myths that are being brought here in defense of this bill.

So you raise the middle class banner. At the same time, you essentially, with this bill, would take away health insurance from many, many, many, many, many middle class citizens. That is what you would be doing here.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN), a distinguished member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. PAULSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said before, the more we learn about the President's health care law, the more the facts show it is hurting more people than it is helping. The latest development now is the law's 30-hour rule is forcing some companies to scale back hours with more part-time jobs and less full-time jobs, so that those employees that have good full-time jobs are now having to go to part-time jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I met with a small business owner. He owns seven different restaurants. And I know that a lot of folks think that people in the restaurant industry, they only employ part-time workers, but 41 percent of his workers he employs full-time. But because of the new law, where now 30 hours is the standard being considered full-time work, he is being forced to lower the work hours for those employees, nearly all of them, to 29 hours or less. That absolutely makes no sense. These reduced hours are now going to force a 25 percent reduction in pay for those workers. Many will now have to go out and find a second part-time job just to make up for the hours that they lost.

Another small business owner I talked to from Minnesota, he was imploring me when he contacted me: please, Congress needs to correct the 30-hour rule so that it reflects his workforce's needs and his employees' desire to have more flexible hours. He said, if it's not addressed by Congress soon, there will be disruptions in the workforce, and the flexible work options for his employees could disappear altogether.

The 30-hour work rule is negatively impacting restaurateurs, manufacturers, and even our schools, as was mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker. We should be removing these barriers to work. We should not punish employees who want to work more, and we should be helping American workers.

So let's pass this legislation. It will restore some common sense and a common understanding in America that full-time work is 40 hours. It will pass with bipartisan support.

I commend the gentleman for his leadership on this issue for getting Americans back to work.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to also indicate the fact that I, too, have read the Congressional Budget Office's estimate of this legislation. They indicate that $75 billion in wages will be lost as a result of the Affordable Care Act if something like the Save American Workers Act isn't implemented.

So, effectively, I hear some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle making the case that we ought to be funding the Affordable Care Act essentially on the backs of these hourly workers, and I don't think that is a position anyone wants to find themselves in.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SALMON).

Mr. SALMON. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, as we throw all these numbers around, I guess they mean a lot on the floor debate, but to the real people that are suffering, they don't really mean anything.

There is an old adage that says there are lies, damn lies, and statistics. We are throwing numbers around here like they matter, but the fact is there are real people's lives that are being hurt, being destroyed.

In fact, I read an article just a few months ago that the community college where I met my wife is actually notifying 1,300 employees, 700 of them that were adjunct professors, that their hours are going to be reduced, and they are being reduced because of this law. They are being hurt.

I guess we can quote them a statistic to tell them: go on your merry way. I know you can't pay for your mortgage. I know you can't make your car payment. You can't pay for your child's college education, but we got this great statistic that we just got out of Congress that ought to make you feel better about your life.

The fact is we ought to be more concerned about individuals than we are throwing numbers around.

I understand CBO also said that total implementation of ObamaCare would cost $2.1 trillion. The fact is we can use statistics to say just about whatever we want them to say, but real people's lives are being hurt; and we have a responsibility here in this body to do everything that we can to try to raise the lifestyle in this country, not degrade it.

People are losing their jobs. My son lost his insurance because of ObamaCare. He was one of that small percentage—again, a statistic—that we were quoted, but the fact is he lost his insurance. Now he just told us that he is having his third child. The first two children were delivered by a doctor that they know and trust, but because of ObamaCare, their doctor is not covered under their new policy. To add insult to injury, when he went on the exchange to sign up, after he was told that his policy was no longer covered because of ObamaCare, his premiums went up from $450 a month to $850 a month. That is hardly helping people.

I think that it is safe to note, this law was passed without one Republican, and it is time that we stopped our high horse of statistics and actually care about people.

□ 1445

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

Mr. Speaker, if you care about people you should be for the ACA. Seven million people have been enrolled in private plans through the ACA marketplaces, 7 million-plus. And millions—we will get the figures—now have coverage under Medicaid. That is lots of millions of people, and you come forth with an individual case?

In many cases, I don't know your instance, these cases have turned out to be incorrect. They have been put in political ads, and they have been refuted.

I now want to read the Statement of Administration Policy from the President:

> The administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act—it should be the so-called Save American Workers Act—because it would significantly increase the deficit and reduce the number of Americans with employer-based health insurance. Rather than attempting once again to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which the House has tried to do over 50 times, it is time for the Congress to stop fighting old political battles and join the President in an agenda focused on providing greater economic opportunity and security for middle class families and all those working to get into the middle class.
>
> This legislation would weaken the provision of the Affordable Care Act that keeps employers from dropping health insurance coverage and shifting the cost to taxpayers. According to the Congressional Budget Office, it would increase the budget deficit by $73.7 billion over the 2015 to 2024 period. Moreover, the proposed change would reduce the number of people receiving employer-based coverage by about 1 million, while increasing the number of uninsured.
>
> The Affordable Care Act gives people greater control over their own health care. Since October 1, over 7 million have signed up for insurance in the health insurance marketplaces. Because of the Affordable Care Act, Americans who have previously been denied coverage due to a preexisting condition now have access to coverage. Additionally, the law helps millions of Americans stay on their parents' plan until age 26 and provides access to free preventive care like cancer screenings that catch illness early on.
>
> While the administration welcomes ideas to improve the law, H.R. 2575 would undermine it by shifting costs to taxpayers and causing employers either to drop or to not expand health insurance coverage.

''If the President''—and this is underlined—''were presented with H.R. 2575 he would veto it.''

With that very effective, I think so convincing statement—I hope all listen to it—I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe what I just heard. I heard that individual cases ought not be cited, that that is somehow off limits.

Mr. Speaker, one of my colleagues just cited the example of his son, lost his insurance despite the promises of this bill during campaign season. He lost his doctor. He saw his insurance premiums and copays go up. These are real lives we are talking about. These are real hours and real wages that we are trying to remedy. This is a real 40-hour workweek that people depend upon.

Then to cite the Statement of Administration Policy as somehow being more authoritative than these personal examples I find, frankly, a bit off-putting.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), the chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It was pointed out by the chairman in the House Education and the Workforce Committee, as the name suggests, the committee has broad jurisdiction over policies affecting our Nation's classrooms and workplaces. It goes without saying that both face difficult challenges today.

Budget constraints continue to plague States, school districts, and institutions of higher education, straining their ability to effectively serve students. Workers and job creators are still struggling in a persistently anemic economy, making it difficult for many Americans to pay the bills and provide for their families.

Unfortunately, the health care law is making things worse. Thanks to the President's government-run scheme, full-time jobs are being destroyed, not created. Health care costs are going up, not down; and millions of individuals are losing the health care plan they like—an example of which we just heard earlier—instead of keeping it as promised.

This reality isn't limited to private businesses. It is a reality unfolding in schools, colleges, and universities across the country. Recent headlines confirm in stark detail how the President's health care law is hurting our education system.

From The Washington Free Beacon: ''Alabama schools face shortage of substitute teachers due to ObamaCare.''

From The Weekly Standard: ''Hours cut for 200 North Carolina teachers due to ObamaCare.''

And just in case my friends from the other side of the aisle would accuse me of selecting only conservative publications, from The New York Times: ''Public sector capping part-time hours to skirt health care law.''

Aside from press reports, we have also heard firsthand accounts of how ObamaCare is making it harder for school leaders to meet the needs of students. In December, the committee asked the public to share personal stories about the effects of the health care law on local classrooms and campuses.

Helieanna, from Saint Anthony, Minnesota, described her dream to teach at the school she once attended as a student. While that dream may have come

true, she wrote that her financial situation is less stable than it was before the health care law.

Kate, from Hemet, California, informed the committee that her community college would have to restrict workers' hours, noting this impacts our ability to properly serve students.

Secretary Sebelius once dismissed concerns about jobs lost and hours cut under ObamaCare as ''speculation.'' Yet for Helieanna, Kate, and countless others, the health care law is wreaking havoc on their families, their livelihood, and their schools. It is time to do something about it.

By restoring the traditional standard of full-time work, the Save American Workers Act will help restore workers' hours and allow them to earn the wages they deserve. Just as important, the legislation will provide relief for schools grappling with a flawed health care law.

Congress should not stand by while teachers have their hours cut and students receive diminished access to educational opportunities, all because of bad policies out of Washington.

Certainly I urge my colleagues to provide relief for our Nation's workplaces and classrooms by supporting the Save American Workers Act. I would point out, as my colleague did, that taking the administration's Statement of Administrative Policy as definitive here defies, frankly, all logic.

There is no one in America who would be surprised that the President doesn't want changes to his law, unless he unilaterally makes those changes, because after all, Mr. Speaker, if you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan—unless you can't. If you like your doctor, Mr. Speaker, you can keep your doctor—except when you can't.

Before I yield back my time, I would like to thank the Ways and Means Committee for their excellent work on this legislation, and I would like to take a moment to recognize my friend and colleague, DAVE CAMP, who announced earlier this week his plan to retire. During more than 20 years of service, Chairman CAMP has been a distinguished Member, a dedicated reformer, and tireless champion of working families. We are going to miss him. I wish him all the best.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the balance of our time today be managed by the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), a member of the committee.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RANGEL. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LYNCH).

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding.

I rise today in opposition to this bill, the so-called Save American Workers Act, and to speak in support of working men and women of this great country. I am here today and every day, not only as a Member of Congress, but as someone who knows what it is like to work for a living.

As someone who for 18 years as an ironworker strapped on a pair of work boots during boom times and down economies, I know what it is like to stand in an unemployment line when my local shipyard closed and when our auto plant shut down.

Mr. Speaker, I am part of the American workforce. Like many of my colleagues, I represent hundreds of thousands of hard-working people who struggle every day to make ends meet. That is why I am deeply offended that the Republican leadership of this House, the people's House, has the temerity to refer to any of their efforts in the context of saving the American worker.

Now, the simple fact is that during my time in Congress the actions of my colleagues, especially the Republican leadership, have spoken loudly to the contrary. It is impossible in the time allowed to me to cover all the anti-worker efforts that the Republican majority has undertaken since I have been in Congress. They have continually tried to roll back prevailing wage laws and workers' rights and protections that have been in place since the 1930s. They tried to cripple the National Labor Relations Board, put in place in 1935 to protect American workers.

Their attacks on the Federal workforce are ceaseless, freezing pay and cutting benefits, and demoralizing our hard-working men and women in government. The Republican leadership has opposed equal pay for women; they have opposed raising the minimum wage; they have opposed employee nondiscrimination legislation. In fact, they won't even bring some of those bills for a vote.

As we struggle to recover from the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, the Republican leadership has refused to extend emergency unemployment benefits to the long-term unemployed, many of whom use that money just to put food on the table while they search for work.

Now the Republican majority has the audacity to put forward a bill they call the Save American Workers Act. We have got to save the American worker from you. That is who we need to be saving them from.

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

Mr. RANGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I thank the Speaker for his indulgence.

The bill before us today is more of the same. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the bill will add $74 billion to the Federal deficit, force 1 million more people to lose employer-covered health care, and leave 500,000 completely uninsured.

According to a study released by the University of California Berkley, this bill will cause 6.5 million workers to lose more hours. This bill, like so many others offered by my colleagues from across the aisle, is not crafted to save the American worker. It is crafted to increase the profits of large employers while workers continue to struggle.

Perhaps this bill should be named the ''Save American CEO Act.'' It is the height of hypocrisy, that after all their efforts to harm the American worker my colleagues should have the audacity to even offer a bill entitled ''Save American Workers Act.''

We all know and realize that we need to save the American worker from the Republican leadership. That is what we need to do. So I urge my colleagues to continue to oppose these efforts to destroy the middle class and sabotage the American worker and the American family.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), a member of the Education and Workforce Committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, this bill would repeal ObamaCare's mandate on employers to provide insurance to all employees working at least 30 hours per week and would instead restore the traditional 40-hour standard. Everywhere I go, I hear concerns about the lack of jobs and the need for job creation. Tennessee's unemployment rate is still near 7 percent. We need to be doing everything possible to encourage employers to not only create jobs, but to maintain current jobs.

That is why the 30-hour standard makes no sense. Employers are already struggling to make their budgets work in the stagnant Obama economy. We all know how the employers are forced to respond: by cutting hours or hiring fewer workers. There is concrete evidence this is already happening, not just in the private sector. In my own hometown, Johnson, Tennessee, where I was mayor before I came here, the city school system been forced to keep approximately 200 employees, including substitute teachers, below the 129 hours a month.

□ 1500

This hurts the families that count on that income and the schoolchildren that benefit from the efforts of these adults.

President Obama's case for defending this flawed law is built on a false premise: that there is no other way to help individuals who cannot afford health insurance or who have been affected by a catastrophic illness or disease.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent my entire adult life as a physician taking care of people from all walks of life. I want every American to have access to an affordable health care plan, and I have worked since I arrived in Congress to develop patient-centered solutions to help people afford health care, like H.R. 3121, the American Health Care Reform Act.

There are ways to reach this goal without creating massive new bureaucracies, spending $2 trillion, weakening the doctor-patient relationship, or increasing premiums for millions of hardworking Americans, but the President won't even engage in a conversation. So, in the meantime, we must do everything we can to protect the American people from this law. That is why I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

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

I think, Mr. Speaker, this is about the 52nd time that the Republican majority has attempted to either repeal or derail the Affordable Care Act. I don't know why they do it so often since constitutionally it is abundantly clear that they don't have the votes to pass it in the Senate, and clearly, if it ever reached the President's desk, it would be vetoed, and there are not enough votes to override the veto. So, clearly, this madness continues even after more than enough people have enrolled, far beyond those that were expected by some of the Republicans. And this struggle, this madness, goes on as though Democrats are the only people that are going to become sick and need health care.

So I don't know where we go from here. I assume that comes the next election, once again, the voters will speak out. And for those people that have had kids on their insurance policy, we will hear from them; for those who have had preconditions and couldn't get health insurance, we will hear from them; for those that thought that getting preventive health care was a luxury, we should hear from them; but, more importantly, the people who just could not afford insurance. I cannot conceive how these people are all Democrats, in that the Republicans have no people that are vulnerable to illnesses and the severe expenses that are involved.

But, clearly, it has been my opinion that if this bill doesn't work, if it fails, and if some of these tactics had been successful, that the Democrats would be embarrassed by its failure. But I also thought—and it makes a lot of sense to me—that if, indeed, the American people started to understand the complexities of the bill and thought they were in need of health insurance, as close to 10 million people feel, then the Republicans would have to defend their negative position as to why they fight so hard to deny people health insurance.

So I understand from Mr. LYNCH that the bill is named after workers. So that brings me to include a letter for the RECORD from the AFL/CIO. Clearly, this is not a management outfit but really supports the workers, and they, of course, are opposed to this bill that is drafted to go nowhere.

In addition to that, I include for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, a letter from the AFSCME into the RECORD, which represents county and municipal employees, and they strongly oppose the legislation that the Republican majority has brought to the floor.

Lastly, I include for the RECORD a letter from the National Education Association that opposes this legislation.

Before I reserve the balance of my time, I would like to join in with the majority that has complimented the work of Chairman DAVID CAMP. His announcement surprised most of us, but I don't think in his challenge that he has really proven his chairmanship to be all that we expected from him and then some. I regret the Republicans have passed over his opportunity to reform the tax law, but, then again, the chairman's tax reform law made too much sense for anybody to think that it would be picked up by the Republican majority. But it was a bill that would be great for discussion; it was hard hitting; it provided a lot of savings; and it reduced the rates.

So I don't know why before he leaves that we couldn't have this taken up, but it is my understanding that the gift that was given to him by his majority was just to allow him to present his draft. I think that is unfortunate because, if ever there was a time we need to reform the tax laws, it would be now. So I congratulate Chairman CAMP for his attempt to introduce this to the House, and I regret that the Republican majority has, out of hand, rejected it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the AFL–CIO, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the Save American Workers Act (H.R. 2575) sponsored by Congressman Todd Young and the Forty Hours is Full Time Act (H.R. 2988) introduced by Representative Dan Lipinski.

Both of these bills would weaken the employer responsibility requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by increasing to 40 hours per week the threshold at which employers are required to either offer coverage or pay a penalty. Contrary to the intent of this legislation, economic data show that raising the threshold would cause more employers to reduce the hours of their workers, and it would result in millions of working families losing employment-based insurance coverage.

As the Ways and Means Committee examines these issues in a hearing this week, and as discussions continue, the House should instead seek to strengthen the employer responsibility requirements of the ACA by lowering the hours threshold, requiring employers to provide coverage for workers who work 20 hours a week or more, and by applying a pro rata shared responsibility penalty if workers with fewer than 20 hours are not offered coverage. This is the only way to protect groups of workers—such as low-wage employees, school staff, and adjunct professors—that will lose wages under the existing incentive to reduce hours.

Unfortunately, the ACA's employer responsibility requirements do not adequately sanction employers that drop coverage or decline to offer affordable, comprehensive coverage. The $2,000 penalty for not offering coverage to a full-time employee pales in comparison to the average annual cost of single coverage, which was $5,884 in 2013. The ACA's extension of Medicaid eligibility to the uninsured will tempt low road employers to move lower-income employees into the program, since the law has no penalty to discourage employers from shifting the responsibility for covering these workers. In the construction industry, where the vast majority of firms have fewer than 50 employees, there is no penalty for companies that fail to provide coverage, creating a competitive disadvantage for employers that do provide coverage. A true ''employer mandate'' would address these issues and other weaknesses in the employer requirements.

The bills introduced by Representatives Young and Lipinski would take the ACA in the opposite direction, compounding the problem they seek to solve. A December 2013 analysis by the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education found that the approach employed by this legislation—moving the threshold for coverage from 30 hours to 40 hours—would result in reduced work hours for three times as many workers (6.5 million) compared to the number vulnerable to a reduction of hours at the current threshold (2.3 million).

The researchers also found that the approach would ''effectively eliminate'' the employer shared responsibility requirement, because employers could cut workers to 39 hours or less with relatively little cost. Pointing to the Congressional Budget Office estimate that one million workers will lose job-based coverage as a result of the Administration's one-year delay in implementing the current employer responsibility rules, the researchers warned that making the ''employer requirement effectively non-binding on a permanent basis'' would cause many more workers to lose employment-based coverage. The responsibility for covering this group would shift from employers to the federal government, incurring substantial new costs. Instead, the authors recommend that the incentive to reduce hours created by the 30-hour cliff could be addressed by applying the employer requirement to part-time workers and by pro rating the penalty for these workers.

The AFL–CIO endorses this kind of approach. We seek a full penalty for employers that fail to provide affordable, comprehensive coverage to workers averaging 20 hours a week or more. A pro-rated penalty should apply if adequate coverage is not provided to employees working less than 20 hours. This policy would eliminate the cliff imposed by the current 30-hour threshold, rather than simply shifting it higher and creating a new incentive for employers to reduce hours.

We look forward to working with you to strengthen the employer responsibility rules of the ACA, by extending coverage requirements to part-time workers and bolstering requirements related to the affordability and comprehensiveness of coverage. Achieving the coverage goals of the Affordable Care Act will depend upon maintaining employer responsibility for providing coverage to working families.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,
Director,
Government Affairs Department.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL–CIO,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2014.

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American, Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the Save American Workers Act

(H.R. 2575), sponsored by Rep. Todd Young and the Forty Hours is Full Time Act (H.R. 2988), sponsored by Rep. Dan Lipinski.

Both of these bills would weaken employer responsibility requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by increasing to 40 hours per week, the threshold at which employers are required to either offer coverage or pay a penalty. Based on research described in testimony to the Committee last week, three times as many workers would be at risk of a reduction in hours if one of these bills became law. Rather than resolve any problems that may exist, these bills would make them worse.

Financing our health care system must be a shared responsibility. While our health care system is based on employer-provided coverage, some employers are shirking their responsibility. Instead of making it easier for employers to do so, the ACA should be strengthened to ask more from employers. We urge the Committee to approve legislation that would require employers to provide coverage for those working 20 hours or more, or pay a penalty. A pro-rated penalty should apply for workers who put in fewer than 20 hours per week.

Today, we urge you to oppose legislation to raise the hour's threshold to 40.

Sincerely,

CHARLES M. LOVELESS.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, and the students they serve, we urge you to vote NO on the Save American Workers Act of 2013 (H.R. 2575), scheduled to be voted on in committee today. We oppose the bill because we believe it would create a disincentive for employers to provide health care coverage, negatively impacting employer sponsored health insurance and harming families, children and educators who need coverage.

We believe that the Affordable Care Act's shared responsibility for employers, sometimes referred to as the employer penalty, supports the overall goal of expanding quality, affordable coverage to all Americans.

We are concerned that this bill's changes to the ACA's definition of what constitutes full-time employment from ''on average at least 30 hours of service per week'' monthly to an average of 40 hours per week monthly would adversely affect overall employer-sponsored health coverage. It also may lead to higher costs to the federal government as workers are passed off to exchanges and potentially become eligible for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions.

Additionally, if employer-based coverage is reduced, an even greater number of low-income individuals and their families in the 25 states that have refused to expand Medicaid will be unable to afford buying health benefits. In those states, childless adults whose incomes fall below 100 percent of the federal poverty line will not only be denied access to Medicaid coverage, but they will be ineligible for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions through a health insurance marketplace (exchange). Moving the full-time definition from 30 hours to 40 hours, as this bill does, would only expand the number of people hurt by this coverage gap.

We believe the bill misses the mark by substituting ''40 hours'' for ''30 hours'' because it would do nothing to stop employers' misuse of the ACA's employer penalty provisions as a justification for cutting employees' hours. Experience with this portion of the ACA shows that one of the biggest implementation challenges in the education sector consists of making sure that employers and other health plan sponsors fully understand the law's provisions related to shared responsibility for employers. For years, we have engaged with the Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service to ensure that regulations on shared responsibility for employers work consistently well in the education sector, and believe regulators have taken important steps to correct this.

The changes contemplated in H.R. 2575, however, would simply shift the hours-related context in which these common errors take place:

Mistakenly believing that the only way to avoid employer penalties is to cut employees' hours to under 30 a week or to under six hours a day;

Misunderstanding how and when to use proposed regulations related to an optional hours-counting method called the look-back measurement method;

Overestimating the potential cost of complying with the law's provisions on shared responsibility for employers; and

Failing to incorporate into decision-making the statutory and regulatory provisions that ensure that this part of the ACA establishes possible penalties on large employers rather than an ''employer mandate.''

These and other ACA-implementation errors can lead to exaggerated responses that hurt students, workers, and families alike. Unfortunately, H.R. 2575 would just shift the hours-related focal point for such errors.

Employers who take the time to understand the law and regulations as they currently stand can develop common sense, constructive, and consensual approaches to properly implementing the law.

Again, we urge you to vote NO on H.R. 2575. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee on this issue.

Sincerely,

MARY KUSLER,
Director of Government Relations.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge that to get a bill this far in the legislative process requires the work of a lot of people: my own staff within my office, the committee staff, and my fellow colleagues who are willing to provide a consultative role, constructive advice, and a very strong leadership role.

So, with that, I am very happy to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, TIM WALBERG, who helped us introduce this bill. He is a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the gentleman. I thank you for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to stand here in support of this legislation—good legislation—that will help people in my district in Michigan, a hard-hit State because of economic problems and, I think, bad, bad efforts and policies from an administration that didn't understand that workers who are encouraged to work to their fullest extent produce an economy.

It is hard to take seriously the objections of the Democrat side of the aisle here when they talk about the middle class, they talk about employees and their efforts to help them, a party who enshrines the minimum wage and unemployment insurance as the golden grail of what grows an economy. I find that absurd.

It is a party who has decimated the middle class in the last 6 years with policies including what we are discussing today. Moving from 40 hours to 30 hours as full-time worker requirements? I don't get it.

We also understand it is the same party that told us, if you like your insurance, you can keep it—no. If you like your doctor, you can keep it—no. If you like your hospital, you can keep it—no. And now we hear their objection that basically says, if you like your job, you can keep it—no.

Back in September, before this ill-advised law took place, Janet from Jackson, Michigan, called my office in tears, a 56-year-old mother of three, single parent, who had just been told that morning by her job provider in home health care—a very valuable field of service—that she no longer would be working 36 hours, which was her normal working hour opportunity, and was being moved back to 28 because of what? The Affordable Care Act requirements. And so she said to my office staff, in tears:

> How am I now going to make it when I was making it on 36 hours at that job, supplementing that with a waitress job on the weekend, and I was paying my mortgage and my insurance, and now I am going to be asked to pay for all that on 28 hours? I am 56 years old. Where am I going to get another job?

That is what is being produced by this. We want to give Janet the opportunity to have her 36 hours back. We want to give Jim, Jerry, and Joan, and all the rest of the people, the opportunity to have the fullest hours they can possibly have in an America that grows the middle class and gives opportunity for success.

Mr. RANGEL. I just don't know what part of the Constitution the gentleman doesn't understand, but the truth of the matter is that this law passed the House of Representatives, passed the Senate, was signed into law, and verified by the United States Supreme Court, and still we hear people yelling at the darkness that we should repeal it.

Now, there are ways to do these things, but one thing is abundantly clear: the way we have been going about this, the 52 parliamentary opportunities that the House has had, this doesn't work. And so if you tried something 51 times, it would seem to me, unless somebody is putting something in the water on the other side of the aisle, that we will try something else like try to repair it, try to fix it, try in a bipartisan way to see where we agree that changes could be made to make it easier for employers and employees. But this barking at the Moon, to me, is just a waste of taxpayers' money and time.

How many speakers do we have, and how much time do we have remaining, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). The gentleman from New York has 62 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Indiana has 64 minutes remaining.

Mr. RANGEL. How many speakers does the gentleman have? I only have two speakers.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. We have six speakers on this side.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I would like to include in the RECORD a letter of support for the Save American Workers Act, the bipartisan bill, by the National Restaurant Association.

Mr. Speaker, I also now yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, April 1, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Restaurant Association, the leading trade association representing the restaurant and foodservice industry, I write to urge you to vote YES in favor of H.R. 2575, the ''Save American Workers Act,'' when it is considered on the House floor this week. The National Restaurant Association may consider any votes on, or related to, such legislation in our annual ''How They Voted'' legislative scorecard.

H.R. 2575 would reinstate the historic definition of full-time as working 40 hours per week. The law's definition of full-time set at 30 hours could have lasting impacts on the labor market, far beyond the Affordable Care Act, with the unintended consequence of potentially limiting hours for workers who do not intend to rely on their employer for their insurance needs.

One reason so many Americans are drawn to restaurant and foodservice industry jobs is the flexibility to build a work schedule or change hours to suit their personal needs. Generally, most restaurant operators have classified positions as salaried and hourly, not full- or part-time. Previously, hourly workers were able to take on extra shifts as available and as they chose to work. However, under this law, there is now a bright line as to who is considered full-time and who is considered part-time. As a result, the flexibility so many enjoy and seek out in working for the industry may become harder to find.

In its analysis of the legislation, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) acknowledged employers' commitment to offering coverage to employees and projects that only a small percentage of employers would either reassign or reduce hours of employees who work more than 40 hours per week. More than 156 million people would continue to be covered by employer-sponsored plans, underscoring the CBO' s conclusion that ''most of the affected employers would continue to offer coverage because most employers construct compensation packages to attract the best available workers at the lowest possible cost.''

Aligning the law's definition of full-time employee status with current levels used by restaurant and foodservice operators would help avoid any unnecessary disruptions to employees' wages and hours, and would provide significant relief to employers. The National Restaurant Association supports H.R. 2575 and encourages you to vote YES when it is considered on the House floor.

Sincerely,

SCOTT DEFIFE,
Executive Vice President,
Policy and Government Affairs.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you, Congressman YOUNG, for yielding.

As an original cosponsor, I am very grateful for Chairman JOHN KLINE and Congressman TODD YOUNG for their thoughtful leadership on this very important issue with the Save American Workers Act.

ObamaCare is the saddest example of Big Government failure. The American people have lost their health care plans, access to their most trusted doctors, and been forced to pay significant premium increases for poorer coverage and higher deductibles.

On top of all of these broken promises, it is tragic for American families that the President's signature health care law will also destroy jobs. Every day, real constituents living in South Carolina's Second Congressional District reach out to me expressing frustration with this broken law. Jennifer, a true small business owner from Lexington, writes:

> Keep trying to repeal ObamaCare at all costs. The employer mandate will cause my business to move full-time employees to part-time.

Dozens of actual people express these same sentiments and plead with Congress to provide relief. The National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, was correct that ObamaCare will destroy 1.6 million jobs.

ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek rule is lowering wages for a significant portion of hardworking Americans, the very ones the President claims to champion.

On behalf of the millions of Americans who are receiving smaller paychecks and having to work multiple jobs, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and provide greater economic security and opportunity for those who need it the most.

Mr. RANGEL. At this time, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the former chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee that played such an important role in bringing this historic legislation to the floor and to the law.

□ 1515

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is an historic week for the economic security of the American people. After the unprecedented surge in enrollment, the Affordable Care Act has led to the largest expansion of health insurance coverage in half a century.

More than 7.1 million Americans have signed up for private coverage through the marketplaces. More than 3 million young adults are covered through their parents' plans, and millions more Americans are now covered through Medicaid or through private insurance purchased directly from an insurer.

According to an analysis by the Los Angeles Times, more than 9.5 million Americans who previously lacked health insurance now have coverage because of the Affordable Care Act.

These millions of Americans now have the peace of mind and economic security that comes with quality, affordable health insurance, and every American knows that they will never be discriminated against because of a preexisting condition. These are historic achievements.

However, despite these reforms to our health system, the Affordable Care Act does not change the fact that the vast majority of Americans who have health insurance get it through their employer. In fact, the law strengthens the employer-sponsored insurance system.

It encourages larger employers to do the responsible thing and offer their employees affordable coverage. It ensures that workers get quality coverage and do not face harsh annual limits on their coverage.

The bill before us today, however, weakens the employer-sponsored insurance system and hurts American workers. The Congressional Budget Office has indicated that the bill would cause 1 million Americans to lose their employer coverage.

CBO found that the bill will cause half a million Americans to become uninsured, and CBO found that the bill will cost taxpayers nearly $75 billion.

Republicans claim that all these costs are worthwhile because their legislation will keep workers from having their hours cut, but the fact is this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

CBO said it plainly:

> There is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA.

Since the Affordable Care Act became law, we have added more than 8.6 million private sector jobs. After years of increasing part-time labor, the number of part-time workers today is actually lower than it was before the ACA was enacted. The flimsy justification for this bill just does not stand up to scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the end of the ACA's first open enrollment period can be an opportunity for the Congress to change its approach to this law. More than 7 million Americans have signed up for coverage through health insurance marketplaces.

Tens of millions more will sign up in the months and years to come. Rather than pushing divisive legislation, let's come together to acknowledge the fact that millions of Americans getting covered is a great step forward for this Nation.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a letter of support from the International Franchise Association for this bill, and I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), a member of the Education and Workforce Committee.

INTERNATIONAL
FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2013.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the International Franchise Association, I write today to urge you to support H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act, sponsored by Rep. Todd Young (R–IN). This legislation will change the definition of a full-time employee in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to 40

hours, the definition that employers have traditionally used to manage their workforce, and will help small businesses better adjust to the ACA's employer mandate.

For decades, employers have used the 40-hour work week as a standard for workforce management. The ACA's provision requiring employers to provide coverage to full-time employees, and defining full-time as 30-hours, will cause many employers to simply manage their part-time employees to fewer hours. Data from a recent Public Opinion Strategies survey commissioned by the IFA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce shows that 31 percent of franchises and 12 percent of non-franchised businesses have already reduced worker hours to lower costs, a full year before the employer mandate is set to take effect. Not only has the employer mandate discouraged job creation and business expansion, it has also damaged existing jobs by including a misguided statutory requirement that discarded more than a half-century of established labor policy.

The employer mandate will hurt American workers in many ways, but one of the most devastating effects of the mandate is that fewer workers will be offered health insurance, and employees will be less able to afford their own coverage when working fewer hours. Allowing employers to manage their workers to the traditional 40-hour work week will give employees more flexibility and eliminate the need to revamp long-standing employer personnel policies.

IFA urges you to support the Save American Workers Act. This is a common-sense effort to a problem we know is only going to get worse. The passing of this bill would provide much-needed relief and flexibility for employers and employees by avoiding the worst effects of the employer mandate.

While this measure will not make the Affordable Care Act completely workable for the 825,000 franchise locations nationwide or the 9 million workers they employ, it will help both employers and workers better absorb the impact of the employer mandate.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN J. CALDEIRA,
President & Chief Executive Officer,
International Franchise Association.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation. Let's focus on schools in my district. Greencastle School Corporation was forced to cut the hours of 54 employees from full time to part time.

The Terre Haute School Corporation was forced to cut the hours of hundreds of employees. Many of them are bus drivers who are no longer allowed to provide transportation for afterschool activities.

Washington Greene County School Corporation was forced to cut the hours of 150 employees from 40 to 29 hours.

Eastern Greene County School Corporation announced that all of their employees who aren't receiving health insurance will have their hours cut to 28 hours a week.

Dubois County School was forced to reduce the hours for instructional assistants, cafeteria employees, and custodial staff.

Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of these employees already receive health insurance either through their spouse or other sources, and many of them have worked for their school corporation for many years.

School corporations don't have the luxury of raising taxes to pay for these provisions of the Affordable Care Act. They are not a major business that can raise their prices.

School corporations simply can't afford the Affordable Care Act. These Hoosiers work every day with students, and because of this provision in the Affordable Care Act, our students will suffer.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), our distinguished minority whip. Maybe after he expresses what makes common sense, our Republican friends may change their minds, and so I yield for the hard work he has done in this area, and good luck.

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I might say that the chairman in exile of the Ways and Means Committee and his confidence in my ability to change minds is wonderful, but probably overstated. I regret that, but I will try anyway.

The previous speaker said that people will be forced to reduce hours. Now, they will only be forced to reduce hours from 40 to 39, as opposed to 30 to 29. In other words, if you work 39 hours a week, you won't have to be covered.

You won't have to have health care insurance, and somebody else will pay their bill, maybe Medicaid, depending upon how much they make. Maybe all of us will pay that extra thousand dollars in our premium so the uninsured can be funded; or maybe the other employers who do, in fact, believe it is good to offer their employees health insurance, even though they only work 39 hours a week, somebody else will pay the bill.

That is what has been happening with employers who don't provide health care insurance. Their competitors who do are in an unfair position.

Why did we choose 30 hours a week? We chose 30 hours a week, Mr. Speaker, because in surveying the private sector employment field, we found that 29 hours was perceived to be the litmus test for 29 hours or less being part time; so we picked 30 hours, which was more than the average in the private sector.

Now, we have a bill that is the 52nd vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act, this obsession with undermining the access to affordable, quality health care by the American people.

This bill changes the definition of full-time employee in a way that would make approximately 1 million Americans lose their employer-sponsored coverage.

Do we care? Do 1 million Americans make a difference to us? Do 1 million Americans not having the availability of the assurance that they and their families have health coverage, does that matter to us?

Or are they all part of the 47 percent who aren't going to vote for some of us anyway—the proposition is—so why worry about them?

In addition, it would increase the number of uninsured by as many as half a million people, and it would increase the deficit by $74 billion. A million people lose their employer-sponsored care, half a million people would continue to be uninsured, and $74 billion is the loss in revenue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RANGEL. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, this is because the legislation provides an incentive for some employers to redefine work hours, so that more employees would be categorized as part-time.

In other words, you work in the United States of America 39 hours, and you are part-time.

Under this bill, more than five times as many workers would be put at risk of having their employers just slightly reduce their hours to avoid providing them with health insurance.

That would be a change that subverts the goals of the Affordable Care Act, and it is not going to help grow our economy either; but more importantly, it subverts the quality of life, the confidence, the assurance, if you will, of millions of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the defeat of this legislation. I urge us to confirm the fact that we believe Americans in the richest country on the face of the Earth ought to have access to affordable, quality health care and that everybody would participate in that objective.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this bill, the Affordable Care Act that the President calls ObamaCare, clearly would not insure every American in the country.

Dropping somebody from 39 hours down to 29 hours is effectively a loss of 10 hours of work per week. Over the course of a month, that is the loss of an entire week's work of wages.

For the life of me, I can't understand why the very same individuals who embraced all of the three dozen or so administrative changes to this law without hesitation will not work together in a bipartisan fashion because this is a bipartisan bill to restore the hours and income of those who need it most during the worst economy since the Great Depression.

With that, I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman YOUNG for his superb management of this bill and for his expertise in this area.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act, which would change the health care law's definition of full-time employee from 30 hours per week to the traditional 40 hours per week.

That is 8 hours a day, times 5 days in the workweek, 40 hours, the traditional

workweek, empowering hardworking middle class men and women to earn additional wages otherwise denied to them under the health care law.

Not long ago, I spoke to a constituent from Basking Ridge, New Jersey, the congressional district I have the honor of representing, whose son works at a grocery store.

This young man was told he could only work 29 hours a week. Despite the company wanting him to work more and pay him more, it could not permit employees to exceed the health care law's arbitrary definition of full-time status. This young man from Basking Ridge must work less and earn less because of the health care law.

Too many Americans are experiencing significantly reduced wages and hours worked because of the law. H.R. 2575 will protect existing jobs by removing some of the uncertainty facing employers and employees and help America's job creators put people back to work.

I urge passage of H.R. 2575.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from New York for his leadership and years of service and his understanding of this issue.

I heard his debate on the floor of the House, which would drive many of us as Members of Congress to come and join you because of the literalness and the straightforwardness of your argument.

Frankly, I think that is the challenge we have this afternoon, wondering how many Americans even understand what we are doing because it is a numbers game. I have heard the stories of my colleagues, and I am absolutely empathetic, and I am sympathetic.

All of us have young people working, single parents working, husband and wife working. Maybe there are two working in a grocery store.

I think the problem with this legislation is that we are giving a pass to businesses who, in actuality, we are providing them with an opportunity to provide enhanced benefits to their hardworking workers.

□ 1530

This is a threshold question. The Affordable Care Act defined a full-time job as 30 hours. So it means that if you have 50 employees that are at 30 hours or above, you provide them with health insurance. But let me remind you, it is the Affordable Care Act. That means that these individuals, if you don't provide them, you have the opportunity to get into a pool or you can find insurance that fits that level of 50 workers. This does not apply if you have one worker; it doesn't apply if you have two workers. It is a threshold.

So what my friends are telling me is that, if you can afford 50 workers, you are dead broke. Then you have to take that 50th worker and drive him or her into the ground and leave them crawling out of your business at 29½ or 28 simply because you don't want to do the right thing. That is why this bill is so baffling.

In the Rules Committee, I offered two amendments to try to make it better to indicate that commuting time would be included as part of your 40 hours, or that we should delay this bill until we fully appreciate and understand the overall impact of whether or not it, in fact, undermines hardworking Americans who are in hardworking businesses. We are just passing this bill and have no clue as to whether or not this is going to be something that undermines businesses that have 50 employees.

Now, this is the backdrop of what they are doing. I even offered the point, Mr. RANGEL, of why not a tax incentive so that these businesses with 50 employees can keep the 50 employees at 30 hours and get a benefit for providing them with health insurance; and when I say that, one that is pointed to the fact that you have 50 employees and you are willing to give insurance. As it is now, we know that the individual employees will get tax relief.

But 7 million people have enrolled, Mr. Speaker. The fact that we had a record-breaking access to the Affordable Care Act, or interest, this bill seems to be the complete wrong direction to go. It is wrongheaded. I would ask my colleagues to vote against the bill that destroys the working people of America and puts them on their knees to work less hours.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2575, the so-called "Save American Workers Act of 2014."

This bill represents the 52nd time that House Republicans have tried to scuttle or impede the Affordable Care Act and deny Americans the security that comes from having access to affordable, high-quality health care.

Their record to date is 0–51.

The Affordable Care Act, which has been passed by both the House and Senate, signed by President, upheld by the Supreme Court, and ratified by the voters in the 2012 presidential election, is here to stay.

It is long past time that House Republicans abandon their quixotic quest to derail a law that is bring so much peace of mind to millions of Americans and will reduce the deficit by $1 trillion.

The Affordable Care Act is working. For example, in my State of Texas:

1. 5,198,000 individuals on private insurance have gained coverage for at least one free preventive health care service such as a mammogram, birth control, or an immunization in 2011 and 2012. In the first eleven months of 2013 alone, an additional 1,683,800 people with Medicare have received at least one preventive service at no out of pocket cost.

2. The up to 10,695,000 individuals with pre-existing conditions such as asthma, cancer, or diabetes—including up to 1,632,000 children—will no longer have to worry about being denied coverage or charged higher prices because of their health status or history.

3. Approximately 5,189,000 Texans have gained expanded mental health and substance use disorder benefits and/or federal parity protections.

4. 4,889,000 uninsured Texans will have new health insurance options through Medicaid or private health plans in the Marketplace.

5. As a result of new policies that make sure premium dollars work for the consumer, not just the insurer, in the past year insurance companies have sent rebates averaging $95 per family to approximately 726,200 consumers.

6. In the first ten months of 2013, 233,100 seniors and people with disabilities have saved on average $866 on prescription medications as the health care law closes Medicare's so-called "donut hole."

7. 357,000 young adults have gained health insurance because they can now stay on their parents' health plans until age 26.

8. Individuals no longer have to worry about having their health benefits cut off after they reach a lifetime limit on benefits, and since in January, 7,536,000 Texans will no longer have had to worry about annual limits, either.

9. Health centers have received $293,038,000 to provide primary care, establish new sites, and renovate existing centers to expand access to quality health care. Texas has approximately 400 health center sites, which served about 1,079,000 individuals in 2012.

I oppose this bill because its effect would be to deny employer provided health insurance to hard working employees who work more than 30 hours but less than 40 hours per week.

If this bill were to become law in its current form, the health security of 10.2 percent of the workforce, or approximately 19.8 million workers, would be placed at risk.

I offered two amendments to H.R. 2575 that would prevent this travesty but regrettably neither was made in order by the Rules Committee.

Jackson Lee Amendment #1 would have improved this bad bill by amending the bill's 40-hour work week definition to include the employee's average commuting time in the computation of hours worked for purposes of determining "full-time employment."

Commuting time has become a major issue for those who work hourly wage jobs because their workday is much longer.

According to the Bureau of the Census nearly 8.1 percent of American workers commute 60 minutes or longer.

In 2011, almost 600,000 full-time workers had "mega-commutes" of at least 90 minutes and travel 50 miles or more from their homes. The daily average one-way travel to work for employees nationally is 25.5 minutes, and 1 out of 4 workers cross county lines to reach their jobs.

Jackson Lee Amendment #2 would have amended the bill by delaying the effective date of the bill until the first month after there has been two consecutive quarters in which the national unemployment rate is below 5 percent, which would indicate the Nation has reached a full employment economy.

Our Nation has taken a momentous step in creating a mindset that health insurance is a personal responsibility with the enactment of

the Affordable Care Act. The law did not automatically enroll all citizens into the program because it was specifically designed to be an opt-in process.

This week all over the Nation, over 4 millions of Americans took the first step toward taking control of their lives by purchasing their first personal or family health insurance policy.

Over the course of the sign-up process for the Affordable Care Act tens of thousands of visitors each day shopped the website and over 7.1 million people were added to private insurance roles as customers or have enrolled into Medicaid.

Despite problems with the initial rollout of the online health insurance registration process, people were patient and persistent about getting coverage for themselves and their families.

I have held many events in my District to inform and connect people with Navigators and Community Health Centers to support the message that it was time to get health insurance for yourself and your family.

Why with 60 legislative days remaining in the Second Session of the 113th Congress before the end of the 2014 fiscal year, we are still seeing attempts to end the Affordable Care Act is a mystery to the American public who are voting with their own healthcare dollars for Obamacare.

H.R. 2575 proposes to amend the Internal Revenue Code by redefining a full-time employee for purposes of providing health insurance to only those workers who work a 40-hour work week.

Mr. Speaker, few hourly workers in low-wage jobs work a 40-hour work week. These employees often rely on government assistance, which amounts to a hidden tax break to employers.

Low wageworkers often rely upon public housing assistance, SNAP, WIC, or Medicaid to make ends meet.

Health insurance should not be used as a status symbol, but a basic right for people who live in the world's most prosperous nation.

I know that many predicted that the Affordable Care Act would cause havoc on the Nation's health care system, but it is not the ACA that is causing havoc—it is a small vocal minority within the majority party that is causing headaches and heartaches to doctors and their patients.

I ask that my colleagues to join me in protecting workers by voting down this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the record a letter of support for the Save American Workers Act from the National Grocers Association on behalf of their members and on behalf of their workers, and I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

NATIONAL GROCERS ASSOCIATION,
Arlington, VA, March 31, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, Washington, DC.
Hon. ERIC CANTOR,
Majority Leader, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, Washington, DC.
Hon. STENY HOYER,
Democratic Whip, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, LEADER PELOSI, LEADER CANTOR, AND REPRESENTATIVE HOYER: The National Grocers Association (NGA) supports H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act (SAW), a bill introduced by Representative Todd Young (R–IN) and championed by Representative Dan Lipinski (D–IL). The bill has broad support in the House, with 210 bipartisan co-sponsors. NGA strongly encourages the House to pass the bill with bipartisan support during the vote scheduled for the week of March 31. We commend Majority Leader Cantor for bringing H.R. 2575 to the Floor for what will hopefully be an overwhelming vote in support of the bill.

H.R. 2575 addresses one of the most problematic provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by amending the definition of a full-time employee, which the ACA currently defines as those averaging 30 hours a week. Left unchanged, this provision will have far reaching consequences on the independent supermarket industry. Simply put, 30 hours is not full-time and requiring employers to meet this new definition is one of the most significant challenges of the law, jeopardizing coverage for our true full-time workforce. The SAW Act seeks to amend this problematic provision by defining a full-time employee as those averaging 40 hours a week and treating full-time equivalents as full-time employees for the purposes of determining whether an employer is an applicable large employer. This is a win-win for both American employers and our nation's workforce.

Independent grocers face complex challenges in implementing the law all while operating on a profit margin of around 1 percent. They are committed to their workers, and 92% of independent grocers already provide health benefits to full-time employees. It is important that Congress work in a bipartisan manner to provide employers with important reforms such as the SAW Act before irreversible changes to the US job market occur. Maintaining the full-time level many employers use today is something both sides of the debate can agree would be better for job preservation and employee coverage. Reforms such as the SAW Act are vital to our businesses and to our goal of providing quality benefits and available hours to our employees. Independent retailers and wholesalers have a significant economic impact across nearly every community in America. Our industry is accountable for close to 1 percent of the nation's overall economy and is responsible for generating over $131 billion in sales, 944,000 jobs, $30 billion in wages, and $27 billion in tax revenue. We are proud that the communities we serve are also the neighborhoods we live in.

Thank you for your support of this important issue. NGA looks forward to continuing to work with Congress to address this issue before the employer mandate is implemented in 2015. This is a critical issue for NGA and our member companies, and we will be key voting this vote and including it on our 2014 Legislative Scorecard. We remain appreciative of the reforms Congress has already made to amend the ACA to make the law workable for both employers and the American workforce.

Sincerely,

PETER J. LARKIN,
President and CEO.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, workers in western Pennsylvania and across the Nation are seeing their hours cut and wages reduced due to the employer mandate in President Obama's health care law. This mandate hurts our friends and neighbors who are working to provide for their families.

Last July, a mom working in the food service industry in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, told me about how her hours had been cut nearly in half because of the employer mandate. Sadly, her story is not unique or an isolated incident.

Brian in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, called the office to let me know that his daughter would have her hours cut at a bridal shop. She is yet another victim of this 30-hour workweek rule.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median hourly wage for someone working in sales in Pennsylvania was $12.18 in 2013. Losing 10 hours a week will cost that worker almost $6,000 annually.

Many small business owners want to add jobs and increase wages but cannot afford to because of the employer mandate. As Brandon from Ellwood City said: ''Small companies like ours try to do the right thing for us. They probably won't be hiring someone who can really use a job.''

Washington should be working to grow the economy and add jobs, not making it harder for employees to earn more and get ahead or for employers to hire more people. The Save American Workers Act will restore the traditional 40-hour workweek and help those who want the opportunity to work more hours and see their wages rise.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand in solidarity with these workers and support this legislation.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Mr. YOUNG on his outstanding leadership in managing this bill, which is going to remove one of the most misguided and confusing provisions of the President's Affordable Care Act.

Everyone outside Washington knows that full time means 40 hours. Only Federal bureaucrats would try to redefine a commonly understood fact that is critical to millions of workers and employers nationwide.

The redefinition of full time to 30 hours under the health care law is not only confusing to hardworking Americans, it is confusing to the very government who changed the definition in the first place. Just last week, Mr. Speaker, news reports showed that on different forms of the Federal agencies and in different offices, full-time work was being described as 40 hours by some agencies, 30 hours by other departments, and 35 hours by still others.

By moving the goalposts on what is actually constituting full-time employment, this administration fundamentally changed the workplace for hourly workers, increasing the risk of lost hours and smaller paychecks for real people, for real workers, for real Americans who are losers under this law called ObamaCare.

The bipartisan Save American Workers Act, of which I am proud to cosponsor, is going to restore that 40-hour

workweek. I am proud to cosponsor it and urge my colleagues to support its passage.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD letters of support for the Save American Workers Act from The Associated General Contractors of America on behalf of their workers and their members, and also a letter by the National Franchisee Association on behalf of their members and workers, and I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN), my colleague.

THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA,
Arlington, VA, February 3, 2014.

Re Support H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act of 2013

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP: On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), I am writing in support of H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act of 2013. This act would repeal the 30-hour definition of ''full-time employment'' in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by replacing it with the more traditional 40-hour definition.

The construction industry is typically project-based, transitory and seasonal, which distinguishes it from other professional industries with more predictable hours. As a result, many construction employers rely on part-time, seasonal and variable-hour employees. In addition, the construction industry consists of many smaller employers with limited human resource and administrative staff. These two issues alone add layers of difficulty for a construction firm that is required to use the complex formulas in the ACA to determine whether or not it is considered a large employer under the law.

Despite the one-year delay of the reporting and enforcement provisions of the ACA, the law continues to add layers of administrative burdens for employers, while other regulations are yet to be issued. Replacing the definition of a full-time employee to the more commonly accepted 40 hours per week will, at the very least, reduce some of the complexity associated with the ACA.

AGC hopes you will support H.R. 2575 and provide some relief for construction employers across the country.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY D. SHOAF,
Senior Executive Director,
Government Affairs.

NATIONAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION, INC.,
Kennesaw, GA, February 3, 2014.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
House Committee on Ways and Means.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP: On behalf of thousands of BURGER KING® franchisees across the country, we would like to express our strong support for H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act of 2013, scheduled for mark-up in the Ways and Means Committee tomorrow.

The National Franchisee Association (NFA) represents independent BURGER KING® restaurant entrepreneurs in the United States who operate more than 5,300 franchised restaurants and employ almost 200,000 individuals across the nation. The NFA works side by side with member franchisee regional organizations, system suppliers, business partners and Burger King Corporation to promote economic growth and prosperity.

The NFA strongly supports the Save American Workers Act, which amends ''full-time'' employment as defined in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (''ACA'') to working forty hours per week. The current 30-hour definition neither reflects current workplace standards nor the desire for flexible hours for both employers and employees in the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) industry. By defining ''full-time'' as working 30 hours per week, our members may be forced to reduce hours, limit the number of full-time positions available and enforce rigid scheduling standards for their employees.

On behalf of thousands of small business owners, the NFA thanks you and the Ways and Means Committee for the opportunity to share our views. We look forward to working with you and the other members of this Committee to help small business owners create more jobs and grow their businesses.

Sincerely,

PETER J. COTTER,
Chair, NFA Government Relations Committee.

MISTY CHALLY,
VP, Legislative Affairs.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman YOUNG for his hard work.

ObamaCare is waging a war on work. ObamaCare's 30-hour rule gives employers an awful choice: cut hours or pay new taxes.

Fort Wayne Community Schools, our State's largest school district, announced last year that they would cut 610 part-time workers after estimating a $10 million cost of compliance with ObamaCare.

My constituent, Todd Hollman, the Vice President of Pizza Hut and KFC of Fort Wayne, writes this:

> Due to ACA, our company has been forced to reduce the number of part-time employees or face even greater penalties than we already will. Even by reducing the number of newly defined full-time employees, we will still incur nearly a $1 million penalty in 2015.

While the Obama administration has delayed the employer mandate, businesses are still bracing themselves for ObamaCare's inevitable impact. Hoosiers don't need a part-time economy. We deserve a full-throttled recovery. It is time to repeal ObamaCare's 30-hour definition of full employment.

I thank my friend and colleague, Mr. YOUNG, for his leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2575. It is the right thing to do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 2575 is postponed.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Today, we are here to talk about the Affordable Care Act, and especially the big week that we have had in this country in making sure that millions of Americans will now enjoy access to quality, affordable health care.

Last week, we had a chance to talk about this and had other Members from all over the country who represent wonderful districts come forward and talk about how the Affordable Care Act has been very beneficial to their constituents. Part of the discussion last week and in the previous months, really since October, has been about whether Americans would accept the Affordable Care Act and how many people would enroll and how many States would expand Medicaid.

The numbers are very clear that, despite all of the advertisements and the millions of dollars that has been spent on television promoting misinformation about the Affordable Care Act, demonizing this as socialism and other bad things, that despite all of that, the American people have clearly rejected that narrative, that they believe the Affordable Care Act and what it is doing for this country are good things and that in the wealthiest nation on Earth, as we are, that people should be able to afford health care, that they should not be denied because of preexisting conditions, that students should be able to stay on their parents' plans after college, and that Medicaid for low-income Americans should be made more readily available.

Let's look at some of those numbers. We know, for example, that 7.1 million people ended up signing up for the Affordable Care Act in the exchanges. Now, that is on top of the 3 million students who can now stay on their parents' plans because of this act. That is on top of all of the States that expanded Medicaid to make sure that folks who don't make a lot of money, the vast majority of these people working hard day in and day out, that they are going to be covered, too.

There are still about 19 States, including my home State of Texas, that have chosen not to expand Medicaid. That has been such an incredible blow to the people of my State. For example, we have the highest percentage of people in the Nation that have no health care coverage.

On Monday, I was back home in San Antonio and there was a large enrollment fair, as there was in many cities throughout the country on Monday. It was probably about 6, 7, and this fair was going to close at 8. So I went over to see how it was going and to say hello to folks. There was a long line of people waiting. Families were there, two and three and four and five family members. People brought their young kids to enroll them in insurance.

One of the narratives during this debate has been this idea that has been pushed that this is just benefiting people who may be lazy or not working. One of the things that struck me when I was making my way through that line was that there were so many people there that had the insignia of the company that they work for or their uniform on. They told me that they had just come straight from work and how grateful they were that this was going to go on until 8 so that they had time to come after work.

It was really a stark reminder that—despite all of the stories or this idea of the makers and the takers in this country, or 47 percent of people versus 53 percent—the vast majority of people who are benefiting from this law, benefiting from things like Medicaid, are, in fact, not just takers, but are hardworking Americans who are powering our economy. All they want is a fair chance at the American Dream.

We talk a lot about freedoms in this body. The United States Congress is, of course, one of the main bodies in government that is entrusted with protecting American freedoms. So we talk about our First Amendment rights, whether it is freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, or Second Amendment rights, other amendments, the right against self-incrimination, all of these things, all of the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution. But I pose the question to those who continue to want to repeal the Affordable Care Act: What good are any of those rights that we are entitled to as Americans, that previous generations of Americans and this generation of Americans have fought so hard to preserve, what good is freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of speech if you are stuck in a hospital bed sick, broke because you can't pay your hospital bills, worried about your family and your future?

Remember, that is not an uncommon situation for Americans over the years.

□ 1545

The biggest reason for personal bankruptcies before the Affordable Care Act was the fact that people were racking up these huge health care bills that they couldn't pay, and this happened for a few reasons. Sometimes people just couldn't afford the insurance for their primary care physicians—the doctors they would go see—or emergency room doctors, not doctors in some clinic or private practice. Sometimes, even if they could afford insurance, they were hitting lifetime caps—somebody with cancer, somebody with MS—somebody like my grandmother and my mother with diabetes, who suffer from complications. My grandmother, before she passed away from congenital heart failure because of diabetes, had her leg amputated.

There are so many people who can't enjoy the freedoms that we are supposed to be able to enjoy because they can't afford health care coverage, so they have ended up not going to the doctor for many years. They have put off going to the doctor for a long time because, if they went without insurance to the doctor, then they wouldn't be able to make their mortgage payments or to pay their rent or pay their car bills, cars that they need in order to get to work. These are the common experiences of millions of Americans, not just of low-income Americans—certainly, low-income Americans—but also of Americans in the middle class, who power our Nation and power our economy.

I want us to consider the success of the Affordable Care Act. Of course, there was the Web site that had a tough rollout, and a lot of people doubted whether the program would be successful. This has shown also that the Affordable Care Act is about more than just a Web site that had a glitch. Again, the fundamental reason that this law has passed is that America is the wealthiest nation on Earth, and for generations, other countries with a lot less money have been able to provide and make available health care to their citizens a lot better than the United States of America has.

Consider this: with the Affordable Care Act, up to 129 million Americans who have preexisting health conditions, including up to 17 million children, no longer have to worry about being denied coverage or being charged higher premiums due to their health statuses. Again, you might have a woman who is 55 years old or 60 years old. She loses her job that gave her insurance, so now she tries to find another job, and tries to buy insurance, and she is rejected. She tries to go on to the individual market, and finds that she can't afford the prices on the individual market.

What is that person to do? A lot of them are suffering from chronic diseases.

In south Texas, for example, we have an incredibly high rate of diabetes. In other parts of the country, in other communities, it is other diseases, but whatever it is, these ailments are common, and they are forcing people oftentimes into bankruptcy, into not being able to pay their bills or in not being able to get health care coverage. So lifting the lifetime caps has made a mountain of difference for people. It has helped ease their minds, and it has also made things more fair.

Yesterday, the President was pretty very forceful in his comments. I think they did the press conference in the Rose Garden, but I was on an airplane, so I couldn't watch the press conference, but I got to see some of the clips. He made a comment that really struck me, which is that the Affordable Care Act is here to stay. This law is not going anywhere despite all of the opponents and despite the millions of dollars that have been spent on television for misinformation and demonizing this law.

The reason it is not going anywhere is not just because of the political reality. I mean, the politics, really, are tough on both sides. The country had been evenly divided for a long time. The reason that it is not going anywhere is because of the human reality, because we want fewer people going bankrupt because they are hitting lifetime caps and their insurance companies won't pay for their bills anymore. It is because you want more people who are not using the emergency rooms as their only way to get medical care and putting off ailments and diseases because, if they go to the doctor, they know that a month later or 3 weeks later they are going to run up these huge bills, and they know they can't pay them.

By the way, many folks have pointed this out, but certainly, when we had a dialogue last week, I pointed out again that there is a measure here also of personal responsibility, of people getting insurance in the same way that many States require you to get auto insurance. Why do States require you to get auto insurance? It is because, if you rear-end somebody, somebody has got to fix his car. In many public hospitals throughout the Nation, certainly in Texas—in San Antonio, for example—what happens routinely, oftentimes not from San Antonio but from surrounding counties, is that these folks come in, and you can't deny anybody emergency room coverage. You have to treat them. Then you send them a bill, and they can't pay the bill. They don't have insurance, and they can't pay the bill. Guess who pays the bill? That bill has to be paid somehow. The taxpayers end up paying that bill. Somebody has to eat that cost, and it is not the hospital. They pay a fraction of it, but those costs are spread, and all Americans have to pay them State by State, county by county. So this is a way that people can not only benefit from the Act but can also take a measure of personal responsibility for their own health care coverage.

That is why in the 1980s and in the 1990s, which was before this issue became so political and before President Obama was inaugurated in 2009, that originally the kind of legislation that we now know as ObamaCare, or the Affordable Care Act, was actually legislation that was promoted by the very conservative Heritage Foundation. It was considered to be a conservative idea in the same way that somebody getting car insurance—taking personal responsibility in case you hit somebody on the road—is thought to be a conservative idea. You are going to own up to your responsibilities. It has been very interesting over the last 4 years and even over the last few months to see the evolution of the arguments about health care coverage and about the Affordable Care Act and about how politics sometimes and often has trumped public policy.

In a minute, I would like to yield to my good friend from California, MARK TAKANO, but before I do that, I want to share with you just a few stories of

people from my area, from Texas, who said that I could share their stories with them and how grateful they are that they are now able to afford health care.

The first one is a woman named Magdalena. She is a substitute teacher and had a hard time transitioning to San Antonio since moving from Del Rio. Del Rio is a city right along the Texas-Mexico border. It is about 2½ hours from San Antonio. She has dedicated herself to taking care of her family, and she often puts her family in front of herself. Like many mothers, she was worried about her health as she moved into her senior years. She was skeptical about trying to fill out an application, but she eventually came to an Enroll SA event. Many cities had Enroll SA or Enroll Austin or Enroll Dallas. After sitting down with a counselor, she was able to get a plan for 5 cents a month. This is a woman who had previously been unable to get health care coverage. She returned to the registration table and wept tears of joy, with her eyes filled with hope, and the volunteers wept along with her. Her face just lit up because now her life was truly changing.

Like many others, Magdalena is a hardworking American, somebody who has taken care of her family, who is going to work day in and day out, who is not asking for very much—just a chance to enjoy the freedoms that we talk about here in Congress a lot.

With that, I would like to yield to my colleague from California, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Thank you so much to the gentleman from Texas, San Antonio, and New Braunfels.

Mr. Speaker, today, we are talking about the Affordable Care Act. This is so, so important as we have seen this week 7 million-plus American enrollees, and I know there are still some who tried to get in at the very end and are in the pipeline. I am hoping we push even closer to 8 million new enrollees into the Affordable Care Act.

It is interesting because we over here on the Democratic side have really been working to enroll people—we have been working to talk to people about how important it is to have a health care plan—while at the same time we have seen from the other side 50-plus votes to try to undercut, to undermine, to eliminate the ACA, but here we are. They were repealing. We were enrolling.

California's enrollment numbers surpassed 1.2 million people this past Monday, which is more than double of any other State. On top of that, the expansion of Medi-Cal, which is our Medicaid piece of this, has covered another 1.5 million low-income families, so we are pretty excited. California looked at this and said, this Medi-Cal plan—this plan of having a health care plan for lower income families, for the members in these lower income families—is so important. For the first 3 years, it is paid 100 percent from the Federal Government.

So, if you are sitting in a State like California and if you have 1.5 million new families who didn't have health care before that was paid for, they were putting up with being sick, doing what we call in Spanish ''aguantamos.'' If you got sick, you wouldn't go to the doctor. You wouldn't go and you wouldn't go, and you would work through. You would go to work, and you would be sick. You wouldn't go until, finally, you couldn't take it anymore. You were really, really sick. Then where would you go? You would go to the emergency room, which is the highest cost place in the entire health care system. Instead of putting up with not having health care—instead of aguantamos—we now have 1.5 million families who are in Medi-Cal and, again, as of Monday, 1.2 million people who are in what we call our exchange, Covered California.

This is very, very important, but there is also another piece of this that is incredibly important, which is that now we have to work with people. Now that we have enrolled them for the year, we need to work with people who have never before had a health care plan. They don't know what a primary doctor is. They don't even know what a specialist is. They don't know what the process is to go. They don't know about getting a baseline. Go and get an annual physical for free under these plans. This is for free. We have to teach them.

So you go in. You get a relationship with a doctor. You get a physical. You get a baseline. You get your blood drawn. For someone like me, that is incredibly important because, for example, diabetes runs in my family. My granddad died of it, my grandma, my aunt, her five kids. It is 3½ times more likely to be in Latinos than in the average Anglo in America. It is being able to go and get blood work done so that can you see where you are, whether you have the propensity to get diabetes, for example, because diabetes in over 50 percent of the cases can be stopped; it can be turned back. It is about having some nutritional understanding, being able to eat the right way, sequencing your food, exercising after you eat—just a 15-minute walk. There were just two studies that were released this past May that said, if you have a propensity for diabetes but if you walk 15 minutes after you eat, you can cut that propensity by almost 50 percent.

This is information that our communities do not have. Low-income, immigrant communities in particular are less likely to have this kind of information. Now, if they have health care plans and if we teach them how to go and get that baseline—get their annual physicals, get their pap smears, get their mammograms—and if there is something wrong, let's work on fixing it, and it takes personal responsibility to do that.

□ 1600

I have to get up early in the morning and go and run. I have to go to the gym to ensure that, since the propensity is high for me, I don't get that because it takes some personal responsibility—personal responsibility not to eat pizza all the time, and things of that sort, yes, personal responsibility.

It takes a health care plan, it takes knowledge, it takes access. These places have to be close by. We have to have clinics and doctors signed up into these plans so we can go to them. It takes cultural knowledge, as you know, being from San Antonio. Some of it is a language barrier. Some of it is just understanding how our community works and how we spread it by word of mouth, rather than go to computers to find our information.

Knowing all of this will help us ensure that, now that people are enrolled, they begin to use the plans effectively, and when they use them effectively, we drive down that cost curve that was happening. In California, on average, it was a 17 percent increase in medical health care costs on an annual basis. That was not sustainable.

The only people who could have liked the old system were the wealthy or the healthy. If you got sick, you had the money, or you never got sick; but today, we can fix these things.

Today, we can fix these things by moving forward with these health care plans and with teaching people how to use them efficiently and effectively, so that all of society becomes stronger and healthier, and that is why we voted to put this in. That is why we have worked so hard.

I am so thrilled that the gentleman from Texas wanted to discuss this issue today.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congresswoman. Thank you for your passion over the many years on health care and many other issues, and you raised several wonderful points, but there are a few in particular that I wanted to mention.

We debate our national debt and deficit here a lot. Since the Affordable Care Act was passed, as we know, health care has been the biggest driver of our debt. The Affordable Care Act has actually slowed the cost of health care, the slowest growth that we have seen in decades.

So this is something that has actually been good and will be good for our fiscal health in this country. Thank you for alluding to that.

Also, you mentioned that in many of the communities we represent—not only in California or in Texas, but many places—ailments like diabetes are things that affect so many people in our neighborhoods and our cities, but it is not just diabetes.

In other places, it could be cancer or sickle cell anemia or multiple sclerosis. All of those patients will now find a lot more relief because the United States Congress passed this bill.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. I couldn't agree with you more. There are pockets of this.

I just want to leave with one story. A few years ago, we had this one company who was a lensmaker kind of company. It was somebody who had retail stores, and you would go in and get your eyes checked. They would grind lenses and get glasses for you. Usually, they could do it in one stop, in 2 or 3 hours, et cetera.

They said: Let's do this in your area, LORETTA; let's hold a health care fair.

We had a lot of different types of people offering services, and they said: For the first 400 people who show up, we will have ophthalmologists there—medical eye doctors—and we will take a look and see what is going on with people. If we need to grind lenses, we'll grind lenses for them and give them free glasses.

Because even if you had a health care plan, most people didn't have vision or dental, so people were not buying glasses. They couldn't afford it.

I got there at 7:30 in the morning to this health care fair. It started at 8. There were 600 people in line already, so we gave coupons for these people to be able to walk into one of those retail stores and get the service for free. We kept the first 400.

One of the young ladies that worked with me stayed all day with one of the doctors, making sure the patients were coming in and out, giving him the things he needed, et cetera. At the end of the day, the doctor turned to her and said: Do you know that 80 percent of the people that we saw today had diabetes or were about to get diabetes?

They didn't even know it because one of the first symptoms for diabetes is blurry vision, so these people were thinking they are getting old and their vision is kind of going, but the reality was they were sick.

They didn't know it because they did not have health coverage, and, like I said, that is a disease that you can really get rid of or eliminate in your life if you work at it.

These people need that knowledge. These people need that ability to walk into the doctor and to get their blood tested and to see what is going on, so that we can tell them: if you don't change what is going on in your life, you are going to be diabetic.

By the way, the plans before, if you had diabetes and you had to have your leg chopped off, for example, we would pay for that. You see what I am saying?

We wouldn't be paying to let them know you may be getting diabetes or you have diabetes; we would pay after the fact to chop off their legs. Or, if they went blind, we would have them at home because, now, they couldn't work.

So it is going to make Americans healthier. When Americans are healthier, they will be more productive. They will have less sick days. It will be good for industry.

So I am really thrilled to have voted for the ACA. I am really thrilled, 4 years-plus now, and that we are seeing it now, at the ground level, with people signed up for plans; and now, we have just got to make sure they go and use these, so that we can get them healthy.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congresswoman SANCHEZ.

Now, I would like to yield to my friend from Houston, Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the convener of this Special Order and the colleagues I have heard since I have come to the floor, like Congresswoman SANCHEZ.

Congressman CASTRO, thank you very much. Coming from similar territory—the State of Texas—I just hope that you will allow me, just for a moment, to juxtapose the present pending bill on the floor.

I heard you speak of the bill, H.R. 2575, as well, and with all due respect to the proponent of the bill, it is confusing. It is confusing in the backdrop of the number that you have standing alongside of you, 7 million Americans and growing.

Because there were many Americans who were in the queue—in the line, when March 31 came, and because of President Obama, they will now have extended the opportunity to finish the work, and I was with a lot of navigators and people enrolling over the weekend. They were excited about being able to finish the task.

In Texas alone, that was the epicenter of unemployed. I keep saying, ''unemployed.'' Certainly, it has unemployed persons as well. There are 164,000 without unemployment insurance, which really is what baffles me about this effort at repeal and this effort of determining that, with 30 hours of hard work, you can't get health insurance.

In the State of Texas, 5.198 million individuals on private insurance have gained coverage for at least one preventative health care service, such as mammograms, birth control, and immunizations. That is for people with private insurance.

Also, 10.695 million individuals with preexisting conditions like asthma, cancer, or diabetes, including 1.6 children, will no longer have to be worried about being denied coverage in our own State alone.

As well, 5.189 million Texans have gained expanded mental health and substance abuse or use disorder benefits, and 4 million-plus uninsured Texans will have new health insurance options through the idea of going into the marketplace.

Also, 233,000 seniors and people with disabilities have saved $866 in prescription medications, and 357,000 young adults have gained health insurance, and 7 million Texans will no longer have to worry about annual limits. That is, of course, those who are uninsured and who can access the new Affordable Care Act insurance.

The other point is that, over these last 2 days, we have seen the reality of Americans clamoring for health insurance, with 4 million people accessing the healthcare.gov Web site.

And let me make this as breaking news—because this is what we were hearing from those opposing it—80 to 85 percent of those who have enrolled have paid their first premium. This is not a story of I have enrolled and you never hear from me again; this is a story of serious decisions being made by serious persons.

Let me offer, as well, some of the tragedies over the years—and I am very pleased to have cast that vote for the Affordable Care Act. I have been to any number of townhall meetings to share it with my constituents, some of whom who did not understand or agree.

In the course of the hearings, I have heard of so many stories that we don't repeat anymore, like the little girl that had leukemia. Her parents took her over and over again to the insurance company to get the opportunity for her to be covered. She had a preexisting disease. She had no coverage. She ultimately lost her life.

I believe—I don't want to call up facts that are not accurate—they even took her to the insurance company's office to plead for her to be covered. It was at that point near the end of her life, which she shortly thereafter lost.

We have the mother who came to us and said yes, her son had a difficult history. He was a trained lawyer. He was doing pro bono work. He was in Atlanta, Georgia. Frankly, he had gotten hepatitis. Because he had no health care, the only coverage he could get was from going into an emergency room. He had waited too long.

He was going into the emergency room, being the only source of health care. If he had had the ability to go to a doctor, in spite of his history of drug abuse at that time—a trained lawyer—he would have been able to maintain his life.

My last one is the issue of a young resident who took a summer position in Atlanta, Georgia, but his health care was in a 25-mile perimeter around Washington, D.C.

He fell ill with kidney disease during that summer. His father was a doctor. He was a student. He didn't have the ability to stay on his parents' insurance. His insurance was a school-based insurance that said it could only be around the school.

Congressman, his father had to drive hours to pick him up and put him in his car and pray for his survival and get him back into the perimeter of his health insurance.

This is what we lived with before the Affordable Care Act in 2010 and before the President ultimately signed it, and so I am baffled as to why, for the 52nd time, there is an attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act with H.R. 2575.

Let me just say that the importance of this Special Order is to emphasize whose side Members are on. I am on

the side of those who are clamoring for good health care and who have children who need good health care. I am on the side of those who need the expanded Medicaid and ask the State of Texas to do it.

As I close, just on this bill, H.R. 2575, I am still trying to understand what it means to tell someone who works full time, 30 hours a week, in a company that has 50 employees, that you cannot get health care.

So to the employers out there, frankly, I believe that some people are speaking for you that may not be really speaking for you. Because when you pay your employees and they get health care, they have more cash to buy your goods.

More people have income to come back to the grocery store, come back to the restaurant, come to the small clothing store, or to buy flowers.

Why would you deny employees health care so that they can get sick, go to the emergency room, and have days off? It doesn't make sense.

I think this bill is way before its time. There is no evidence that we need to reduce the hours of working Americans. There is evidence that we should pass unemployment insurance for those who are chronically unemployed. We need to do that.

There is evidence to raise the minimum wage, but there is no evidence that this is a problem of catastrophic moment that we are debating it for 4 hours on the floor.

So I want to congratulate the gentleman for his leadership on this question.

□ 1615

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE. Thank you for all of your work on this and many other issues. You are one of the most tireless folks, Republican or Democrat, who is involved in all the floor debates and amendments and proposing legislation. So thank you.

Just a few things that you mentioned. You were talking about the bill that we just discussed, and it was essentially saying that for sizeable businesses, not small businesses, because the small businesses are exempted from the requirements of the Affordable Care Act. That is worth repeating again. Small businesses are exempted from the requirements of the Affordable Care Act, so this was about larger businesses.

Instead of requiring that they offer health care coverage to their employees at 30 hours, the Republicans wanted to move it up to 40. One of the myths has been that all of these employers are reducing hours and cutting employees hours and this is hurting the workers. Well, the Congressional Budget Office, which both sides use as a neutral resource to figure out what's what, said that there is no evidence of that. There is no trend that says that part-time work versus full-time work is increasing because of the Affordable Care Act.

I also pointed out earlier in the discussion that part of the challenge in this economy is that American business has bounced back, but ordinary Americans still have not fully bounced back.

So, when we see that the stock market every other week, if not every other day, is hitting alltime highs and at the same time there are millions of Americans still struggling to find work, I think it is fair to ask why an employer shouldn't offer health care coverage to somebody that is working 32 or 35 hours a week.

Under the Republican plan, somebody that was working 39 hours a week, as STENY HOYER mentioned earlier, you wouldn't be offered health care coverage necessarily. And we believe that that is wrong. We believe that the freedoms that we would otherwise enjoy as Americans, those freedoms are harder to enjoy if you are sick and unhealthy and broke because of medical bills.

So the Affordable Care Act is not perfect and, quite frankly, nothing this Congress does, from health care to education to any other issue, is ever going to be perfect. If anybody is expecting perfection from this place, they are always going to be disappointed. But this is a bill that is absolutely a step in the right direction and one that we are going to continue to improve with the help of the American people, with the voices of the American people.

But I will tell you what. As I mentioned earlier, this law is not going to be repealed. We are not going to go backward. We are not going to go to the way things were because the way they were was not good, and this is much better.

Thank you, Congresswoman.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you.

If I could just make one final point. First of all, I am excited about the embracing by new Members like yourself who came out of State legislatures and knew how difficult it was to provide health insurance for our fellow Texans. But the embrace that you are now offering is one that gives us confidence that it will not be repealed, even though this is the 52nd time that it has been offered to repeal.

I just want to leave these facts for you as you continue your debate. This is a values question. This is a fairness question.

As you stand on the floor right now, the Budget Committee is meeting, with a budget as its underpinning, the underlying bill, that will give millionaires a $200,000 tax cut, and yet we have a bill here on the floor that wants to take the living substance from under the feet of workers working 30 hours a week, that gives them the stability and the confidence that they have health insurance for companies that are 50 and above, 50 persons and above. That is not a small company. I can tell you, I would ask that employer: Are you going to get rid of Mrs. Smith, who has given you 10 years of hard work, and put her at 29 hours because you don't want to give Mrs. Smith health insurance?

I think we are on the right side of the issue on this. The Affordable Care Act has helped seniors, it has helped single parents, it has helped individuals with preexisting disease, and it has helped young people who have surged into buying it. We should continue to embrace it and recognize that it has a value and it is going to turn lives.

My message to our Governor, if I can end on this note: Governor Perry, it is time to opt into the expanded Medicaid, which is part of the Affordable Care Act, which will give millions of others in the State of Texas their opportunity to benefit from good health care—being healthy and being able to work.

That is our challenge, and I look forward to working with you on these issues.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you.

I yield now to a wonderful legislator from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding time.

I rise today to stage an intervention, an intervention for Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republicans. Now, this intervention is not because they are wearing goofy hats or are spray tanning too much. This intervention is over their obsession with repealing or delaying the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare.

Now, just this week, the open enrollment period ended, and it is estimated that more than 7 million Americans signed up for private health coverage through healthcare.gov or their State exchanges. That number does not include the millions of young adults who are staying on their parents' plans or those getting coverage through Medicaid for the first time. The open enrollment period was one of the final pieces of ObamaCare.

Now, millions of Americans finally have access to affordable coverage that can't be taken away just because they get sick. Despite that, Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republicans are committed to fighting a battle that they have lost and have scheduled the 52nd vote to repeal or delay ObamaCare.

The Affordable Care Act passed the House. It passed the Senate and was signed by the President and has been upheld by the Supreme Court. Despite millions of dollars being funneled into misleading ads that discouraged people from getting covered, this is a law that millions of Americans have embraced and have benefited from. We saw an incredible surge in the final days of open enrollment, with consumers reportedly lining up around the block at some sign-up centers.

But if you talk to Republicans, it is clear they are still in the first stage of denial, denial of the facts, denial of the benefits, denial that our health care system is finally doing what it is supposed to do for the first time in a long time. My Republican colleagues must

stop making excuses and blaming others. They have put themselves in this position.

Even in the first few days of the rollout, when the system was admittedly struggling, Republicans were predicting ObamaCare's complete and total failure. JOHN BOEHNER called the initial numbers ''a symbol of the failure of the President's health care law.'' My colleague from California, Congressman DARRELL ISSA, said, ''It is time for the President to finally acknowledge ObamaCare isn't working and to delay the law.''

Funny how they believed the numbers then, because they seemingly have doubts about what is being reported now. According to Senator JOHN BARRASSO, the administration was ''cooking the books.''

To my Republican friends, I want to say: this is a safe place. We are here to help. Your addiction to repealing ObamaCare and peddling conspiracy theories about the law are not doing any good for yourselves or for the American people.

Stop standing on the wrong side of history. Let's move on. Let's accept that ObamaCare is the law of the land. Let's get back to being productive as a legislative body.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congressman. Thank you for your comments, and also thank you for all of you in California who have been one of the States that has shown the Nation what is possible in helping to offer insurance to the hardworking men and women of your State.

We, as Americans, we appreciate that.

Mr. TAKANO. Well, it is a point of pride that even in my area of California, the Inland Empire, my county has met, has exceeded its enrollment goals under Covered California, and just a few days ago we had reached a million in California alone. It is because we have a State legislature and a Governor who cooperated from the beginning. I don't understand any Governor or any State legislature that would intentionally try to keep low-income people from getting coverage.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. You make a wonderful point. California and several other States have had the benefit of a State legislature and a Governor who have been helpful in making sure that the Affordable Care Act, health care coverage, is available to their residents.

In places like the State where I live, in Texas, you have a Governor, State legislators, both Senators who are actively working and campaigning against the Affordable Care Act. So, many of us, not just elected officials but others who are trying to make sure that people have health care coverage, have faced a very strong headwind when trying to get the word out about the Affordable Care Act.

I told a story earlier about a woman who showed up at an enrollment fair in San Antonio and she ended up being able to provide insurance for herself and her family, but she went there and she was skeptical at first. Well, part of the reason she was skeptical is because there has been so much misinformation about this law and so much demonization about the law that I am not surprised that a lot of Americans would say, hey, you know, that thing doesn't sound like a good thing. It sounds like a bad thing.

Mr. TAKANO. There has been so much distortion. And to my way of thinking, it is diabolical to spend money on distorting ads to confuse people intentionally, to get young people to not sign up for the law, to undermine the law in that way

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. That is right. You bring up a good point.

There was a group that was specifically set up to go on to college campuses, funneled millions of dollars to go on to college campuses to convince college students not to enroll in the Affordable Care Act. That is just amazing to me.

Mr. TAKANO. Fortunately, I can tell you stories of someone who is under 30, one of those young invincibles, but who was wise enough to know that it made sense for a young person to sign up because it was so very affordable, and he convinced his employer that she needed to take a look at what the exchange had to offer.

As it turned out, he discovered he had a very serious condition, and he was one of those young people who discovered that they did need health insurance and that he was facing far larger bills than if he didn't have any coverage at all.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. California also, I believe, expanded Medicaid, and that is something that Texas didn't do. In fact, I remember several months back, when the State legislative session in Texas was still going on, and usually it goes to about the end of May or early June. We went down there and we were doing a press conference, and at the same time, the Governor and the Senators, Lieutenant Governor, all Republicans were doing their press conference.

Our junior Senator, Senator CRUZ, compared folks who need Medicaid and accept Medicaid to drug addicts, compared them to drug addicts. And the State's leadership implied that—not implied, said—allowing Medicaid to low-income Texans was like getting people hooked on sugar or drugs.

Mr. TAKANO. Forgive me. I may be speaking—I don't think what I am saying is an exaggeration, but I see that the denial of the expansion of Medicaid by some of these States is nothing less than a war on the poor. I don't know how else to say it.

Twenty-four percent of my congressional district were uninsured before the ACA. I have seen charts and maps of congressional districts color-coded, and I have seen many of those districts in Texas that are at the same level of uninsured as my congressional district.

In my congressional district, we benefit greatly from the expansion of our version of Medicaid, which is Medi-Cal. And the beauty is that the expiration is not to end it as of the 31st of March. People who qualify for Medi-Cal can continue to sign up for it year-round.

But to think that in Texas that it is not available to people who are low-income, to me, is unconscionable.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I appreciate those words. Unfortunately, in Texas there are a lot of people suffering needlessly, hardworking people. These are not lazy people. These are people that are going to work day in and day out, but they are suffering because their State leadership—even though Texas was going to get up to $90 billion for Medicaid expansion. The Federal Government was providing the funds through 2017 and then providing 90 percent of the funds after that. Despite the fact that it made economic sense, still, the State's leadership refused to do it.

□ 1630

I think it is worth mentioning a few other things. A lot of us, we saw there were long lines on Monday, March 31 of people waiting to enroll in the Affordable Care Act. It is worth noting that anybody that started that process on March 31 but was not able to complete it has until April 15 to actually finish it off. So the 7.1 million number of the number of folks that have enrolled will very likely, I would think, go up by at least a few hundred thousand people.

Mr. TAKANO. At least the folks in Texas, who can sign up with the Federal exchange, can get insurance if they are online, but it is unfortunate that those low-income Texans have no place to go.

I will just say to the folks in California, those low-income people who can still qualify for Medi-Cal, that you can still sign up. There is not a deadline for you. You are presumed qualified if you meet a certain income test. So the effects of the Affordable Care Act are still going to continue in my State for those who need health care the most and those who have heretofore not had access to medical care.

It has been a pleasure sharing this time with you on the floor, Representative CASTRO.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you very much, Congressman.

There is another benefit of the Affordable Care Act that I haven't talked about yet that is also very important to know. We know that 7.1 million people have signed up. Three million or more college students or young adults are able to stay on their parents' plans because of the Affordable Care Act. Millions more have benefited from Medicaid expansion. Millions of Americans also benefit because there is no longer lifetime caps. You know, you are not going to have somebody who is suffering from cancer in a hospital bed have a doctor or an administrative billing person from the hospital come talk

to you about the fact that you are about to hit your lifetime cap. So now, not only are you lying there sick in the hospital bed, but you are also thinking about how you are going to pay your mortgage and keep your kids in college. That is not going to happen anymore.

So when you hear people talk about repeal—and first of all, repeal with no plan to replace it. I mean, the only thing coming from the other side is, just get rid of this whole thing. There is no plan to replace it.

So I think what we owe the American people is, when we talk about repealing a law, especially something as important and big as this, I think it is a very fair and necessary question to ask: What are you going to replace it with? Are we going to go back to the old system, where that cancer patient lying in a hospital bed now is going to hit a lifetime cap with the insurance company so they are going to be told that they either have to leave the hospital or they are going to get stuck with $250,000 of bills, and they have to sell their house because they can't afford it anymore? When you hear the word ''repeal,'' you should understand that that is what is at stake, that is what we would go back to, the old system.

Until folks come up with an alternative—and in 4 years, there has been no alternative, and really, there is no reason to think that over the next 4 years there is going to be one. Unless you can come up with an alternative, then we are talking about going back to that time.

But the thing that I wanted to mention and something that is often overlooked here is that part of the Affordable Care Act, another benefit of it is that mental health care coverage is vastly expanded because of the Affordable Care Act. That is extremely important. Millions of families in this country, individuals and families, have either suffered themselves or have family members who suffer from serious depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, other mental health afflictions that—quite frankly, in America and many other countries of the world, for the longest time, we never took mental health issues as seriously as we have taken physical health issues.

So for a long time, people would tell you, oh, you are depressed. Well, you just need to snap out of it. Or they treated things like bipolar disorder very lightly. They thought somebody just had a bad attitude.

In Texas, in 2011, I and others worked on getting young people with serious emotional disturbances covered by insurance companies in Texas. And, you know, the Democrats are in a deep minority in Texas. The whole time I was there, for five terms, we were in a deep minority. So you would have a Republican-controlled legislature. And my bill went nowhere. It didn't go anywhere. It died. So serious emotional disturbances weren't covered. But under the Affordable Care Act, things like that will be.

The reason that was important was because families were coming to me—in my district office, there is one family in particular that came to me and said, We are scared of our son. Our son is a teenager, and he has gotten violent before. So we call the cops. The cops take him to the hospital. There is nowhere to keep him for any kind of long-term treatment because, by the way, the State provides inadequate resources for mental health care coverage. They can't really put him in jail unless he has really assaulted somebody. So there is just this cycle, where we are having this issue with our son, and we are scared to be in the same house with him. But we can't really do anything. And the law offers us no relief.

Well, one of the benefits of the Affordable Care Act is that serious emotional disturbances and many other mental health issues will now be taken more seriously, and they will be more covered by health care companies than they have ever been in the history of the United States. And that hasn't been a big focus because a lot of this has been about politics. And a lot of the milestones and, quite frankly, the celebrations about the more than 7 million people signing up, that has been the big focus of this whole thing. But we shouldn't overlook some of the things that haven't gotten as much attention.

For me, as somebody that worked on mental health legislation in Texas, and I know many other people, Republicans and Democrats, have worked on things like that—to the families who are dealing with situations like that, that is a big deal. That means a lot to them. And that is helping them out.

So, as Americans, when you hear folks talk about repealing this law, I hope that we all fully understand exactly what we would be going back to. And those legislators who propose repealing it are irresponsible if they don't provide to the American people a full alternative and an explanation for what that alternative would do for them and what it would cost for the country. You know what the Affordable Care Act is about. We have seen no plan on the other side.

So as I close, I would like to say ''thank you'' to all the Members of Congress from different places in the Nation who joined me today in talking about this milestone for the Affordable Care Act. I am very personally glad that over 7 million people have now signed up and are benefiting. And millions more are benefiting through Medicaid expansion, college students, and all of these people who won't be kicked off of insurance because they have hit lifetime caps. Or, you know, somebody that tries to get insurance, and the insurance company sends them a letter back saying, we can't insure you because you have a preexisting condition, or your doctor submits a bill to the insurance company, as it used to be, and the insurance company writes back saying, Well, you know what, we are not going to cover that $3,000 bill because you had a preexisting condition. That is what repeal would be about, going backward.

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

THE STATE OF OUR CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be able to stand here today with my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) and Mr. WENSTRUP from Ohio, behind me, in order to talk a little bit about not only the state of our country but of our Congress. When we came here 3 years ago, we were on a mission to get America back to work. We have watched now over the last 3 years. And some of the criticism that comes about all the time is, You know, you guys just aren't getting anything done. I hear people talk about not getting anything done, about being a do-nothing Congress, about not really pushing the agenda forward, about us not being able to get America back to work.

Well, today, Mr. MARINO, our colleagues, and I are going to be here in the position of myth-busters. This myth that somehow the House of Representatives—and I think the key to this is that there are actually two Chambers to this Congress. There is a House of Representatives and there is a Senate. In the House of Representatives, we have done incredible work over the last 3 years. We are talking about 220 House-passed bills that are stuck in the do-nothing Senate. And of those 220 bills, 30-plus of those bills are about job creation. They are about getting America back to work. They are about giving people confidence in the future that they can look forward and begin to plan their lives.

Now, we can't do it alone. And while we get criticism from the administration and as we look down the hall to the Senate, we start to wonder ourselves, what would it take to get America engaged in this process? What would it take to get our American citizens aware of what is actually going on in the Capitol? Why is it that we are stuck here? Why can't we move forward?

So today's exercise—for the next 60 minutes, Mr. MARINO, myself, and our other colleagues are going to have an opportunity to speak to the people of the United States to make sure that we expose this myth that this is a do-nothing Congress. No, no, no, no. This is not a do-nothing Congress. This is a Congress that has worked very hard. This is a Congress that has done monumental work to get our fellow Americans back to work.

The problem is, when you walk it down the halls and into the Senate, it

gets lost. It gets tabled. It doesn't get amended. It doesn't get discussed. It doesn't get debated. In fact, it doesn't do anything. It just collects dust.

So I welcome this opportunity to speak not just to this House but also to the people of America. And at this time, I would like my colleague and my good friend in Congress, Mr. MARINO from Pennsylvania, to also weigh in on this.

Mr. MARINO. Thank you, Congressman KELLY. I appreciate this. It is an honor to be here with you, and it is an honor to be setting the record straight.

You know, I spent a couple minutes in here listening to my colleagues about what we are not doing and what they are doing. The facts and figures that they are throwing out are coming from the White House. They change on a regular basis. We will get into that stuff in a little bit.

But I want to hold up something and show it to the American people and then touch on it a little bit, about what we have done in the House of Representatives. What the Republicans have done in the House of Representatives for the 113th Congress—that is just last year and this year. That is not including the legislation that we passed in the 112th Congress, from 2011 to 2012.

I am holding in my hand here the names, the numbers, the dates, and the details of 220 bills that the House passed—220 bills. Some of it was with support from a handful of Democrats who saw that this is good legislation, that it will create jobs, it will keep taxes low. It does away with job-crushing regulation. It lets the private sector do what it does best. It allows the hardworking taxpayers to have a level playing field.

I am just going to recite some of the bills. I am not going to go over nearly all 220 bills that are sitting on Democrat Senate Leader HARRY REID's desk that he refuses to bring to the floor for a vote. I ask the Democrat leader: Senator REID, what are you afraid of? Why do you not bring these bills to the floor for a vote so the American people can see the legislation and how their Senators vote for it? They can see it right here in the House. They can go to our Web site. They can go to the congressional Web site. They can see how we voted on legislation.

I think it is despicable that one person in Congress can hold up 220 pieces of legislation and hide it from the American people. And do you know why he does it? Politics. There is an election coming up this year. He doesn't want his Democrat Senators to have a voting record. Well, that is why we are here. We are supposed to have a voting record. We are supposed to represent the American people.

Some of the legislation concerns energy, the Offshore Energy and Jobs Act, H.R. 2231; Northern Route Approval Act, H.R. 3; hydropower regulation; Energy Consumers Relief; Coal Residuals Reuse; Federal Lands; Energy and Water appropriations; Department of Defense appropriations; Homeland Security appropriations; Preserving Work Requirements for Welfare Programs; the SKILLS Act; Student Success Act; the RAPID Act, which does away with regulation and time that prevents businesses from creating jobs. And who creates the jobs the best? The private industry.

□ 1645

Look, the Federal Government has a rough time keeping Amtrak on time, and they are always way over budget, and we are going to trust them with health care? We are going to trust the Federal Government with creating jobs when entrepreneurs are the best people, women and men, to do that?

Any time you want to see what legislation is on Mr. REID's desk, you just go to the Web site, the congressional Web site and see what was passed.

You are going to hear some facts and figures. I was a prosecutor for 18 years. Actually, I started working in a bakery, a wholesale bakery, at 17. I worked in that bakery until I was 33. The owner died, and a new company came in. They overlooked me for a promotion because I didn't have a college degree, but they wanted me to train the guy with the college degree coming in. I went home and said to my wife: I want to go to college and law school. My wife worked full-time, and I worked part-time. We got through college and law school, which normally takes 7 years, in 5 years. I wouldn't have been able to do it without my wife.

But I know what it is like to work in a factory 60 and 65 hours a week. I know what it is like to stretch a paycheck. My wife knows what it is like to stretch a dollar from here to next year. And I also know what it is like in the criminal justice system as a prosecutor for 18 years. I have seen it all. I have seen the worst sides of life that I have ever seen. But do you know what I have a passion for? It is the children. And our children's future now is dismal.

My father gave me a better life than he had. I am not sure I can do that for my children. They are now looking at over $50,000 of debt—each of them. So that means that every dollar that they earn, over 50 percent of it—if we ever get to the point to pay the debt down—is going to our debt.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

At this time, I am going to yield to a new Member from the State of Ohio. BRAD WENSTRUP is with us today. He has done remarkable work since he has gotten here in just a little over a year.

So, Mr. WENSTRUP, thank you for being with us today.

Mr. WENSTRUP. Thank you very much. I appreciate that, Mr. KELLY.

Mr. Speaker, we have a problem. We have an inactive Senate with HARRY REID at the helm as the majority leader. Someone on the Senate side seems to have hit the pause button, and it has been stuck there for a while, and we are having to deal with that. But here in the House of Representatives, the people's House, we have passed over 200 bills since I came to Congress that just seem to be gathering dust over in the Senate.

We have hardly been inactive on this side of Congress taking up important energy, education, health care reforms, and numerous jobs bills—some Republican bills, some Democratic bills—and most passed with bipartisan support. Yet Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID has thrown them on the ground.

Ohioans ask me what we are doing here in Washington, D.C. I am at my wit's end trying to explain that every reform-minded bill that I have supported that we passed on behalf of the American people is stuck in the Senate. It is a legislative purgatory. It just sits. And I don't wish that on my fellow Ohioans or my fellow Americans. I am not asking the Senate to agree with every bill that we pass, Mr. Speaker, but at least allow a vote and at least allow a discussion.

One example is the Keystone XL pipeline. The energy security legislation passed the House with bipartisan support nearly a year ago; 241 Members of Congress voted for the Northern Route Approval Act. More than that, a filibuster-proof majority of Senators, Republicans and Democrats, are on the record as supporting this project.

A recent Washington Post-ABC poll demonstrates that the American people also support the goals of this legislation of building the pipeline by nearly a three-to-one margin. But the Senate has thrown the bill on the floor blocking any vote. Does the Senate have a solution? Not really. They just seem to want to stand in the way.

Another example is the SKILLS Act. I hear from Ohioans frustrated that Washington isn't working, especially in year 6 of this Obama economy with disappointing job growth. And as we continue to face unacceptable unemployment levels, the Senate refuses to take commonsense steps to get Americans back to work.

Over a year ago, I was proud to support the SKILLS Act, legislation that would have helped job seekers, helped employers, reformed government, and cut bureaucratic costs so that more money can go directly to help people getting back to work. This legislation offers a long-term solution to help those looking for work, combined with smart government reforms. And what do we hear from Senate leadership? Nothing.

It is bipartisan frustration, I think, on some parts because these aren't just Republican bills that are being blocked. Nearly three dozen Democratic-sponsored bills have passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming support from both sides of the aisle—no action in the Senate. These are noncontroversial bills. But some in the Senate are more concerned with demonizing individual Americans than helping every American.

The legislative branch is the most direct representation of the American people, yet the Senate leader is content to hand over his constitutional responsibilities to President Obama and the executive branch rather than do his job and to legislate. It is a myth that this is a do-nothing Congress, but we are witnessing a do-nothing Senate.

I ask Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID: relieve this legislative backlog; hundreds of bills and millions of Americans are waiting.

Here in the House, we have taken action. We are active. We have taken the vote. We have taken the action as far as we can take it, and America waits for a further response. Most of these bills that we pass usually involve having less government involvement, not more, not more involvement. The table is set. Our Founders set it up in such a way that we are to represent the people and we are to act, and the Senate is to act, and we are all supposed to come together at the table. I have been here just over a year, and I have been waiting at that table. I have been waiting for the Senate to engage with us. I have been waiting for the President to engage with us. But that hasn't happened.

I left a medical practice to serve here, and I am proud and honored to be here. People often ask me, well, what is the difference between a doctor and being here? Well, as a doctor, I can make a diagnosis. I can get together with a patient and their family and provide a treatment, and together we go to work on that. It takes both of us to do that. Sometimes when you make the suggestion of a treatment, you even suggest that there be a second opinion. And I can tell you right now on all of these things that we have passed, all these treatments that we have recommended, we are still waiting for our second opinion from the Senate.

The House is active. We are waiting for the Senate to take up the arm and do their job, as well.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank Mr. WENSTRUP.

Mr. MARINO and I were talking for a second. Mr. MARINO had touched on something that had just happened recently when you talked about activity on the Senate floor and inactivity on the Senate floor. There was a night not too long ago where the Senate talked all night long, and I think Mr. MARINO wants to just touch on that right now.

Mr. MARINO. If this were not nauseating, it would be hilarious. There are millions of people out of work, Mr. Speaker, millions of people who are losing their health care and millions more whose health care is increasing. There are 230 pieces of legislation sitting on HARRY REID's desk. And do you know what they debated a couple weeks ago all night on the floor? Nothing to do with jobs, nothing to do with deregulation, and nothing to do with getting out of the way of the hardworking taxpayer business. They debated climate change all night on the floor.

Now, there is no one that is more than a conservationist than myself. I live out in the country. I love seeing the bear and the deer walk across my property. I get my water from a well. My children have grown up there. I will do everything I can to protect my children and make sure that the air they are breathing is clean, the water is clean, and the land is pristine. But do you know something? I am pretty sure the hardworking taxpayers, the people in this country, the farmers in my district, and the entrepreneurs in my district want to see the government get out of the way and let entrepreneurs and business do what it does.

I am a states' rights guy. I believe the less Federal Government in my life the better. That is proven by—I just met with a group of entrepreneurs a little earlier. They are called start-ups. They are young kids. They are geniuses who know the IT industry and who create apps, create hardware, and create software. They are saying to me: Congressman, our hands are tied. We are being overregulated, and we have a lot of good ideas that will help the American people.

You are going to be hearing some figures quoted. I am not a big figure guy, but I think it is important that you listen to these figures and see these figures. But I want to tell you where I got them, because as a prosecutor, I always had to back up, in court, where I got my evidence and cite it.

You have all heard of the Congressional Budget Office. We refer to it as the CBO. I am going to tell you just in two sentences what the Congressional Budget Office does. The Congressional Budget Office, CBO, is a Federal agency within the legislative branch of the United States Government that provides economic data to Congress. The CBO was created as a nonpartisan agency by the Congressional Budget and Improvement Control Act of 1974, which means they are independent. They are not Republican, and they are not Democrat. These are people who crunch numbers, make estimates, bring us information, and then submit it to us so the American people know what the actual facts are.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Mr. MARINO.

We all have similar experiences. I know you do, BRAD, when you are back home; and, TOM, I know you do when you are back home. It really doesn't matter where we are. A lot of times it is coming out of Mass on Sunday morning, and sometimes it is just being down at the K-Mart or the Walmart, or maybe I am up in Erie and I am out near Presque Isle, or I could be in Grove City or I could be in Slippery Rock, and people come up to me all the time and say: Do you know what? You all need to get busy. And they talk about: We don't want to hear any more about the battles between Republicans and Democrats. Quite frankly, we are tired of hearing it because, if you can't work together, you can't get things done. And then the question that comes up is: Can't you just compromise once in a while to get something done? And then you have got to scratch your head and say: Yes, but, do you know what? We are doing an awful lot right now, but you are just not hearing it.

The reason that comes about, and we all know this, is because the biggest megaphone in the country right now is at the White House.

Now, BRAD, you and I sat here, and, TOM, you and I sat here during the State of the Union. The President made a very chilling statement. He said:

> America can't wait, and I can't wait. And if this Congress won't act the way I want it to do, I will go around them, and I will get it done.

Half of this side of the House stood up and cheered that, cheered up their forfeiture of their duty of the oath that they took when they came into office.

Now, I stand here today as a representative of Pennsylvania's Third District. That does not mean that I only represent Republicans that live in the Third District of Pennsylvania. That does not mean that I am only concerned with the concerns of Republicans in the Third District of Pennsylvania. That does not mean that I represent anything else but every single person—every citizen—that resides within that district.

So the things we are talking about today are not Republican issues, and they are not Democrat issues. These are American issues. We are talking about American jobs. We are talking about getting back to work. We are talking about coming here, taking an oath of office, and then fulfilling that oath to the people who sent us.

Now, I know that you go through the same thing. I have many people that approach me and say: Do you know what, MIKE? I didn't vote for you. And I say to them: Well, do you know what? I didn't know that until right now, but I will forget about it, believe me. And they will say: Well, this is an issue I have, and these are some things that concern me, and I just want to know where are you all going and what is it that you are trying to do? And why can't you get America back to work? Because you all said when you ran for office that we have got to get this Nation back on track and we have got to get America moving in the right direction. We have got to get America being America again.

We know that oftentimes in our life we look at all the problems we have, and the answer to everything right now is these things need fixing. Now, how do you do that? You can only do it with a very dynamic and robust economy. So when I hear the conversation that takes place either in our Chamber or the Senate Chamber and you start to say to yourself, it is nice to have that conversation, it is nice to have that little talk, and it is nice to have that debate, but do you know what? You

haven't created any jobs. Because without a dynamic and robust economy, it is all just idle chatter. It is just politicians getting up, speaking and hoping that somehow they hit a chord with some constituents somewhere that says, boy, she is speaking for me or he is speaking for me.

□ 1700

We speak for everybody, not just the towns we come from or the townships we come from or the counties we come from or the States we come from, but this entire country.

So when we look at what is going on now and people say: yes, you say that is going on, but you know what, there is no proof.

Here is what I would ask our friends to do because the President says this all the time. He says: you know what, pick up your phone or pick up your pen, and that is what I am going to do, and I am going to get things done; I am going to use my executive powers, which are vast and enormous, to do what I want to do, despite what Congress may say, despite especially what those characters in the House of Representatives are pushing down your throat because that is just not what I want you to hear.

Well, my message to the American people is: you all have phones, and you all have pens, and you all have the ability, because of the country we live in, to speak out on anything, any time, anywhere you want; no place else in the world can we do that.

As an example today, as my colleagues and I are doing—because, as I said earlier, it is time to do some mythbusting, it is time to call a halt to this idle chatter about what America really needs.

We know what America really needs. America needs to get back to work, and this Congress needs to get out of the job creators' way. We need to get the heavy regulatory boot of the government off the throat of our job creators, and we need to let them breathe again.

We need to let them look to the future with some certainty and know that you can go ahead and plan. You can go ahead and make a strategy. You can go ahead and look to the future with a great degree of success waiting for you.

Now, opportunity is there for everybody. There is equal opportunity. There is no question about that. We know there is not equal outcome. My goodness, that is just not the case.

We do know that hardworking Americans throughout our history have done things that are absolutely incredible, and they have done it because of a government that lets people be free. It gives them liberty to go on and do what they need to do and when they want to do it and the ways that they want to do it.

There is no place else in the world, so the question comes down to: Why now? Why now have we hit such a logjam? Why is it that we can't get a law to get America back to work?

The answer is quite simple. Mr. MARINO has talked about it. Mr. WENSTRUP has talked about it. My goodness, there is another election coming, and if it truly comes down to we can't get these things done because of another election coming, then we can never get anything done because there are elections every year.

Now, if Mr. REID can say to his people in the Senate and if he can look to this country and if he can go on TV and tell people these things you are hearing about the health care law are all lies, these things have been conjured up by people who don't really exist, the stories that they are spreading are lies, there is not a shred of evidence that would support what they have said—now, he stands in front of the American people and says that you are all liars and that we are not going to tolerate that type of behavior.

Then he goes behind his desk at the Senate and said: all of those pieces of legislation, those 220 House-passed bills, put them on the table because we are not going to talk about them. We are not going to debate them. We are not going to amend them. And you know why we are not? Because there is an election coming.

Right now, there are a third of the Senate Members up for election. That is their rotation—a third, a third, and a third. Every couple of years, there is a third reelected, or new Senators come in.

He has placed the reelection above the redirection of this country. The reelection of his Senate is more important to him than the redirection of this country. That is absolutely unforgivable.

So I would just ask our friends, as they listen—and this is a message to America, not so much to the House of Representatives or to the Senate because we are pretty much ignored, but let me just say this: for those of you who are at home and listening to this, there are several things you can do.

I said about picking up your phone or picking up your pen. How about this, just getting on your computer. Go to www.speaker.gov/jobs. You can also go to majorityleader.gov/bill-tracker.

What will these two sites give you? They will give you everything we are talking about. It is all there. You don't have to come to Washington to see us. You don't have to send away for a book.

You don't have to do anything except go online and pick up this information. You can sit at home and see what it is this House of Representatives has passed; and then you, too, can sit, as myself, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. WENSTRUP do every day, and ask: What is it that we are waiting for?

The answer is leadership; quite simply, it is leadership. America, right now, is hunting for champions. They are hunting for people who will rise up and take control of this situation, and this idea that, somehow, somewhere, some knight in shining armor has to come riding in on a white charger to get us there is baloney because, every election, it comes right out your hometown.

It comes right out of your churches, and it comes right out of the folks you work with every day and have grown up with and have lived life with. That is who is here. That is who is here. It is so unique; it is the only place in the world that you can do it.

I just tell you, because of the social media, you can go as an individual in your home. You don't have to get in your car and drive anywhere. You don't have to waste any money on gas. You don't have to worry about sitting in traffic.

Just sit at home and go to those two sites, www.speaker.gov/jobs or majorityleader.gov/bill-tracker. You can find out everything we are talking about.

Mr. WENSTRUP, you did talk about the Keystone pipeline, and we ask ourselves all the time: What is the holdup on the Keystone pipeline?

One person, one person; and if you don't know where that person is, let me give you a clue: he lives in a white house at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. This is not a tough place to find.

Pick up the phone and call him. Tell him: Mr. President, let's get back to work; Mr. President, let's make America energy independent; Mr. President, let's quit worrying about the next election, and let's get this country back in the right direction.

We can do it as a people. We can do it together. We must do it. It is not just a responsibility. It is our obligation, not just for the future, but to all those from the past.

So I would just tell you, my friends, there is so much going on right now, and I really would like my two colleagues, let's all join, and we can have a colloquy right now between the three of us and talk back and forth because I think it is important for the people of America to understand.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward Senators and are further reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I yield to Mr. WENSTRUP.

Mr. WENSTRUP. The gentleman mentioned the Affordable Care Act, and you mentioned a phone and a pen. I would encourage all Americans to use their phone and to use their pen to let the other parts of our government know where you stand and know that you do want to see some action taking place.

We are a Nation of laws, and we should live by the rule of law. It is very difficult for the American people to understand when certain laws are passed and signed by the President and then just changed as though it is a menu, you can just select which laws you want to enforce.

That makes it very difficult for the American people to understand, and it makes our job more difficult, too, as we go ahead and pass laws.

While we are talking about some of the things that we have done here in the House, both in the 112th and in the 113th Congress, we passed the REINS Act. For those who aren't familiar with the REINS Act, basically what it does is it brings more power back into Congress and into those who represent you. It gives you a voice.

We have established, over the years, many agencies where we have empowered those agencies, and we have empowered the people within the agencies to make the decisions, and often, it is punitive, regulatory decisions that they are making, so this makes it very difficult for our businesses.

What the REINS Act does is it says that, if a regulation has a negative economic impact of over $100 million, then it has to be approved by Congress. That gives you, the people, a chance to reach out to your Representative and let them know how you feel about these regulations, rather than just having a bureaucracy deciding that this is what is going to take place.

As I said, I think, over the years, this body has given up some of that power to these agencies, and that takes it away from the American people, and we want to get that back.

Now, we talk about if it is over $100 million of negative economic impact. Well, I tell you I rarely see a regulation that has a positive economic impact in America, and so this is an opportunity for us to get that back.

Again, it is something that we passed in the last two Congresses here in the House of Representatives, and it has not been taken up in the Senate.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman, and I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership on this and many other issues, and I thank him for putting this time together.

Whenever anyone says it is a do-nothing Congress, they are only half right. It is actually a do-nothing Senate.

In this Congress, the House has passed and sent over to the Senate 311 total bills, and we have talked about the 220 jobs-related bill. There are 311 total bills.

In stark contrast, the Senate has sent to the House only 67 bills. The Senate produces just about one-third of what the House does—one-third of the work, Mr. Speaker.

I am not saying that passing bills in and of itself is an unalloyed good. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, is a primary example of that, but it is one way to measure how hard you are working.

From the House Natural Resources Committee I sit on, we have passed six bills opening up American energy that would create over 1 million new jobs, lower gasoline and electricity prices, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and help lower our national debt by generating over $1 billion in new revenue. These bills are now stalled in the Senate.

The U.S. Senate has turned into a productivity graveyard. President Obama has signed only 24 Senate bills into law during this Congress. In contrast, 91 bills from the House have been signed by the President into law. These are total bills of all different subjects.

Senate Democrats' sole concern seems to be protecting themselves from taking recorded votes that might anger their liberal donors or their voters. They do this by closing off debate, eliminating amendments, and writing their bills in secret, shutting out Republican voices and input.

This broken and dysfunctional Democrat Senate has produced many disasters for the American people and not just ObamaCare. They also passed the trillion dollar so-called Stimulus Act, refused for 4 years to pass a budget, and allowed the President to balloon the national debt in five short years from $10 trillion to $17 trillion.

Don't let the President or HARRY REID fool you with false narratives that those rascally Republicans are holding up the Nation's business. This is just another gimmick to shift the blame away from where it really lies.

Our country deserves better. Bills that would grow our economy and put millions of our friends and neighbors back to work should never die in the depths of the Democrat Senate. It is critical for every single American to let Senate Democrats know that they are sick and tired of the do-nothing Senate.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank Mr. LAMBORN.

If I may inquire, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO).

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I heard a little bit ago when my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were talking about ObamaCare, and they said that Republicans tried to repeal it over 40 times; and that is true, we did.

We tried to fix it, with no help from the other side, but he said, twice, that we didn't have anything to offer. Again, that statement is not correct.

Look at H.R. 3121, American Health Care Reform Act. It repeals ObamaCare and puts together a health care program that physicians and hospital administrators and the public took part in suggesting what we need in a health care program, so it is there. It is backed up. H.R. 3121, we did do something.

Now, we need to talk a little bit about some issues concerning what my colleagues have said with regard to ObamaCare.

I just recently heard and verified this by my staff that the House minority leader, NANCY PELOSI, said Tuesday that the Founding Fathers—talking about Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, and Washington, the Founding Fathers—would be pleased with ObamaCare because it means that Americans can pursue happiness without being stuck with a job just to have health care.

□ 1715

This is the same person that says we have to pass it so we know what is in it. Well, we all know what is in it, and we all know what is not in it.

Now, I want to make a point clear. Congressman KELLY and myself, this is our second term. We new Members of the House, we have a little different approach to things.

This $18 trillion of debt that we are in, this just didn't happen over the last couple of years. This happened over the last 50 years. I often say to my constituents, if I had the ability to have every living President in a group of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, and every leader, I would say to them: how dare you do this to us; how dare you, Republicans and Democrats, put us into this debt.

The Republicans had some opportunities when they had control of the House and the Senate a decade or so ago, but times are changing. There is a new breed here.

I just want to bring some issues to your attention concerning ObamaCare that the American people need to know about. When ObamaCare was first implemented, first told about what is going to happen, it was supposed to cover 60 million people. Again, go to the Congressional Budget Office Web site at www.cbo.gov. It is supposed to cover 60 million people at a cost of $900 billion and some change over a 10-year period.

You were told you can keep your doctor; you can keep your health care program. If you didn't want to participate in ObamaCare, you didn't have to. And do you know something? It wasn't going to cost you one penny more. Well, the Congressional Budget Office just released new figures and they simply put it this way: instead of covering 60 million people, maybe—maybe—ObamaCare will cover 24 million people; and instead of costing $900 billion, it now is closer to $2 trillion.

And, oh, by the way, were you able to keep your insurance that you had prior to ObamaCare? No. The President said you could, but you can't.

Were you able to keep your physicians? In many instances, no.

Your rates weren't going up. How many of your rates stayed the same? We are talking about millions of people, millions and millions of people who lost insurance because of ObamaCare, and millions more whose insurance rates went up significantly.

The President waived more than 30 provisions of his law in order to try and make it work, number one.

Despite his promise that everyone who likes their plan can keep it, between 4 and 7 million Americans have had their health care plans canceled.

Approximately, 7.5 million seniors will be forced from their Medicare Advantage health care plan of choice in 2014. Others will see more than $3,700 in services cut.

ObamaCare imposes 21 different taxes on Americans and businesses and an additional cost of more than $1 trillion to Americans and the economy.

The workforce will shrink. My colleague said there is no evidence that the workforce would shrink. Well, you go to www.cbo.gov and you will read that the workforce will shrink by 2.5 million jobs because of ObamaCare. Not a good sign for the 4 million Americans who have been unemployed for over 6 months.

Eleven million small business employees will see premiums rise under ObamaCare.

And Medicaid, a program that already has reimbursement rates below Medicare and one in which one out of three doctors does not accept new patients will see enrollments rise by more than 91 million Americans, 34 million of whom are childless adults.

This, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, this does not work, and we have to fix it. We have offered a way to fix it, but the President said there is nothing wrong with it.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank Mr. MARINO.

I think, Mr. Speaker, as we draw to the end of time, I think it is time for us now to take a look at the world and our place in the world. Geopolitically, we know we have been hurt lately because America has decided to follow something called ''leading from behind.'' I have absolutely no idea what that possibly could mean.

But I hear constantly about the next great emerging economy. You sit back and say, well, who could it possibly be? Well, let me tell you who it is, and it doesn't take much guesswork. It is us. It is the U.S.

Now, why do I say that? Because right now we are uniquely positioned in history at this moment in time to be the greatest economy the world has ever seen. Why? Because we have been blessed by our Creator with abundant, accessible, and affordable fossil fuels. These can be extracted safely, and that creates thousands of jobs. This can lower our cost per energy unit far below anyplace else in the world and allows us, in fact, to let our wages rise because our cost of producing goes down as far as energy is concerned.

What else we have, if you look just to the north of the district I serve, the Great Lake system is there. Lake Erie is there. Also what is there is one-fifth of the world's freshwater. Also, if you were to look at our land, our tillable soil, the production per acre that our people in agriculture are able to achieve.

So I would ask you then, at this point in time, at this point in history, if we know that really what we need to do is to have a robust and dynamic economy, what would be holding us back? It certainly is not our cost of energy, because we are blessed with energy everywhere. It has been placed there by the Good Lord for us to use. Through new technology we are able to extract it. We are able to heat and cool our homes, to light our homes, to run our factories, to light our streets at night, to do almost anything we want to do at a rate that is lower than anyplace in the world.

In fact, we are at a point right now we don't have to rely on anybody else on this globe other than ourselves. We can be energy independent. We have drinking water that the rest of the world would love to have. And we have the ability to produce, as you know, Mr. Speaker, because of where you come from in California, the ability to produce food for a population that doesn't need to go starving, it doesn't need to look to the rest of the world for help, because we can create it right here, right now, for every single American.

The question becomes then: Why are we where we are at right now? Why do we have the lowest labor participation rate we have had in 35 years? My goodness, when you look at all the assets, when you can look at everything that we have, when you can look at the opportunities we have, when you can look at everything, being there and being within our grasp without too far of a reach to get there, the question becomes: What is holding us up? What is holding us back? What is keeping us from achieving that destiny that we have been granted by the Lord? What is keeping us from that?

Look, I would just say this. There are many, many millions of Americans that are out of work. All you have to do is go out of this Chamber and go down the hall and I can show you a lot of Americans that actually have a job that aren't working. I can show you a Senate that continues to sit on all these jobs bills, on all this legislation that would get America back to work.

I am so sick and tired of hearing about, well, you know, if the House would just do something. I will tell you something; I would suggest this: the President would wear out his fingers on that phone calling HARRY REID; in fact, his left arm would probably go numb from signing all the legislation that could be sitting on his desk right now.

What is holding it up? What is the roadblock? What is keeping us from that pathway to prosperity? Do you know what it is? It is a do-nothing Senate. It is a Senate that sits back and calls the American people liars. It is a Senate that sits back and distorts the facts. It is a Senate that puts out, every day, myths about a House of Representatives not working. It is a Senate that had to go under the gun to pass a budget and say: Do you know what? Here is the deal. You don't pass a budget, we don't pay you.

Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me? You have to threaten them that you are going to cut their pay if they don't pass a budget. Oh, Good Lord. I would like to see us do that in our schools. I would like to see us do that in our homes. I would like to see us do that in our factories and in our businesses in the private sector.

When we have to pass a bill to make them pass a budget, is that where we have reached? Have we reached the depths? Is that how low we have become?

It is a great honor and a privilege to serve in this House. It is a great honor to come before the people and to go home and say: We are working hard for you. We are going to do the best we can do.

But do you know what? It requires a little help. It requires a little help. This system, this system where there are two Chambers, it requires us being able to get things through the House, which we have done. 220 House-passed bills are stuck in a do-nothing Senate right now. It requires some teamwork now. It requires us to truly be the ''united'' States and not the ''divided'' States of America. It requires us to be a body that works for the American people and not for a political party. It requires us to work on an agenda that puts America back to work and does not worry about the next election that is coming up and worries about the new direction this country needs to go in.

It is a responsibility to take advantage of all those assets the Lord has given us; and it is time for the United States to now become the next great emerging economy, one that will be heralded all over the world, one that the rest of the world is looking to and scratching their head and says: My goodness, you have got everything. What is it that you are waiting for?

And the answer, again, is leadership. That leadership has got to take place, and it has got to take place soon.

We will continue to do our job in the House of Representatives. We will continue to push bills forward. We will continue to debate and amend bills. We will continue to pass bills, and we will walk them down the hall to the Senate. But after that, the Senate has to pick these bills up. It has to debate them. It has to amend them. It has to vote on them, and it has to send them down to the White House for the President's final signature.

If we are truly going to get America back to work, then let's get to work. My colleagues in the House have already heard that clarion call and they have done their job. I am just going to yell it down the hallway as we walk out of here tonight: Hey, you all need to get to work because America is waiting for you to lead. Then the phone should be ringing off the hook in Mr. REID's office and at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue as America says it is time to get up off your seat and get the job done.

It is time to quit talking the talk. It is time to walk the walk. It is time to actually do what we know we can do and take advantage of every single asset the Lord has provided for us.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, in closing, thank you so much for allowing us to be here.

Mr. MARINO, always a pleasure to be with you, sir. As we go back to Pennsylvania, we will continue to fight those fights.

Mr. WENSTRUP is gone and also Mr. LAMBORN is gone, but it is good to have colleagues to join us.

I would just tell you this. If there is nobody that sits in this House of Representatives that doesn't want to see America do well, it is just time to get back to work.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am going to yield to Mr. MARINO, and he will finish up.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I am going to hit on two areas here for a moment and ask the American people to get more involved, to call your Representatives, to call your Senators, demand from them that we get legislation passed through both Houses, or at least the legislation is brought to the floor for a vote. The American people deserve that.

As I said earlier, I am a states' rights guy, a constitutionalist, worked in a factory, worked in industry, and then put myself through college and law school.

My father, as I said, gave me a good life. My father was a firefighter, a janitor, a painter, and whatever else he could do to raise money to keep a roof over our heads and to feed us. He always said, if you are going to say something, first of all, to someone, that you look right in their eye and you speak the truth. You don't make it personal, and you base what you say on facts and you support those facts.

I am a true believer that Americans, over the last decade or two, even more so today, have been asked to do more with less. Their budgets are tight. Some are laid off. Some are completely out of jobs. They are working one and two and three part-time jobs. But we have the technology out there to create better jobs.

Also, the American people should demand that government operates the same way. I am a believer that the Federal Government is much too large. The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. It needs to be downsized by at least a third.

□ 1730

From those of us still here, the taxpayers should demand that we do more—do more with less—just like industry does, just like we do at home. The government should operate under that basis.

I am now going to switch back to ObamaCare for a moment. In an article of 2–24–2014 in Forbes magazine, it reads: ''ObamaCare Will Cost 2.9 million or More Jobs a Year.'' I have more health care people—physicians, hospitals, constituents—constantly calling me, saying, What am I going to do? I can't get insurance or I cannot afford this insurance. We, the Republicans, have put a proposal together, and we would like to see that voted on. We would like to see that get over to the Senate.

I also want to bring something else to your attention concerning ObamaCare, and it is concerning our young people, the future of this country. I have met so many bright young people who are out of college but who cannot get a job. They are very talented. They are smart individuals. There was a feature issue put out by Sea Change, and it was a poll. It reads: ''Policy Feature Issue: ObamaCare and Youth—Why Millennials are Right to be Concerned.'' These are young people, particularly those out of college who can't find work.

It reads:

> A recent poll of millennials, released by Harvard's Institute of Politics, found that, today, ''only 41 percent of millennials approve of the President's performance, down 11 points since Harvard's last survey in April.''

I am going to go further on to read:

> With respect to ObamaCare, young Americans are even more suspicious. More than half of the poll's responders believe that health care costs will increase under ObamaCare, with 44 percent indicating that they believe the quality of care will decline. Moreover, almost two-thirds of the respondents say they do not plan to enroll in ObamaCare, which, if accurate, would be extremely problematic for the future viability of the Federal exchanges.

The White House just released that now they have—I heard it on the floor today—almost 7 million. It was 7 million, and then it was over 7 million. Again, the White House has not been consistent with its numbers, and it hasn't, I believe, given all of the information. I read an article here in which it says they are touting that 6 million, 7 million—whatever figure they have come up with—got on the Web site and signed up. There is a big difference there, folks, because, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between signing up and paying. This article stated that most of those individuals who signed up did not pay and that they project that those individuals will not pay. That is what this ObamaCare health care plan was relying on, for young people who are in good health today to pay. Yet they are saying, I am in good health. Why should I bail others out?

Now, let me make this perfectly clear. I believe that everyone should have health care. My daughter has cystic fibrosis, a disease for which there is no cure. The hoops that my wife and I had to jump through and still are jumping through in order to cover my daughter are extraordinary. If there are people out there who cannot afford health care, we, as Americans, have to help them. We have to pay for them. We have to give them health care. That is what America is about. That is what Americans do. We help people. We try to improve the quality of life.

I am asking, Mr. Speaker, that the American people get more involved in the political system, to be aware of what is out there, to hear what is going on. You heard what I stated and what I cited. Check my facts. Follow up. Just don't take what you hear as actual fact and actual truth. Back it up. Ask your elected officials, Where did you get that information? On what did you base it?

It is about time, as my colleague Congressman KELLY said, that we level the playing field, that we take the handcuffs and the restraints off of hardworking taxpayers so they can give their children and their grandchildren a better way of life. I know that we can do that in this country. We are the greatest country in the world. I am a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and I am a member of the NATO alliance. I talk to people who represent 27 other countries about how great America is and about how they look to us and what we can do. Even the countries that do not like us look to America for leadership. They look to America for a better way of life, not only here in the U.S. but around the world.

I have to tell you that every time I drive from Williamsport, Pennsylvania—the 10th Congressional District there—after a week of listening to my constituents and seeing what they go through—my farmers, businesspeople, homemakers, single moms, men who can't find jobs, women who have to work two and three part-time jobs to raise their families—I know we have a responsibility. As I turn on to Independence and as I see the dome of this beautiful building, I can't believe that I am fortunate enough to be here, to represent not only my 10th Congressional District in Pennsylvania but all of America, but it is a responsibility that I chose. It is a responsibility for which I have to continue to fight every day of my life.

I heard one of my colleagues say—and I am going to borrow his line, and I am going to ad-lib it a little bit. He would say to his people as he was speaking to them in a group—and he would stand up and take his glasses off—do you see this line here, this wrinkle here? This was caused by fighting to keep your taxes low. Do you see this wrinkle here? This was caused by making sure that the American people know what we are voting on. This line here was caused to make sure that there is a level playing field, and there is still room on my face for more lines and more wrinkles to keep fighting.

That is what I am going to do—that is what we all should be doing here in the House—to keep fighting for the American people. Down the road, I want someone to say to my children, Do you know something? When your father was a Member of Congress, he did the right thing for the American people and for his constituents.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I think my time is pretty close to the end, is it not?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I will take this brief opportunity to thank my colleagues Mr. MARINO and Mr. WENSTRUP for being here and Mr. LAMBORN for being here and for your indulgence and for the American people's.

We have often said—and we have shared these moments together many times—that we have not just a responsibility but an obligation not just to ourselves and to our current generation but to all of those who came before us for all of the sacrifices that they made—for the 1.6 million men and women in uniform who gave their lives that we could have this moment today and those into the future. We have a responsibility to guarantee to them that we made a conscious decision to make sure that their future would be as secure as the one that we were given.

In having said all of that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. I want to thank my friends, Mr. Speaker, who are both from Pennsylvania, for their superb comments. They are so right on everything they have said.

In following up on those comments, there was an article today from The Washington Free Beacon: ''Employers Say ObamaCare Will Cost Them $5,000 More Per Employee.'' How much more can businesses absorb?

Actually, in the last month, we have been finding out about more groups that are getting money from a health care program informally called ''ObamaCare,'' because it is so hard to call it ''affordable'' when it is not. They are groups that are getting money from the Federal Government that, it sounds like, are using it more as an opportunity to register voters as Democrats when that money could be used to get a pacemaker or to get a mammogram or to replace a knee for some 85-year-old widow who could really use a new knee or a new hip. Yet millions and millions of dollars are being paid to groups to go out and find people and to do all they can to get them signed up so they can say they had 7 million people sign up. They sign them up all over the country, using millions and millions of dollars that should have been for health care, yet they are using it to try to recruit votes for the Democratic Party. Millions and millions and millions of dollars are being spent on hiring big names that young people will recognize to go on television, to go on radio to try and talk people into signing up for health care to pay for the health care of others—because they hope they are in good health and won't need it—and that will fund all of the millions and millions of dollars that they are paying to celebrities to convince them to buy ObamaCare.

We know that insurance companies cannot run like the Federal Government and, certainly, not like the executive branch. They can't just announce 7 million people have bought a product if they have not bought it. I haven't seen any insurance companies come out and say, Do you know what? We have had 1.5 million of these or we have had 3 million of these 7 million. Insurance companies have to know who has paid for their services, who has paid for their products. They can't just go along and announce to the IRS, We had 7 million people who bought our products. We don't know who paid for them. We will probably not know for a year or so. We don't know, but 7.1 million have bought our products, but you are going to have to give us a pass for a year or two until we find out who actually paid for it, and then we will eventually get around to telling you how much we owe you in income tax from all of the people who bought or who didn't buy our insurance. They can't work like that, because the IRS will not let them work like that. The insurance companies have to know how much money has come through their doors. They have to account for it. They can't get into this magical math that the executive branch gets into that 7.1 million have paid for ObamaCare and count that as some kind of glorious thing.

We were told there were over 30 million people who didn't have health care and that that was the whole reason health care, itself, had to be turned upside down. Cancer patients had to be turned away from their cancer treatment providers. Of the people who had the doctors they wanted, who were doing great things for their health—keeping them alive—oh, they had to lose them because we had over 30 million who didn't have health insurance. Then we were told, of the 7.1 million or so who may have acquired health insurance under ObamaCare, there is only a small fraction of them who were people who didn't have insurance, part of the 30 or so million who didn't have insurance.

If you are going to cut off people's cancer treatments and if you are going to cut off their ability to get the health care they need—cut off their ability to go to the cancer hospitals they have been going to for treatment—if you are going to basically bring people's lives to an early end because we have got to help those 30 million or so who don't have insurance, then wouldn't you want to get the 30 million signed up? Why are you happy that it is only, maybe, 1 million or 2 million or many fewer who didn't have insurance who have signed up? If it is a fraction of the 7 million who have actually paid, and if it is an even smaller part of the fraction who paid who didn't have health insurance before and who were part of the 30-plus million, then how is that a good thing?

Why did every Democrat in the House and in the Senate who thought it was such a good idea without a single Republican's input—we didn't get to have any input in ObamaCare. They shoved it through this body and down the throats of the American people. They shoved it through the Senate, and they had to do it quickly before Scott Brown ended up in office, in having that seat. Tragically, they shoved it through without any bipartisan assistance, so nearly half of Americans were not represented in the creation of that bill.

□ 1745

It wasn't done on C–SPAN, as the candidate for President, Senator Obama, had promised. It was done in back rooms at the White House, here. Who knows where. We don't even know who was present.

We know there were some union leaders that met with the President about it, without anybody there to record what was said. We know that they ended up wanting every health care worker eventually to be a union member because their numbers have declined everywhere except in the area of government workers, where Franklin Roosevelt said we should never even have government unions.

So if the 30-plus million who purportedly didn't have health insurance were the real important reason we had to turn health care upside down, that we had to cut $716 billion from Medicare, so seniors are not going to be able to get care they would have before ObamaCare was passed, if we had to turn away seniors from health care they need just for those 30-plus million that don't have insurance, then why should we be happy that maybe only one-thirtieth or so of that has signed up for insurance?

In the 4 years since ObamaCare passed, the best they could do is sign up 1 million of the 30 or so million that didn't have insurance. That is a good thing?

Most Americans are ready to have some real reform, like having competition. If you need an MRI, you shouldn't have to do like one of the people in my office who was in Boston and under RomneyCare at the time.

The President said they modeled ObamaCare after RomneyCare. She was in a car wreck and couldn't get an MRI for a month or so after the wreck, so she had to fly back to Texas and get an MRI to find out she had broken bones.

This is the kind of care we are heading to. You get put on a list. This is what happens in England and Canada, and that is coming to a health care provider near you. You will get on the list. Why? Because we are told 30 million people didn't have health insurance.

Well, real reform would have made sure not that everybody had insurance, but that they had health care that was affordable and that they could get all the health care they needed and that it was affordable.

In some cases, it would have been a whole lot cheaper than having insurance. Also, having catastrophic insurance for the things you can't afford. Those were some reforms that we wanted to make.

Most of us were okay with fixing a problem called preexisting conditions, which had allowed some insurance companies to really screw over people unfairly. We offered to address that in a bipartisan manner, but the Democrats didn't want our input.

They said they didn't need it. They had the votes without it. They didn't care what we wanted. They didn't care what our constituents thought was a good idea. So we got ObamaCare, and it is wreaking havoc across the country. It is time to repeal it.

So we are told that, under this administration and under those two glorious years when the Democrats had the White House, the House, and the Senate, full control of all the powers here in Washington—and what did they put in motion in 2009 with control of the House, the Senate, and the White House?

Well, now, we find out—the President admitted this last September. It didn't get much press at all, if any, from the mainstream because, of course, they got the President elected, and so they have got to cover for him. We understand that.

But this is staggering. It has never ever happened before in American history. When the President, the Democratic House, and the Democratic Senate put these things in motion, 95 percent of all of the income made in America went to the top 1 percent of Americans. The top 1 percent of income earners in America got 95 percent of the income. Wow.

We talk about how we have really got to help the poor and we have really got to help the middle class, and then we find out the actions of this Democratic-controlled House, Democratic-controlled Senate, and Democratic-controlled White House put in motion the mechanics to ensure that 95 percent of all the income for those years—2009 until it was admitted last September—went to the top 1 percent income earners. Staggering.

Why isn't there more in the mainstream about it? They love to go after the wealthy. Well, because these wealthy are about 70 or 80 percent of the people on Wall Street who donate to Democrats over Republicans. People don't get that. It is shocking.

But it is about 4 to 1 that donations from executives and their spouses on Wall Street go to Democratic candidates.

It is shocking, I know, for some people to come to the realization that most of the wealthiest people in America are Democrats, and they are ready to pull up the ladder behind them. They are thrilled to have a President that will talk about the fat cats.

They don't mind being called fat cats, when they are making 95 percent of all the income in America, they have got a President that talks about the poor and the middle class, and the ones he has helped like nobody else are the ultrawealthy in America.

At some point, people are going to figure this out. At some point, the middle class and the poor are going to say: You know what? I have been supporting Democrats all these years, and now, 95 percent of all the income is going to the top 1 percent. How is that a good thing? Why should I keep supporting the party that is sending 95 percent of the income to the top 1 percent and the Wall Street fat cats have gotten richer than they ever have in their lives?

I don't mind people getting wealthy, but not at the expense of the whole country, and you look at the separation of the wealthy and the middle class. It has never been so dramatically far apart as it is now under this President, with what was set in motion with ObamaCare and all these things that this administration has done.

Crony capitalism has been amazing. How? You can pay over $600 billion to your buddies that you have known for years to create a Web site. Oh, they forgot to do security. That is going to cost people billions of dollars to try to save their own identity information that has now been out there on an insecure Web site.

You have a Web site that keeps breaking down. Why? Because crony capitalism kicked in and people that are buddies got the contract.

It is just like British Petroleum should have never been allowed to continue drilling in the Gulf of Mexico, but they were buddies with the administration. At the time the Deepwater Horizon blew out, I read that they had people from BP talking to John Kerry about coming out in support of cap-and-trade, so they didn't want to shut them down.

They had hundreds and hundreds of egregious safety violations, compared to others like Exxon and Shell. I think they had one or two or none.

Well, they should never have been allowed to operate. Why? Because crony capitalism is alive and well in this administration and with Democrats in control. Yes, we will let them keep operating. Never mind they are the unsafe drillers in the Gulf of Mexico. That is okay because they are on our side.

America is sick of cronyism. They are sick of favoritism. We don't begrudge anybody getting wealthy, but what we begrudge is gaming the system so the middle class and the poor have no chance because the ladder has been pulled up behind ultrawealthy Democrats by a Democratic administration, and it continues.

So employers are saying ObamaCare will cost them $5,000 more per employee. This has got to stop. We have got to repeal ObamaCare and have true health care reform. I know some people say: well, you don't have any ideas.

Are you kidding? The last I saw, there were about 80 different bills—ideas for reform; and what I really want to see us do is, once we get ObamaCare repealed, let's have the full debate. Let's have it on C–SPAN.

Like Candidate Obama said, let's let America see who is really standing up for them and who is cutting those sweetheart deals with unions, who is cutting the sweetheart deals with AARP, the big pharmaceuticals, the AMA, the AHA; who is cutting those big deals behind the scenes in private rooms, so that mainstream America sees 95 percent of the income going to 1 percent, the most wealthy?

Let them see that. I welcome that. We have got to repeal ObamaCare. We have got to.

There is a book Glenn Beck had pointed out a week or so ago. I had not seen it before. It was copyrighted originally in 1942. The Library of Congress has this book. It is ''The Road We Are Traveling.'' It is interesting.

He basically talks about the ways that socialism and communism have failed. Really, socialism and communism are bad words, so you don't want to call it that. We know now it is called progressivism.

Here, at page 95, he talks about:

> In war and peace, boom and depression, the march towards centralized, collective controls has continued. Planning has often been identified with socialism. Yet orthodox socialists themselves are far from pleased with the collectivism practiced in Russia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and they look with grave suspicion on the New Deal. Something has appeared which nobody anticipated, nobody wanted, and nobody really understands.

This was written in 1942.

> Mr. James Burnham has called it the ''managerial revolution,'' in the first intelligent attempt to understand it which I have seen. Many more studies will be needed before the mystery is cleared up. We have something called ''X,'' which is displacing the system of free enterprise, all over the world. If we do not know yet what to call it, we can at least describe its major characteristics. They include, in most countries, free enterprise into ''X.''

He goes on and lists these things. Again, this is 1942. It is interesting.

You can still find on the Internet, Mr. Speaker, a presentation about President Obama from, obviously, a supportive Obama group, called ''The Road We've Traveled.'' It appears to be a clear takeoff from ''The Road We Are Traveling'' that was written in 1942.

But here is what is described as this new progressive ideal that we are moving toward that he was excited about in 1942 under President Roosevelt and these characteristics of what they call X because they know socialism and communism doesn't go over well. Progressivism sounds a lot better.

□ 1800

But here is this X, a strong centralized government, an executive arm

growing at the expense of the legislative and judicial arms. In some countries, power is consolidated in a dictator issuing decrees.

Well, we have certainly seen, Mr. Speaker, the legislative and judicial arms compromised in this trilateral government, which the executive arm has even said, and got a standing ovation in here, basically, that he will usurp legislative power if we don't use it. It turns out that was an aim that was set out for progressives, socialists, X, as he called it, back in 1942.

He goes on, these are the other things that we are trying to shoot for, according to him: control of banking, credit, and security exchanges by the government.

Well, we know under the Democrat control of the House and the Senate and the White House, the Federal Government took control of all student loans. What a great thing.

Thank God that my kids, we were able to get student loans for them before I had to go begging to a Democratic administration, because it isn't difficult to figure out how easily corruptible it is when the government controls who gets to get a college loan and who doesn't.

So this was set out as what they were shooting for back in 1942. He says also:

> The underwriting of employment by the government, either through armaments or public works.
>
> The underwriting of Social Security by the government, old-age pensions, mothers' pensions, unemployment insurance and the like.

Well, we have seen that all come to pass since 1942, just as this Progressive had hoped.

> The underwriting of food, housing, medical care, by the government. The United States is already experimenting with providing these essentials. Other nations are far along the road.

This Progressive says he is also shooting for:

> The use of deficit spending technique to finance these underwritings. The annually balanced budget has lost its old-time sanctity.
>
> The control of foreign trade by the government, with increasing emphasis on bilateral agreements and barter deals.
>
> The control of natural resources, with increasing emphasis on self-sufficiency.

We have seen the government, with every passing month, take more and more control of natural resources. And since Texas is doing so well, producing more oil, more natural gas than ever, basically, the Federal Government is, in effect, declaring war on Texas. Economically, they have sicced the EPA after Texas. They want to do everything they can to destroy any private resource production.

It just sounds like somebody has had this book, and that the book, ''The Road We Are Traveling,'' fits right nicely in the road the President's supporters say he has traveled or we have traveled.

This goal's progressive—they call it X in the book, but clearly it is the progressive. They want control of transportation, railway, highway, airway, waterway. Well, that has progressed right nicely since 1942. They want control of all agriculture production. Well, we have certainly seen that take effect as well; control of labor organizations, often to the point of prohibiting strikes.

Now, that is something we haven't seen, but there really hasn't been a need, because when the President, as this President did, issues an executive order that even the IRS cannot enact policies until they have a private meeting with the head of the labor union to work things out behind private doors and it can't be recorded and nobody can know what they discuss, there is really not much reason for strikes. When top labor union heads sit down with the President in a private meeting about health care before they come out with ObamaCare and nobody gets to know what was said and done, why do you need strikes? The heads of the labor unions are working hand-in-hand with the executive branch.

In this book, X, which clearly is progressivism, shoots for:

> The enlistment of young men and women in youth corps devoted to health, discipline, community service and ideologies consistent with those of the authorities. The CCC camps have just inaugurated military drill.

Well, it is also interesting that in ObamaCare, in my copy, at the beginning of Page 1312, it talked about—or section 1312, but it talked about the new President's Officer and Noncommissioned Officer Corps, created under a health care bill for international health emergency or national emergencies, and they can be called up involuntarily at the present. So it sounds like that fits right into what was sought as the road to travel.

Then here is another:

> Heavy taxation, with especial emphasis on the estates and incomes of the rich.

Well, we have certainly heard that enough.

He goes on and says:

> Not much ''taking over'' of property or industries in the old socialistic sense. The formula appears to be control without ownership. It is interesting to recall that the same formula is used by the management of great corporations in depriving stockholders of power.

And last:

> The state control of communications and propaganda.

We have certainly seen that take effect since 1942. And we have people in the House and Senate, my Democratic friends—some of my Democratic friends—that want even more control through the FCC and other government entities to control people's thoughts and what they can put out on the air. Let the government control all of that. It really is outrageous what is happening.

In any event, it appears that ''The Road We Are Traveling,'' written in 1942, by Stuart Chase, setting out what he called X, because socialism, communism were not as popular, are the road that we have traveled. It is time to give the people their power back.

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

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the honor and privilege to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and to follow my good friend, the gentleman from Texas, Judge Gohmert, in this presentation here tonight.

I have been watching forward with increasing concern about some of the potential decisions that might be made here in this House of Representatives. We have been through some long immigration debates in this saga of what happens to the future and the destiny of the United States of America. It is something that goes back, I will say, in the modern era, to sometime January 5, 2004, when then-President George Bush gave his speech that launched their effort to advance ''comprehensive immigration reform.''

Mr. Speaker, I had my discussion with the President's west wing at that time, meaning west wing of the White House. I advised them—I should say, I advised him that what you have described here is amnesty. However you want to redefine it, however you want to try to call it comprehensive immigration reform, in the end, amnesty is amnesty. The American people will know what amnesty is, and they will reject amnesty because it is bad policy for our country.

Well, since that time, I will say that that has proven to be true in each one of these national debates that we have had and these waves of national debates that we have had.

That debate that took place in 2005—excuse me, 2004 into 2005 and beyond, when there were, at times, tens of thousands of people, often coming in on buses wearing identical white T-shirts, pressing Congress to suspend the rule of law and give them a special path to citizenship. Through that, this discussion has pivoted on what I called, at the time, the scarlet letter A, called amnesty.

The definition of ''amnesty,'' it comes in different forms. Black's Law has one. There are a couple of other definitions for ''amnesty.'' But the practical definition that applies in this political arena that we are in, this cultural American arena that we are in, Mr. Speaker, is this: to grant amnesty is to pardon immigration lawbreakers and reward them with the objective of their crime.

Now, the objective of their crime—and in most cases it is a crime. It is not necessarily someone who is unlawfully present in the United States or necessarily guilty of committing a

crime, but it is true in most cases. In any case, we don't always know the objective of their crime, whether it is to come into the United States to get a job and seek a better life and take care of their family. If they cross the border illegally, that is a crime. If they come in legally and overstay their visa, then that is a violation, a civil misdemeanor. And yet, if they go to work in this country, they have to fraudulently misrepresent themselves in order to legally work, then in that case, it is often document fraud, and that is also a crime.

So the objective of their crime may have been a job; it may have been a home; it may have been what is planned to be and often is a better life; and it might be someone coming in here with a different kind of intention. We know that coming across our southern border we have had, I will say, scores of people, at a minimum, who are persons of interest from nations of interest.

Now, that is the verbiage that gets used in our security personnel. If they are from a nation of interest, that is a nation that is in the list, having been a nation that spawns terrorists. If they are a person of interest, they are a person from that nation that is a nation of interest that spawns terrorists.

So you have got kind of a double marker here. Somebody shows up coming across our southern border and they are from Yemen, for example, they are going to be a person of interest from a nation of interest, which means we should pay more attention to that because they are a risk to the security of United States because that is a place that terrorists come from in the records that we have and the data that we know. It doesn't mean that everybody that might come across our southern border from Yemen is a terrorist. It means, though, just what the definition is. This happens on a regular basis.

When anyone is interdicted, apprehended, coming across our border who is a person of interest from a nation of interest, they are turned over, as soon as possible, to the FBI. That act immediately closes the case as far as public discussion is concerned because now it is classified. So, if they are continually classifying the reports and any prosecutions and how we handle persons of interest from nations of interest, that means, Mr. Speaker, that we don't know how many people have been caught coming into the United States with ill will towards us or suspicion of ill will towards us. That is classified.

What I know is I know of seven cases where we have interdicted a person of interest from a nation of interest. And the reason I know about them is because, having spent time on the border, been down there when a person of that definition is interdicted and I gain knowledge of that circumstance, same business day, early enough in the day and close enough to the incident that they can tell me about it before that individual or individuals are handed over to the FBI where the case becomes classified.

This Congress doesn't seem to be aware that this circumstance exists at all, so they whistle through the graveyard. And it may be a more appropriate explanation than I had actually thought when I started to say it, whistling through the graveyard here on what could be going on inside the United States when people come across the border who are from sources that we normally identify as sources for terrorism. That is one piece.

Another is, 80 to 90 percent of the illegal drugs consumed in America come from or through Mexico. It isn't all their fault. One is that some of those drugs are produced and smuggled into Mexico and then into the United States. Another is there is a huge demand in the United States for illegal drugs. The value of that marketplace in this country could well be over $60 billion. That is 60 billion with a b. But even the Drug Enforcement doesn't know that number, and they aren't comfortable producing that number. That number actually comes from a media report.

In any case, so we have persons of interest from nations of interest. We have 80 to 90 percent of the illegal drugs coming from or through to Mexico. It is a threat to our country, a threat to our society.

And on top of that, we have a border that remains porous. We have a President whose administration has been announcing that he has been deporting record numbers of people, but when you look at the numbers, you find out that he is double counting and he has changed the definition of ''removals.''

□ 1815

He is counting those who are turned back at the border, those who are caught crossing the border that do a voluntary return to avoid it going on their record so that they can avoiding being subject to the 3- or 10-year bar and double-counting some of those that are turned back.

So here are the real numbers, and it is this: That the lead deportations that actually took place in our modern era under—not the George Bush administration, Mr. Speaker—but they took place under the Bill Clinton administration in the year 2000 when there was some number above 1.8 million removals from the country. And we have a President now, under Barack Obama, down around 450,000 removals from the country, a long, long ways from being what they sometimes accept the definition of him as being the Deporter-in-Chief.

No President has taken the position that this President has, that he picks and chooses the laws that he wants to enforce and ignores the rest. No President has so broadly gone out there and violated the limitations in article two of the Constitution.

Just within immigration itself, when the Morton Memos came out—and those are the memos that created DACA, which is the executive amnesty that was produced and signed by Janet Napolitano, then the Secretary of Homeland Security, who came before the Judiciary Committee, Mr. Speaker, and alleged repeatedly that they had prosecutorial discretion, that they don't have the resources to enforce every law, therefore, they have to enforce with the best effect of the resources that they have, and stated: We have prosecutorial discretion, and it is on an individual basis only, an individual basis only. She repeated it in her testimony under oath before the Judiciary Committee, and I had in front of me at the time the document that describes this, and in a page and about a third of single-spaced 12-point type, it said, used the term ''on an individual basis only,'' by my count, in memory, seven times.

Now why would this administration remind Members of Congress, especially members of the Judiciary Committee, that they were executing prosecutorial discretion by waiving the application of the law to hundreds of thousands of people altogether under this definition of ''on an individual basis only''? We know they didn't deal with them on an individual basis only.

When you read that report and you go through and draw a couple of x's and o's, you come to this conclusion: that Homeland Security, under the Morton Memos of ICE, created four different classes of people, and they are broadly exempted from the law by the definitions of the classes of people created in the very memo that says, seven times ''on an individual basis only.''

This was what I thought was a lame effort to try to cloak themselves in prosecutorial discretion when there is no such thing. Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize this. There is no such thing as prosecutorial discretion outside of an individual basis only. It only can be applied on an individual basis. It cannot be applied to classes or groups of people because everyone that is paying attention to law, the structure of law, knows that the law defines classes and groups of people, and the exemptions under prosecutorial discretion have to be justified, justifiable, and on an individual basis only. This administration didn't adhere to that, and they know it. And, Mr. Speaker, they strategized around it so that they could grant what is the equivalent of executive amnesty to hundreds of thousands of people.

Now Senator JEFF SESSIONS has released a report a little over a week ago, and I want to thank him and his staff for the work that they have done to dig the details out of this network of regulations and rules and executive edicts to come down to this point: that the application of the law almost completely exempts the law, itself, which requires those encountered by immigration officials who are unlawfully present in the United States to be placed into removal proceedings. That is the law.

It is real clear that the DACA documents, the Morton Memos, direct ICE to violate the very law that they have taken an oath to uphold, and that is the requirement that they place into removal proceedings those whom they may encounter who are unlawfully present in the United States.

The President has ordered that they not do so, which violates their oath to the Constitution, their fidelity to the law, and their fidelity to the rule of law, and it usurps the directive from Congress, which sets up immigration law here in the United States of America.

This is an appalling assault on our Constitution and on the rule of law and on the separation of powers, and the administration knows it. And I am not drawing this as an assumption, Mr. Speaker. I am drawing this from this understanding.

The President has told us on a number of occasions that he taught constitutional law as an adjunct professor at the University of Chicago's School of Law for 10 years. Ten years of teaching the Constitution means you can't avoid coming across these constitutional requirements, and you can't avoid addressing the separation of powers that are distinct between articles one, two, and three of our Constitution. And if we wondered if somehow the President could have taught con law for a decade and not run across the separation of powers concept, or the authority that is granted to the Congress: All legislative powers shall be vested in the body of the United States Congress, the legislative body in article one. All powers, all legislative powers. The President had to have taught that for 10 years. I don't think you can take con law and not encounter that principle. And he didn't.

He didn't avoid that principle. In fact, he was teaching it as recently as March 28, 2011, when he was speaking to a high school class at a high school here in Washington, D.C., when he said to them: You want me to enact the DREAM Act by executive order. But I am here to tell you that you have studied this, and you know that the Congress doesn't allow that. I don't have the authority to implement the DREAM Act by executive order because—and he said this this way—Congress writes the laws; the judicial branch interprets the laws; and my job is to enforce them. It is a very compact and succinct and, I think, a clear understanding of the three branches of government embodied in articles one, two, and three.

So it is clear not only did the President teach this very principle for a decade, but he—and I don't want to say ''lectured,'' but he gave a speech on it to a high school class and said, I cannot implement this by an executive order or fiat; it is exclusively reserved for Congress. Some months later, though, apparently the idea was stuck in the head of the President of the United States, and by executive fiat, he did do just what had he said publicly he didn't have the authority to do. That is just on the immigration piece.

We could go on through ObamaCare—the 38, 39, or more different changes that have been applied to ObamaCare. Now, I don't assert, Mr. Speaker, that they are all unconstitutional moves on the part of the President, but some of them are so clearly unconstitutional that it cannot be argued with a straight face if you know anything about the Constitution whatsoever.

The clearest, the starkest was, the directive in ObamaCare that the employer mandate shall be implemented in each month after December of 2013. That is real clear. But the President announced months ago, we are going to delay the employer mandate for another year. They are going to add another year to the implementation date. So it is as if the President—you know he said he had a pen and a cell phone. It was as if the President took his pen, went to page whatever it is in the 2,700 pages of ObamaCare, and went in there—it would be a red pen, not a blue one—and drew a line through the number that said 2013, and in each month after December of 2013, drew a line through that and just changed the number 13 to the number 2014.

Now, the President does not have the authority to do that. If he does, then the work of this Congress is meaningless, and it would never have a relation to anything, except we would be a debate body here. So we could be in the business of deciding whether we side for or against the President without any power whatsoever. If the President continues to exert this authority—it is unconstitutional, it is a violation of his constitutional authorities and the separation of power. There are multiple lawsuits that are working their way through the courts, and I think that the administration has done a calculation of, they are not going to catch up with us before the President's term is over and he goes off into his happy perpetual golfing land, that he might.

But this immigration issue sets the destiny for America. It is not a policy like ObamaCare, which is the largest social movement in my adult lifetime, social piece of legislation, social engineering piece of legislation. It is a takeover of a huge percentage of our economy, some say as much as 17 percent of our economy. It is a directive that orders American citizens, for the first time, to buy a product that is produced and specified by the Federal Government or be fined and punished by the Internal Revenue Service.

That is where we are with ObamaCare. That is what it does to this God-given liberty and says, You shall be a subject of the State, and you will buy a product that is approved by the Federal Government. And if you fail to do what we have told you to do, ordered you to do, then we are going to fine you and punish you, and we are going to use the Internal Revenue Service to chase you down and dun you for that money.

Now, that is an appalling thing to a free people. But we should think of that in the context of, first of all, if the Federal Government can order you to buy an insurance policy, they can order you to buy an automobile, they can order you to buy a washing machine, they can order you to go to the grocery store and buy broccoli. They can forbid you from buying—let's just say butter, or whatever it is that the First Lady might think is not the healthy diet for the American people. By the way, they are already dictating the calorie limitations to our kids in school.

This country has become not so much the land of the free any longer. It has become a land where they seek to micromanage every aspect of our lives. It has started. It is going down that way.

But if the White House can configure a bill and pass it through this Congress by hook, crook, and legislative shenanigans, and, in the process of making the deal to get the votes to get it passed, promise a Member of Congress—let's just say a Member of Congress from Michigan—that, never fear if the language that you would like to have doesn't become part of the law, the President will sign an executive order to amend ObamaCare after the bill is signed if the agreement that they make here doesn't follow through in the final piece of legislation that comes from the Senate.

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, the very idea that the President would promise to amend a bill? He has no authority to amend any bill whatsoever. He has no authority to amend any legislation whatsoever. He has no authority to amend existing U.S. Code of any kind whatsoever.

Now he can influence the executive branch to pass a rule, to publish that rule and take it out for comments. And through the authority granted to the executive branch through the Administrative Procedures Act, they can have the force and effect of law. But they can't change law. They can't amend law. And they cannot write a rule that changes the directive language that is part of the law. The law is the law. The Constitution is the foundation for this Republic, and the laws that are passed by it are supreme, not the President.

So we have this usurpation of congressional authority from the President. We have an ObamaCare piece of legislation that is a taking of American liberty. And we have a President that changes it willy-nilly at will. And not an ability in this Congress to put the brakes on that. But maybe, just maybe the American people will go to the polls in November and bring it around the other way. In 2016, there will be a new President elected. That President must run on adhering to, respecting, and reverting our country back to this Constitution.

But this country, the bedrock underneath our Constitution is free and fair elections, confidence that they are free and fair and legitimate. The foundation

is the Constitution. The Declaration is the promise; the Constitution is the fulfillment.

As we sit here in this most blessed country in the history of the world, Mr. Speaker, we are watching it be taken apart by executive fiat and executive edict piece by piece. ObamaCare changed 30-some times. Immigration changed five or six times. And a President who threatens to go out and do that again, one who suspended Welfare to Work when it was written specifically to tighten up, that a President couldn't suspend the work component of Welfare to Work. And No Child Left Behind, suspended by the application of waivers that go on because he didn't agree with the policy and he thought he had a better policy, but he didn't want to come to Congress because Congress might not think it is a better policy.

This President doesn't negotiate with this Congress. He doesn't work in a cooperative fashion. He imposes the whim of the White House on the American people.

□ 1830

This Congress went through a government shutdown to assert its will and came in to second place on that because not enough Members of this Congress had the will. We watched the Constitution be eroded because of that lack of will.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I see coming is an effort to grant more amnesty through the legislative process instead of, this time, the executive fiat or executive edict or executive overreach process, and the President threatens to use his pen more to grant more amnesty if we don't pass it here in the House.

We have some misguided people on my side of the aisle that ought to be better thinkers than they are. I understand why Democrats are for amnesty almost universally because they get the big political benefit from it.

They have been discouraging me for years from bringing up this topic, that Democrats have long known, Mr. Speaker, that a significant majority, 2 to 1, 3 to 1, 5 to 1—there are even statistics out there of 8 to 1—that newly arriving immigrants, if given an opportunity to vote, are going to vote in those kind of statistics at least 2 to 1 for Democrats.

Here is a King axiom, Mr. Speaker, that newly arriving immigrants will assimilate into the politics of the locale where they arrive because they don't know what party they are when they get here.

They will simply associate with their neighbors, their friends, and their family. When they go to political events, if they go, they will go with them, encouraged by them, and when they go to the polls, they are going to take their first advice.

I look down through my neighborhood. We have fourth generation FDR Democrats that by heritage are Democrats, by philosophy are Republicans, but they don't change, necessarily, their voting stripes.

If someone thinks I am wrong about this, they could go to Boston, and they could find me an Irish Catholic Republican. I am sure one of them exists. I understand there are two. But the heritage of inheriting the politics of the locale where you arrive as a newly arriving immigrant is a big part of this.

That is what drives Democrats. It is not about truth, justice, and the American way. It is not about justice and equity. It is not about fairness. It is about political power, and it is about Democrats seeking to expand the dependency class in America because that expands their political class and their political leverage at the expense of the Constitution, the rule of law, safety in the streets of America, and at the expense of the destiny of our country.

We need to think this through much more deeply. We need to look ahead, Mr. Speaker. We need to see that, if we make an immigration decision in this Congress, we are going to live with that decision and our children and our grandchildren. Every succeeding generation lives with the decisions that we make here on immigration.

It is different than ObamaCare. ObamaCare is bad. It is a horrible usurpation of God-given American liberty. It can be repealed. It can even be, in components, diminished in its negative effects by some tweaks that we could do, and I have got some on the books that I will be advancing here in the upcoming week; but we could repeal ObamaCare.

We could undo it. We could recover. We could even somehow struggle through a massive amendment of it and come out with a product that the American people could live with and still have a measure of freedom; but if we get the immigration question wrong, there is no going back to repeal. There is no going back to change. There is no going back to undo what would be done by the colossal mistake of amnesty.

Whatever you think about demographics, whatever you think about political power, and whatever you think about economics, there is an essential pillar of American exceptionalism that we can't do without and still be a great country. It is called the rule of law.

The rule of law means that the law has to treat everyone equally. Justice must be blind. Lady Justice stands there with the scales in her hands, balanced, and most of the time, you will see her with a blindfold on because Justice needs to be blind and treat everyone equally. If we lose the rule of law, we will never be able to restore it again.

If we sacrifice the rule of law in a misguided idea that, somehow, our sympathy for people that want a better life—and by the way, there are some 6 billion of them on the planet that want a better life—if our idea that our sympathy for people that want a better life is more important than our fidelity to the rule of law, then we have sacrificed the core of the greatness of America because our hearts overruled our heads.

I am not surprised when Democrats do that. That is what they are in business to do, is have their hearts overrule their heads; but we can't let that happen on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, not even—not even—for someone who came into the United States illegally, misrepresented themselves to get into the United States military, put on a uniform, took an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States and maybe, just maybe, risked their life in a performance of that duty.

They have already violated our laws, they have already misrepresented themselves, and they have already defrauded the Department of Defense.

Any bill that might be attached to a National Defense Authorization Act or comes to this floor in any form that rewards someone who has defrauded the Department of Defense or the United States—whether or not they have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution, it is a false oath because they have given their false word—any bill like that needs to be met with the full rejection of the full vigor of the rule of law here in the floor of the United States Congress.

That includes those things that are coming out now in the press today. We don't need to have an intense fight over immigration. We have an election coming up in November.

We have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution and have defended it, generally, from this side of the aisle and not exclusively, Mr. Speaker.

We have an obligation to defend that rule of law, preserve the sovereignty of America, and refuse to reward lawbreakers. If we reward lawbreakers, we get more lawbreakers. We need fewer lawbreakers, not more.

I will defend my oath to this Constitution and the rule of law, and I will encourage and challenge all of my colleagues to do the same.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending funeral in district.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 4152. An act to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1557. An Act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize support for graduate medical education programs in children's hospitals.

S. 2183. United States international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, April 3, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

5149. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Basel III Conforming Amendments Related to Cross-References, Subordinated Debt and Limits Based on Regulatory Capital [Docket ID: OCC-2014-0004] (RIN: 1557-AD73) received March 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

5150. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Annual Events Requiring Safety Zones in the Captain of the Port Lake Michigan Zone [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1033] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received March 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5151. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Regulated Navigation Area; Southern Oahu Tsunami Vessel Evacuation Honolulu, HI [Docket No.: USCG-2012-0080] (RIN: 1625-AA11) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5152. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Havasu Triathlon; Lake Havasu, AZ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0004] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5153. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: Maintenance Dredging 35-Foot Channel and Rock Removal; Portland Harbor, Portland, ME [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0010] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5154. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Eleventh Coast Guard District Annual Fireworks Events [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0362] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5155. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Inner Harbor Navigational Canal, New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0562] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5156. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Terrebonne Bayou, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1072] (RIN: 1625-AA09) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5157. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Great Lakes Pilotage Rate — 2014 Annual Review and Adjustment [USCG-2013-0534] (RIN: 1625-AC07) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5158. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Tranpsortation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Minimum Altitudes for Use of Autopilots [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1059; Amdts. No. 121-368, 125-63, 135-128] (RIN: 2120-AK11) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5159. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd & Co. KG Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0352; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-14-AD; Amendment 39-17750; AD 2014-03-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5160. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Christiansted, St. Croix, VI [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0757; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASO-19] received March 10, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5161. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Various Restricted Category Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0736; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-013-AD; Amendment 39-17747; AD 2014-03-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5162. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0791; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-026-AD; Amendment 39-17745; AD 2014-03-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5163. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0210; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-053-AD; Amendment 39-17744; AD 2014-03-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5164. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0054; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-001-AD; Amendment 39-17754; AD 2014-03-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5165. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (Bell) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0735; Directorate Identifier 2013-SW-014-AD; Amendment 39-17748; AD 2014-03-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5166. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; ATR — GIE Avions de Transport Regional Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0799; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-153-AD; Amendment 39-17746; AD 2014-03-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5167. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Type certificate currently held by Eurocopter France) [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0737; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-111-AD; Amendment 39-17739; AD 2014-03-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5168. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Morrisville, VT [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0683; Airspace Docket No. 13-ANE-1] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5169. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; McMinniville, TN [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0682; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASO-17] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5170. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Kailua-Kona, HI [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0622; Airspace Docket No. 10-AWP-10] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5171. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace, Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Salinas, CA [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0708; Airspace Docket No. 13-AWP-11] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5172. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Grand Forks, ND [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0950; Airspace Docket No. 13-AGL-34] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5173. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of the Dallas/Fort Worth Class B Airspace Area; TX [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1168; Airspace Docket No. 07-AWA-3] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.

801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5174. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes; Atlanta, GA [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0891; Airspace Docket No. 12-ASO-37] received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5175. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0632; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-045-AD; Amendment 39-17752; AD 2014-03-14] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5176. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Use of Additional Portable Oxygen Concentrators on Board Aircraft [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1013; Amdt. No. 121-367] (RIN: 2120-AK-35) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5177. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Prohibition on Personal Use of Electronic Devices on the Flight Deck [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0929; Amdt. No. 121-369] (RIN: 2120-AJ17) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5178. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Extension of Import Restrictions on Archaeological and Ecclesiastical Ethnological Materials from Honduras [CBP Dec. 14-03] (RIN: 1515-AE00) received March 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1425. A bill to amend the Marine Debris Act to better address severe marine debris events, and for other purposes (Rept. 113–398, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1491. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to provide certain funds to eligible entities for activities undertaken to address the marine debris impacts of the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113–399, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GERLACH (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REED, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. LEWIS):

H.R. 4365. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROKITA (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York):

H.R. 4366. A bill to strengthen the Federal education research system to make research and evaluations more timely and relevant to State and local needs in order to increase student achievement; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4367. A bill to prohibit the National Telecommunications and Information Administration from relinquishing responsibilities with respect to Internet domain name functions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIMM (for himself, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. JOYCE):

H.R. 4368. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from implementing proposed policy changes that would permit passengers to carry small, non-locking knives on aircraft; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 4369. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require payment to each county of a portion of mining royalties received for mining operations in such county, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. WALORSKI (for herself, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. NUGENT):

H.R. 4370. A bill to improve the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs by directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain actions to improve the transparency and the governance of the information security program of the Department, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 4371. A bill to redesignate the Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area in California as the Johnson Valley National Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4372. A bill to require the President to make publicly available an annual report on the use of targeted lethal force by remotely-piloted aircraft; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Ms. HAHN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. CHU, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. VELA, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. MORAN):

H.R. 4373. A bill to improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4374. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adopt and implement a standard identification protocol for use in the tracking and procurement of biological implants by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARBER (for himself, Mr. SALMON, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona):

H.R. 4375. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 North Taylor Lane in Patagonia, Arizona, as the ''Jim Kolbe Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4376. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify safe harbor requirements applicable to automatic contribution arrangements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself and Mr. CROWLEY):

H.R. 4377. A bill to place conditions on assistance to the Government of Burma; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 4378. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue to Federal agencies guidelines for developing procedures and requirements relating to certain primary care Federal health professionals completing continuing medical education on nutrition and to require Federal agencies to submit annual reports relating to such guidelines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4379. A bill to prohibit any appropriation of funds for the National Labor Relations Board; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. STOCKMAN:

H.R. 4380. A bill to prohibit gun confiscation and registration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STOCKMAN:

H.R. 4381. A bill to protect the privacy of individuals' personal genetic information and other personal identifier information; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE (for himself and Mr. CUELLAR):

H.R. 4382. A bill to streamline the collection and distribution of government information; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself and Mr. STIVERS):

H. Res. 535. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''Financial Literacy Month''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself and Mr. WELCH):

H. Res. 536. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that telephone service must be improved in rural areas of the United States and that no entity may unreasonably discriminate against telephone users in those areas; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers

granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GERLACH:

H.R. 4365.

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

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.R. 4366.

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

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

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4367.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. GRIMM:

H.R. 4368.

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

Article I, §8, clause 3

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 4369.

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

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 4370.

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

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 4371.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 4372.

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

Article I, Section 8 and the Necessary and Proper Clause. Additionally, the Preamble to the Constitution provides support of the authority to enact legislation to promote the General Welfare.

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 4373.

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

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

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4374.

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

Article I, section 8

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 4375.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7

The Congress shall have Power to establish Post Offices and post roads.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4376.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H.R. 4377.

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

Article 1, Sec. 8

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4378.

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

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4379.

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

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. STOCKMAN:

H.R. 4380.

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

The Second Amendment: ''A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.''

By Mr. STOCKMAN:

H.R. 4381.

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

Amendment IV of the United States Constitution—''The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.''

By Mr. BRIDENSTINE:

H.R. 4382.

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

Article I, Section 8 gives Congress the power to make all laws necessary and proper to carry into execution the preceding enumerated powers. It is necessary and proper for Congress to eliminate the National Technical Information Service in the Department of Commerce.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 279: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 401: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. RUNYAN.

H.R. 494: Mr. WITTMAN and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 713: Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 718: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 721: Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 809: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 1179: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 1199: Mr. DOGGETT and Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1226: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 1239: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 1313: Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 1317: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1318: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 1696: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 1718: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1733: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1827: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1918: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 1998: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 2084: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 2203: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 2283: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H.R. 2296: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 2315: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 2415: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 2499: Mr. PETERS of California and Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 2619: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 2648: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2661: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 2692: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 2935: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 2939: Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Ms. BASS, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. FARR, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HOLT, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KIND, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MAFFEI, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCINTYRE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. POLIS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VELA, Mr. WELCH, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HALL, Mr. COBLE, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SCALISE, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 2959: Mr. MCALLISTER and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 2989: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 2996: Mr. SMITH of Missouri and Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 3022: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 3040: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3179: Mr. MICA.

H.R. 3335: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 3461: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 3481: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 3489: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 3493: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3505: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 3529: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 3530: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 3548: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 3583: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 3600: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3610: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 3708: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 3717: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 3722: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 3833: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 3836: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. ENYART, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 3852: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. HAHN, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3867: Ms. MENG, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. KING of Iowa, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 3929: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 3974: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4012: Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 4069: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 4122: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 4135: Mr. JORDAN.

H.R. 4156: Mr. VEASEY and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 4164: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 4184: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4190: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 4217: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4219: Mr. LATHAM, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. FINCHER.

H.R. 4225: Mr. KLINE, Ms. BASS, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 4227: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 4228: Mr. PEARCE, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4229: Mr. GRIMM.

H.R. 4234: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ENYART, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 4249: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 4261: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 4286: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 4304: Mr. TIPTON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 4307: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4308: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4315: Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 4320: Mr. PETRI and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 4321: Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 4342: Mr. LONG, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SCALISE, and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 4346: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 4349: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H. Con. Res. 95: Mr. LAMALFA.

H. Res. 30: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H. Res. 190: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. MARINO.

H. Res. 418: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MORAN and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H. Res. 480: Mr. OWENS and Mr. ISRAEL.

H. Res. 494: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 509: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KEATING, Ms. BASS, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H. Res. 519: Mrs. BEATTY.

H. Res. 525: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. CONYERS.

H. Res. 532: Mr. TERRY, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. MENG, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under Clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 3717: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2014 No. 53

Senate

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Holy God, You make the clouds Your chariot and walk upon the wind. We see Your works in the rising of the Sun and in its setting. For the beauty of the Earth and the glory of the skies, we give You praise.

Today, make our lawmakers heirs of peace, demonstrating that they are Your children as they strive to find common ground. May they take pleasure in doing Your will and fulfilling Your purposes in our world. Lord, You are never far from us, but often we are far from You. So show us Your ways and teach us Your paths.

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 assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, April 2, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

MINIMUM WAGE FAIRNESS ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 250.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 250, 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.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which is the legislative vehicle for the Unemployment Insurance Extension bill, with the time until 10 a.m. equally divided and controlled. The filing deadline is 9:30 a.m. today.

At 10 a.m. there will be a cloture vote on the Reed amendment. Additional votes are expected throughout the day. Senators will be notified when they are scheduled.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2198 AND S. 2199

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2198) to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California and other Western States due to drought, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 2199) 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.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings to both of these matters at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the measures will be placed on the calendar.

HOUSE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in what has become an annual frustration for the American people, the tea party-controlled House Budget Committee released its budget proposal yesterday. This budget is frustrating for Americans because it doesn't reflect what they envision for this Nation. In fact, the Ryan budget more closely resembles the wants of the multibillionaire Koch brothers than it does a pattern for helping America.

For those who haven't seen the prequels; that is, the newest budget proposal, it is the same old story, and it is a story of broken promises—of broken promises to our children, to our seniors, and to our families.

To our children we have promised we will protect and provide for them, safeguarding them during the vulnerable years of childhood and adolescence—at least try to do everything we can to help them. Yet by repealing the expansion of health care to millions of Americans by cutting Medicaid by $1.5 trillion, the Ryan-Koch budget tells our Nation's children they are on their own.

● 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 must provide for our children by supplying the tools they need to succeed—most importantly, a quality education. But evidently House Republicans don't see the need for us to invest in education because their budget slashes tens of billions of dollars in funding for schools and rolls back Federal financial aid to college students.

The Koch-Ryan budget breaks the promise to seniors we have had in existence since the Great Depression. It would be the end of Medicare as we know it. Health insurance premiums for seniors would skyrocket as would their prescription costs.

Finally, a Ryan-Koch budget breaks a promise to every American family that we in the Federal Government have given them; that by working hard and playing by the rules, they can get ahead. That isn't what the Ryan-Koch budget would allow.

What do the Republicans propose to do with this money they cut from Medicare, Medicaid, and education? They will create more tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy, but it is more than that. It is some of the things not written—these holes in the budget that we have heard before. We know they want to whack Social Security. They are just afraid to put it in writing. The Koch budget would cut the corporate tax rate to 25 percent and lower the top individual tax rate for America's highest earners.

I guess what I would say to the House Budget Committee and all the House Members—Democrats and Republicans—isn't $80 billion personal wealth of the Koch brothers enough? I think most everyone would say, yes, it is enough, but not the Koch brothers. They want more. They are the richest people in the world. Individually they are only fifth, but put them together and they are the richest in the world.

Under this budget I have talked about, middle-class families would pay about $2,000 a year more in taxes, but the rich would pay less. Democrats believe in growing the economy from the middle out, but the Republicans are still trapped in the trickle-down economics based on handouts to the superwealthy and special interests.

Perhaps the Ryan-Koch budget is summarized best by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' Robert Greenstein: ''More poverty and less opportunity.'' That is what their budget is all about: more poverty, less opportunity.

So whether it is current law such as the Affordable Care Act or much needed legislation such as comprehensive immigration reform or an overhaul of the tax system, I ask my Republican colleagues to work with us for a better America.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

DELIVERING REAL PROSPERITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Democratic majority led us to believe the Senate would be discussing jobs this week, but it seemed to be a pretty one-sided discussion.

Republican Senators came to the floor to talk about our innovative ideas to create jobs and grow opportunity for all Americans. As for Senate Democrats though—well, they wouldn't even stand to call for votes on the jobs proposals.

I think this reflects a growing divide in the Senate between a Republican Party focused on the middle class and a Democratic Party that is obsessed with November 4.

That is very disappointing for America. The American people need two serious political parties in this country. But at least our constituents can be assured of one thing: Republicans are laser-focused on delivering real prosperity to the families who have struggled so much in this economy. It is the impetus behind basically everything we do, and it is the impetus behind the numerous jobs proposals Republican Senators are rolling out this week.

For instance, several Republican Senators will take to the floor again today to talk about energy's potential for driving growth and American job creation and why the government needs to stop holding Americans back from sharing in the energy boom. I also plan to join and discuss my own amendment that would fight back against the President's war on coal jobs. I am looking forward to that colloquy.

But right now I wish to talk about another jobs proposal Senator PAUL and I have again introduced: national right-to-work legislation. It would allow American workers to choose whether they would like to join a union, and it would protect the worker from getting fired if she would rather not subsidize a union boss who fails to represent her concerns and priorities. It is such a commonsense proworker proposal. According to one survey, about 80 percent of union workers agree that employees should be able to decide whether joining a union is right for them. One obvious benefit is increased take-home pay for workers who choose to keep the hundreds of dollars that would otherwise be taken from their paychecks by union bosses. There is a huge opportunity component here as well, because most unions operate on a seniority system with pay raises often based off the amount of time the worker has spent at a company rather than on her performance. Well, I think an American worker deserves an opportunity to earn more money if she works hard. I think she deserves the opportunity to rise through the ranks and put more money in her pocket if she is determined to do it. That is real paycheck fairness.

These are bedrock American values—core workers rights that should never be denied to our constituents, especially in a terrible economy such as this one. Many of Kentucky's neighboring States have gone right-to-work with great success, and I hope Kentucky will join them soon. I recently read an op-ed that laid out how much we could have gained over the last decade if we had. It noted that private sector jobs have grown about 15.3 percent in right-to-work States compared to just 6.9 percent in Kentucky; manufacturing had expanded three times faster in right-to-work States and compensation had grown about 14.2 percent compared to just 4.3 percent in Kentucky.

So I am encouraged by the members of Kentucky's legislature who continue to fight for right-to-work legislation. Kentuckians shouldn't be subjected to that kind of prosperity gap any longer, and neither should millions of other Americans struggling across our country. I believe they should have a more equal chance of finding work in every State, and they should no longer see their communities failing to secure new investment because their State hasn't passed right-to-work. That is just one more reason why I believe in our national legislation too.

So I am asking our Democratic friends to join Senator PAUL and me in standing up for workers rights and a stronger middle class to join us in passing right-to-work legislation.

Let's be honest. After more than 5 years of economic misery under their watch, that is the least Washington Democrats can do for the American people. Unfortunately, I suspect we will hear a lot of excuses instead about why Washington Democrats cannot or won't stand with us in this fight. No matter what they say, though, the American people will know the truth: It is because big labor bosses have such sway over today's Democratic Party and because big labor bosses aren't about to give up their perks or their vise grip over American workers.

Well, big labor bosses should know that Republicans are determined to fight for American workers, American jobs, and a stronger middle class, even if the bosses work against us every step of the way. Right-to-work is a smart way to get America on the path to real recovery, and it is critical to empowering workers and giving them more freedom.

I commend Senator PAUL for his leadership on this legislation and for his long-time advocacy on this issue. I hope our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will prove me wrong by working together to pass important job initiatives such as right-to-work for the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

An act (H.R. 3979) 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.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874, of a perfecting nature.

Reid Amendment No. 2875 (to Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid Amendment No. 2876 (to Amendment No. 2875), of a perfecting nature.

Reid Amendment No. 2877 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date.

Reid Amendment No. 2878 (to Amendment No. 2877), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2879, to change the enactment date.

Reid Amendment No. 2880 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2879), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2881 (to Amendment No. 2880), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 10 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise to discuss and present amendment No. 2931 to the bill before us. This is a germane amendment. It is all about the substance of the bill before us and it is a fully bipartisan proposal, since all of the substance of this amendment was actually contained in the President's most recent budget submission.

The amendment idea is very simple: It would prohibit unemployment insurance and disability double-dipping. Those are two different things. One is about somebody who is temporarily unable to find work, still looking for work, clearly able to work. That is unemployment insurance. Disability is fundamentally different, somebody who is disabled and because of that disability cannot work on a long-term basis.

So, as President Obama has proposed, as many Republicans have proposed, this would simply prohibit an individual from receiving both of those benefits at the same time, and would save about $1 billion over 10 years. That is President Obama's own estimation.

To fully present and consider this, I would ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2931.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, we have had millions of people over the last many months who have lost their unemployment benefits. In most instances it is real tragic. Many of the people who lost these benefits are past middle age. Because of the recession they lost their jobs they had for a long time and they cannot find work.

We have read into the RECORD the tragic stories about people using their Social Security to try to save their son's home. We have the woman who is couch surfing. She said, ''I didn't know what the term meant. Now I know.'' They have had to struggle without extended unemployment benefits.

The senior Senator from Rhode Island has negotiated a bipartisan fix to this. It has basically given the Republicans everything they asked for. Everything is paid for. There is no disagreement as to the pay-fors. It hasn't increased the deficit at all. In fact, it would stimulate the economy significantly.

We have been told by economist Mark Zandi, JOHN MCCAIN's chief economic advisor when he ran for President, we have been told by him and others that unemployment benefits stimulate the economy quicker and faster and more efficiently than any other thing we do, because they are desperate for money and they spend it.

But in spite of the bipartisan agreement negotiated with Senator JACK REED, Senator HELLER from Nevada and other Republicans, we have the vast majority of Republican Senators doing the same thing they have done for a long time. They respond in their usual way. When they face a bill they are trying to kill, they try to change the subject—diversion.

Now already on this piece of legislation before the Senate today we have more than 24 amendments that have been filed by Republicans dealing with ObamaCare alone, in spite of the fact—in spite of the fact—that yesterday it was announced that there are 7.1 million people who have already signed up. That doesn't count the 14 State exchanges that will get another 900,000, it is estimated, plus the 2-week extension in which hundreds of thousands more will sign up.

They are tone deaf. They have got to go to some other issue. But they cannot. There are more than two dozen amendments on this bill alone dealing with ObamaCare, repealing it in different ways.

Several other amendments have been singled out that we have before the body to attack the administration's efforts to protect the environment. The protests of Republican Senators to the contrary notwithstanding, these amendments show that the other side of the aisle is not serious about unemployment insurance benefits. They are more concerned about protecting the Koch brothers. This is the behavior of Senators who want to kill something, who want to kick up enough dust so they don't get blamed for what they are trying to do. What are they trying to do? Kill extended unemployment benefits.

So I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I am going to repeat my request, because apparently the majority leader, based on his comments, didn't understand it.

I have an amendment that is about unemployment insurance. I have an amendment that is germane to the bill. It is not about ObamaCare, not about EPA, not about the Koch brothers. I have an amendment that is a proposal contained in President Obama's last two budgets. My amendment has nothing to do with any of the comments and objections he makes. For that reason I am trying to clarify that, and I would again ask unanimous consent that my germane amendment proposed by President Obama in his last two budgets be in order, and it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2931.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, I clearly understood the diversion-and-delay tactics of my friend from Louisiana, and I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The objection is heard.

Mr. VITTER. Well, Mr. President, reclaiming the floor, I think it is very unfortunate. I don't know why it is diversionary to talk about the substance that is before us in this bill. That is not changing the subject, I would say through the Chair to the majority leader; that is talking about the subject. I don't know why it is delaying anything to consider an amendment during the time set aside for this bill. That is not delaying anything. That is doing the business of the Senate by bringing valid ideas to the floor and offering them as an amendment, and I don't know why it is Republican obstructionism to have an amendment that is a proposal contained in President Obama's last two budgets.

So again, I would make the point that everything the majority leader said in objecting to my being even able to present my amendment for a vote doesn't apply to my amendment. It is complete nonsense. It is just talking past the substance of this amendment which is about unemployment insurance reform and which is a bipartisan proposal and which is included in the President's last two budgets.

This is an important and commonsense reform. It is common sense because eligibility for the two programs we are talking about is mutually exclusive. It is apples and oranges. Disability is designed to assist folks who are physically or mentally unable to work for a significant period of time, sometimes permanently. Unemployment insurance, in contrast, is intended to replace some of the earnings for those individuals who become unemployed and are unable to find work temporarily.

It is an oversight, a technical imperfection in the law, the fact that some limited number of folks can double-dip and get both at the same time. This is widely recognized on a bipartisan basis.

On the Republican side, of course, I have this amendment. Senator COBURN, my colleague from Oklahoma, has had similar proposals. Senator PORTMAN, my colleague from Ohio, has had similar proposals.

On the Democratic side, there is no higher ranking Democrat I can possibly cite than President Obama. The President has included this reform—exactly this reform—in his last two budget proposals. I have never heard any articulation from any Democrat or any Member of the Senate why this reform doesn't make sense.

The majority leader, while objecting to my even being able to present this amendment for a vote, offered no such rationale. He talked past it. He talked about the Koch brothers and he talked about EPA and he talked about ObamaCare, instead of talking about my germane, commonsense bipartisan reform amendment to this bill, which has been included—this proposal—in President Obama's last two budgets.

So I find this very unfortunate, but I am going to continue to fight for a vote on this amendment. It will improve the bill, whatever you think about the bill. This will improve it. This will save $1 billion over 10 years. This will clear up the double dipping which was never intended and contrary to the fundamental different purposes of the last of the two programs, and this will advance a proposal that has been included in President Obama's last two budgets.

With that, I will return to promote this amendment, but for now I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. 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.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, it has been more than 3 months since 2 million Americans and nearly 60,000 people in my home State of Ohio and tens of thousands of people in the Presiding Officer's State of Massachusetts—overwhelmingly most of whom have worked day in and day out for most of their lives—have had their unemployment benefits expire simply because the House of Representatives and the Senate have failed to act.

This body has tried to act a number of times and a number of times it has been filibustered. We could not get 60 votes to move forward. The House of Representatives has seemed, frankly, indifferent to these 2 million people.

Think about who these people are. This is about unemployment insurance. It is called insurance for a reason. Insurance means they pay in when they are working, they get benefits when they are laid off, but they must be seeking work to qualify and earn—and I underscore earn—those benefits. They are not given those benefits. They have earned them. They have paid into the unemployment insurance program and they get assistance when they lose their jobs.

Every day and week we fail in this Congress because of Republican filibusters and cold indifference in the House of Representatives to extend these benefits, more Americans slip into poverty. People are not getting rich from unemployment insurance. The average unemployment check in Massachusetts and Ohio and across this country is about $300, which helps to keep their head above water, avoid foreclosure, put gas in their car, look for work—as they are required to do so they can receive unemployment—and just keep their family going and reduce poverty.

When they don't get unemployment benefits, they are not spending that money in their community. When they do get these benefits, they are spending money at the local grocery store in Chillicothe, they are going to the local shoe store in Portsmouth or Gallipolis, they are going to the car repair shop in Toledo or Lima. They are putting money in the economy which generates economic activity which grows jobs.

Extending unemployment is not just right for families in Dayton, Akron, Springfield, OH, and Springfield, MA, it is right for the economy because it puts money into the economy and helps to create jobs.

Forget about the statistics. Forget about the numbers—60,000 people in Ohio and 2 million people across the country—and instead listen to what this does for individual lives. I have three or four stories from people around my State. Lori from Montgomery County, which is in southwest Ohio and the Dayton area, writes:

> I have worked my entire life, until I lost my job last summer. I now spend 4–5 hours a day looking for jobs, but the positions in my field are limited.
>
> I'm told I'm either over or under qualified.
>
> My unemployment benefits aren't much, but it's enough to keep a roof over my head, and allow me to make car payments, so that when I did get a job interview, I have a car to get me there. Please don't let me down.

Robert from Belmont County, which is on the West Virginia line near the Ohio River in eastern Ohio, writes:

> I lost my job in 2012 when my employer, a steel mill, shut down. I was unemployed for more than a year before finding another position.
>
> I was there for two and a half months before being let go due to the down economy—not enough time for a new claim to get me by.
>
> I have a family to support and now that the extension is gone, what am I to do until I find a good job to support my family? Do the right thing. Many lives are depending on it.

The first person said, ''Please don't let me down,'' and the second person from Belmont County said, ''Do the right thing.''

Scott from Union County, which is in central Ohio where they are doing a little better overall but still going through tough times, writes:

> I was laid off from my job at the beginning of this year. I had only been there for six months, and it was a godsend for me.
>
> I don't have a college degree, but I was given a chance to show I could do this job, even though a degree was required.
>
> We went through a round of layoffs in October. My job was saved at the time, but then our company closed its doors in January.
>
> Now I have nothing.
>
> Zero income. Zero outside help, and a nonexisting savings—not because I didn't save, but because I didn't make enough money to save anything the last few years.
>
> I joined the military out of high school, and used my GI Bill to put myself through some college. But soon enough, I was just in a mountain of debt from school, and needed to work full-time.
>
> I wasn't able to save money because I couldn't afford to pay my student loan debt.
>
> While I'm writing you, I'm sitting here watching my son play, and he is so happy. But he doesn't know why his dad is so sad—nor should he ever.
>
> I am begging you to get this figured out soon.

These are veterans and people who have struggled and worked all their lives. They are people who have never had it easy, but they do what is asked of them. As President Clinton used to say, they play by the rules. They take personal responsibility for their lives.

The Senate, because of the filibuster, has turned its back on these workers. The House of Representatives, because of its indifference, has shrugged these workers off. It is wrong. It is important that this Congress—the House and the Senate—pass the extension of unemployment. The President eagerly awaits signing this legislation because it will matter to workers in Middletown, Ravenna, Mansfield, and Shelby, OH. This legislation is important not only to my State but all over this country.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I applaud my colleague from Ohio for his stories from his home State on the families who have been dramatically impacted by the broken bridge between a lost job and the next job. Indeed, in my home State there are about 26,000 folks who are affected in this manner. We can think of it as the space between two jobs, as a chasm—a chasm that threatens the success of every family. They are hoping to make their payment on their light bill. They are hoping to make their rent payment or their mortgage payment. But they have to make it to that next job, and savings run thin, particularly when savings are very hard to come by when our economy is generating fewer and fewer living-wage jobs.

In the last recession of 2008, 60 percent of the jobs lost were living-wage jobs. But of the jobs we are getting

back, only 40 percent are living-wage jobs. Indeed, that means millions of families have gone from a strong foundation—the ability to raise children, to buy a modest home, perhaps take an annual vacation, perhaps to save a little bit of money to help send their kids to college—to struggling and chasing minimum wage or near minimum wage jobs, part-time jobs, and jobs that often have no benefits. All of those wrestling with this situation aren't going to have a big pile of savings to get from one position to the next.

That is why, during periods of high unemployment, we have created a longer unemployment insurance bridge to get them successfully to that next job. When people fall into the chasm between one job and the next, it is not just the family that is hurt; it is not just the worker who is hurt. Our entire society is impacted. It is impacted in several ways. First we have the situation where people go through foreclosure, and that is devastating to the family, devastating to the children, and certainly it also impacts the value of every home on the street. We have the situation of families who lose their home, who lose their rental home and become homeless. It isn't just the parents who are impacted. The children are deeply impacted, and they go through a traumatic event. That is certainly a terrible situation to endure and mal effects throughout. Indeed, of those 26,000 families in Oregon, right now there is a couple sitting at their kitchen table trying to figure out just how many meals they are going to skip in order to make their next rent payment, or they are struggling with how long they can defer a health care bill while they make their mortgage payment. These are tough decisions.

This is why we developed a bipartisan agreement under President Bush that during periods of high unemployment, we would have a longer bridge to the next job. The logic is very simple. The logic is that during periods of high unemployment, the average time between jobs is longer and the chasm is wider, so people need a longer bridge to get there. This is a program that automatically pulls itself back in, retires itself, as the unemployment rate drops. As the unemployment rate drops, the number of extra weeks become fewer and fewer. That is why there is so much logic behind it. That is why there was no partisan divide.

Today we are going to vote, again, on whether to keep this logical, bipartisan, self-retiring, critical bridge in place, and I hope we have a broad bipartisan vote to support it. Then we need to say to the House of Representatives: This is not another bill we can lock in the basement and throw away the key. This is a fundamental piece of legislation that affects the welfare of our families, the health of our economy, the strength of our communities, and it merits a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives. It is certainly a reasonable expectation that everyone in America should see where their Congressman or their Congresswoman stands on such a vital economic strategy for individual families and for the broader community.

So let us not disappoint those 26,000 families in Oregon. Let us not disappoint those 1.7 million families across America that have counted on problem-solving common sense rather than partisan warfare to address this issue.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I note the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. 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.

CLOTURE MOTION

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

The 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 substitute amendment No. 2874 to 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, Patrick J. Leahy, Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Tammy Baldwin, Edward J. Markey, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Harkin, Cory A. Booker, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Al Franken, Bernard Sanders.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 2874 to 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 61, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 96 Leg.]

YEAS—61

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

NAYS—38

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—1

Cruz

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. On this vote the yeas are 61 and the nays are 38. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked on amendment No. 2874, the motion to commit falls as being inconsistent with cloture.

The Chair further announces that amendment Nos. 2878, 2877, and 2876 also fall as they were not in order to be offered and their pendency is inconsistent with the Senate's precedents with respect to the offering of amendments, their number, degree, and kind.

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Before we can have a real debate on how to fix the U.S. economy, which is experiencing the slowest recovery following a recession of any time since World War II, we have to agree on what the problem is and what we are actually trying to solve.

On this side of the aisle, we believe the problem is a shortage of full-time jobs, and we believe our main economic priority should be to facilitate or to create circumstances under which the private sector can create more full-time jobs. That is why we have offered a series of amendments to the pending legislation that would help do that. It would help grow the economy and help get people back to work—not just pay people who are, unfortunately, unemployed but actually help create jobs so they can find work and help provide for their families, which is what the vast majority of people want to do.

Currently, we have pending about 70 different amendments from this side of the aisle that would actually improve the underlying legislation. Among

other things, our amendments would repeal job-killing taxes, improve congressional safeguards against overregulation, and restore the traditional 40-hour workweek, which is a particular subject of concern to organized labor, which recently sent a letter to the White House and said that ObamaCare was incentivizing employers to take full-time work and make it part-time work. They called it a nightmare.

We also need to modernize our work-training programs. I have traveled to a number of locations in Texas, for example, where, as a result of the shale gas renaissance, we have had a number of manufacturing companies move back onshore because of this inexpensive energy supply, creating thousands of new jobs, and there are thousands more to come.

Thank goodness our community colleges are working with industry in these areas because what we find is that when people graduate from high school or maybe even college, they don't necessarily have the skills to qualify for these good, high-paying jobs. If there is one aspect we ought to all be able to agree on, it is that we need to modernize our work-training programs so that we can help people gain those skills so they can earn a good income as a result.

We also need to expedite natural gas exports, and that is not only for economic reasons and job-creating reasons at home. We have seen Russia using natural gas—and the stranglehold it has on Ukraine—as a weapon. One of the things we can do to help the people of Ukraine and to help our allies in Europe is to provide a long-term source of energy through another route other than through Russian pipelines.

We also should approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, which will complete this pipeline from Canada all the way across the United States. The terminus would be in southeast Texas, where that oil would be refined into gasoline and jet fuel and create a lot of jobs in the process. Then we need to consider proposals that would incentivize American businesses, small and large, to hire veterans.

I have been discussing these amendments all week, and I have been calling on the majority leader to allow these amendments to come to the floor and to provide an opportunity for a vote. As I said, there are now currently more than 70 different amendments and ideas that have been filed that are just waiting on the majority leader, who is the one who basically has complete discretion over whether or not those votes will actually occur. We have been imploring him to allow a vote on these amendments, but it appears—and I don't know if there is really any other conclusion you can draw—the majority leader has a different priority. His top priority, it appears, is for show votes on bills that either aren't going to go anywhere, because they are not going to be taken up by the House of Representatives, or that really treat the symptom rather than solve the underlying problem.

As we read in the New York Times and elsewhere, it is the intention of the majority leader and the Democratic leadership in the Senate to schedule a series of show votes that basically are designed to change the subject from the failed policies of this administration—notably ObamaCare. Of course, one of those is going to be to make it easier for the trial bar to file class action lawsuits when it comes to gender pay disparity, something that is already against the law. The majority leader and his allies are going to lift the cap on damages and subject small and large businesses alike to class action lawsuits.

You don't have to take my word for it. All you have to do is read the New York Times. Here is what they reported last week:

> 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.

For that matter, the majority leader himself has acknowledged that these ideas were developed in collaboration with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the political arm of our Democrat friends in the Senate.

So it is pretty clear what is happening here. This is not a majority leader—or a majority, for that matter—in search of solutions to the problems that plague our country, particularly slow economic growth and high joblessness, and the highest percentage of people who have dropped out of the workforce since World War II. This has nothing to do with helping the American people. What it does have to do with is making proposals that would actually make the economy worse.

For example, the Congressional Budget Office said the proposed minimum wage increase—a 40-percent increase in the minimum wage—would likely destroy ½ million to 1 million jobs because the money has to come from somewhere. Small businesses, if they are going to be forced to pay 40 percent more for their workforce, are going to have to cut somewhere else, and what they are going to cut is jobs.

Needless to say, notwithstanding the fact that we are seeing the majority leader and the majority party engaged in pure political posturing, what they are actually proposing is going to make things worse, not better.

There is also the so-called Paycheck Fairness Act, which really should be called the ''Trial Lawyers Bonanza'' bill. This is nothing more than a gift to the trial bar. As I said earlier, gender-based pay discrimination was outlawed a half century ago. It is illegal already. President Obama, more recently, signed something called the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act just a few days after taking office in January of 2009. Here is what he said at that time. In 2009, he said that the Ledbetter act ''ensures equal pay for equal work.''

If that is true—and I believe it is—then why offer this additional legislation, unless it is purely a political exercise designed to posture and perhaps distract people from the things they are upset about, such as ObamaCare, leading into the midterm elections. We are now being told that unless we pass the so-called Paycheck Fairness Act, or the ''Trial Lawyer Giveaway,'' employers will be able to discriminate against women. Well, that is nonsense. That is not true. I don't know how you can say it any more strongly other than to call it the lie that it is.

Even before the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act equal pay for equal work has been the law of the land since the 1960s. As the Wall Street Journal once observed, the Paycheck Fairness Act should really be called the ''Trial Lawyer Paycheck Act'' because that is who would benefit from this bill were it to become the law of the land.

Of course, as I mentioned a moment ago, the majority leader doesn't really expect this to pass. It is part of this false narrative we have heard before, and we are going to hear it again, that somehow this is really about fairness and gender discrimination, when it is about nothing of the kind. It is solely about politics. It really is a cynical attempt to distract people from what are the most important things we could do as a Senate, which is, again, to create circumstances under which the economy would grow and jobs would be created by the private sector so people could find work and they could provide for their families. That is what we ought to be doing.

Our Democratic friends claim this political agenda they announced last week, in conjunction with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, is all about giving Americans a fair shot. Yet the majority leader is refusing to give them a fair shot at finding a full-time job, and he is refusing to give my constituents in Texas—26 million of them—an opportunity to get some of their ideas heard and voted on on the Senate Floor.

As I said once, and I will say it again, there are more than 70 different amendments that have been filed to this underlying legislation that would actually provide a solution rather than a political stunt which will do nothing to solve the underlying problem. The purpose of these amendments is to help millions of people who remain unemployed or underemployed, including the 3.8 million Americans who have been unemployed for more than 6 months—3.8 million Americans out of work for more than 6 months.

This legislation does nothing to help those people, other than perhaps to help pay them for a period of time they are continuing unsuccessfully to find work. There are also 7.2 million Americans who are working part-time who would like to work full time.

If the majority leader wants to argue our amendments are a bad idea, let him do it. We will have that debate on the

merits. If he wants to promote alternative options for growing the economy and creating jobs, we will be happy to consider those and perhaps even agree with him on some of them. But to simply refuse to allow a vote on these 70-some-odd amendments is a profound insult, not to us but to our constituents and the millions of Americans who continue to suffer through the longest period of high unemployment since the Great Depression.

We can do better. We need to do better. The American people deserve better than this cheap political stunt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, we have before us a bipartisan piece of legislation designed to provide very limited assistance to millions of Americans who have lost their unemployment compensation benefits. On December 28, the long-term unemployment insurance benefits terminated. At that point it was 1.3 million Americans; today it is 2.3 million Americans, and it is growing.

Since December 28, we have, on a bipartisan basis, been endeavoring to bring to this floor for a final vote a 5-month extension, some of which—in fact, with each passing day more of which—is retroactive rather than prospective. This bill is designed to help people.

In fact, this bill will provide them the benefits they were receiving based upon their work record because the only way you can receive unemployment insurance benefits is to lose a job through no fault of your own and continue to search for a job.

These are working Americans. The benefits we are talking about are roughly $300 a week. What does that do? For some people it helps them keep their home. It pays the rent. For some others it provides food for their families. For others it provides them the ability to have a cell phone that is plugged in, literally, because they need one when they get, they hope, the offer for a job interview or for a job. So contrary to doing nothing to help Americans, this does a great deal for people who have earned these benefits through their toil and effort and their continued efforts to look for jobs.

We have an obligation, a great obligation to increase the growth in this country, and to do it in a way that will allow people to find jobs. In my home State of Rhode Island, there are at least two applicants for every job—in many cases, three applicants. There is a disconnect in many cases between the skills they have had over decades of work and the skills that employers are looking for today. And we have to address that.

But, to prevent this legislation from going through is to deny millions of working Americans the support they need to get through a very difficult period. That is why, on a bipartisan basis, we have come together. We have 5 months fully paid for. This is a fiscally sound piece of legislation which benefits men and women across this country based upon their work record. I don't think there is a more important thing we can do at this moment, and to delay it would be a disservice to the people.

I think something else is important too. When we talk about economic growth, let us recognize this legislation will help growth in the United States. There have been estimates if we had a full-year extension of the unemployment insurance program it would generate 200,000 jobs. Those are significant numbers. That is roughly about 1 month's job growth over the last several years. If we don't do this, then we won't get that growth.

So not only is this a fundamentally sound, fair, and thoughtful thing to do for millions of American families, it is also good for our economy. It does provide the growth my colleagues are talking about when they say we have to grow this economy.

There is much more that we could do. Many of my Republican colleagues, who have come to provide their insights and support, have suggested longer term ways in which we could deal with the unemployment crisis—better training programs, et cetera. Indeed, we have a bipartisan Workforce Investment Act reauthorization that is in the HELP Committee that I hope we can get to the floor quickly because we have to reform our overall job training program in this country. As I go out and talk to businessmen and women in Rhode Island, they say there is a disconnect between the skill set many people have and the skills they need for their workplace.

There is another aspect of this situation. The long-term unemployed numbers in this country today are twice as high as they are typically when we have ended unemployment benefits previously. We have a significant problem and a growing problem of the long-term unemployed.

Again, we will wait for the data to be conclusive and decisive, but my sense is, going back to Rhode Island, many of these individuals are in their middle ages—they are 40 and 50 years old. They have worked for 20 years. They have good work records, but the skills that employers are looking for right now are not immediately those skills that they have. Of course, there are job training options available, but all of these things require support. Again, if you are juggling family responsibilities and trying to get job training, that $300 a week benefit check you have earned through your previous work is very helpful as you prepare yourself for a new job.

This legislation can't be delayed any longer. This is not about some political demonstration or some political messaging point; this is about getting aid and assistance to 2.3 million Americans today. And that number will grow with each passing day. It is about helping people who earned this benefit through their work.

I can't think of anything more important that we can do—and do it in a timely and prompt manner. That is why I hope we can move forward as quickly as possible on a bipartisan basis with fully paid for legislation which is fiscally responsible, which will provide assistance for millions of deserving Americans and in addition provide further stimulus to our economy.

A final point. Why does this provide a stimulus to the economy? Because these types of benefits go to a former worker, someone looking for work, and they go right back in the economy. This is not a sophisticated tax break that will allow someone to put some money aside for a rainy day. This goes right to the families, right to the economy—to the local grocery store, to the local gas station for the repairs of a car, to pay for daycare that is necessary for children—to do those things that will go right back and stimulate further growth in our economy.

For reasons both of fundamental fairness and individual recognition that these people deserve a break in a tough economy and the very real fact that this dramatically benefits our overall economy, I think we have to move.

I am pleased and proud that we have had the support of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to move forward procedurally. I hope we can finish this debate promptly, move this over to the House, and then begin to work with the House so they recognize the same reality that on a bipartisan basis we have recognized here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, yesterday President Obama held an event at the White House to talk about his health care law. The President said:

> The debate over repealing this law is over—the Affordable Care Act is here to stay.

That is what President Obama said yesterday. Of course, last October President Obama said his health care law was ''the law of the land.'' Then he went ahead and changed or delayed the law more than 20 times after that—on his own, without coming to Congress. If it is the law of the land, how does he get to change the law of the land 20 times?

Back on March 6, President Obama said the Democrats' health care law is ''working the way it should.'' Well, if the law is working the way it should, why do people in Wyoming keep telling me how bad the law is for them personally?

Just the other day I heard from a woman in Rawlins, WY. She wrote:

> My husband has been self-employed at a small truck driving company servicing the oil and gas fields in [Wyoming] for over 13 years. We have always purchased individual healthcare coverage for our family of five. We currently pay $906.87 for that coverage.

She said:

The lowest priced ACA Bronze plan will increase our premium to $1359 per month, an increase of $452 per month—an amount we cannot currently absorb. This is not affordable. Why is [President] Obama doing this to us?

That is a good question. Why are Democrats here in Washington doing this to families such as this woman's family in Wyoming? Why does President Obama think his law is working the way it should?

Well, the Senate Democratic majority leader, Senator REID, said here on the floor of the Senate back on February 26 that the law is going great. The majority leader said, ''Despite all the good news, there's plenty of horror stories being told.'' He went on to say: ''All are untrue, but they're being told all over America.''

''All are untrue,'' he said here on the floor.

The majority leader added that all of the stories were ''made up from whole cloth, lies distorted by the Republicans to grab headlines or make political advertisements.''

Why does Senator REID think this woman in Rawlins, WY, is making up a story out of whole cloth?

Remember, the President also said that if you like your insurance, you can keep it. He said that if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. He said people's health care costs were going to be $2,500 lower by now. So the President has said a lot of things that turned out not to be accurate. Now the President says his health care law is here to stay.

Given the President's history, I think it is fair to get a second opinion. As a doctor who has practiced medicine for 25 years, taking care of families in Wyoming, I come to the floor to tell you that I bring my medical experience, along with my colleague's experience, Senator TOM COBURN from Oklahoma. He and I have put together a report that looks at some of the promises Democrats have made about the law and some of the things Republicans have said about it. The report is called ''Prognosis.'' It came out April 2014 and is available today on Senator COBURN's Web site at www.coburn.senate.gov or on my site at www.barrasso.senate.gov.

What we have done is come out with a report going through three different previous reports that, as doctors, we have put out watching the health care law as it has been developing. Each of the reports—one called ''Bad Medicine,'' one called ''Grim Diagnosis,'' and one called ''Warning: Side Effects''—was released between 2010 and 2012. We grade ourselves now on how the predictions we have made over the last 4 years have turned out.

In the first prediction we made—report No. 1, ''Bad Medicine''—we warned that millions of Americans could lose their health insurance plans.

The headlines all across the country show that over 5 million Americans did, in fact, get letters that they lost their health insurance plan—health insurance which they liked, which worked for them, something they chose and they lost because the President said it wasn't good enough. He said he knew more about what they needed for themselves and their families than they did. So we predicted 4 years ago that millions would lose their health insurance plans, and millions did.

We warned that the law's new mandates would increase health costs and obviously increase the cost of insurance. That original diagnosis is confirmed as well.

Like the letter I just read from the family in Rawlins, WY, families all across Wyoming and all across the country are seeing incredible increases in the cost of their insurance. They are paying more, and in their opinion they are getting worse insurance—the President said better; I say worse—because they are having to pay for a lot of things that they don't need, don't want, and will never use. Yet the President says he knows better than they do about what kind of insurance they need and what is best for them and their families. They are also being faced with higher copays, higher deductibles, and higher out-of-pocket costs.

We warned additionally that short-term fixes threaten seniors' long-term access to care.

That is actually exactly what happened. The health care law took $500 billion out of the Medicare Program—a program to take care of our seniors—not to strengthen Medicare, not to help our seniors, but to start a whole new government program for other people. For those 14 million Americans on Medicare Advantage, a program for which there are advantages—preventive care, coordinated care, things one would want—well, that has been dramatically hurt by the President's decision to take money away from the very popular Medicare Advantage plan.

We warned that patients with preexisting conditions would still face care restrictions.

I listened to the President's speech. I read editorials written by colleagues on the other side of the aisle as recently as last week that said people with preexisting conditions are all being protected. That is not true. We know of patients who because of their condition have had to leave the State in which they live to get specialty care in other States. And when they lost their insurance and bought insurance through the plans of their State, their children with cystic fibrosis seeking specialty care in Boston are excluded from doing that under the plan because the insurance was bought in the State in which they live and the insurance they got did not cover any out-of-State physicians. So children have been hurt by the President's health care law, and we can identify those young victims of the President's health care law.

We warned that the individual mandate would fail with the IRS as an enforcer.

The IRS even admits they don't have a whole mechanism put together to make sure the mandate to fine Americans for not buying a government-approved product would be collected by the IRS.

We warned that new IRS taxes would harm small businesses.

That initial diagnosis is now confirmed. Small businesses are impacted all across the country by additional expenses and costs, making it much harder for them to provide insurance to their workers. Many looking at this are saying that it might be cheaper to pay the fine than to do what we would like to do and have done in the past, which is provide insurance that worked for those employers and their employees but perhaps doesn't meet the President's recommendations of what many people say is much more insurance than they will ever need, want, use, or can afford.

The second report we came out with a number of years ago is called ''Grim Diagnosis.'' In that, we went through a number of concerns we had about the health care law after the initial report ''Bad Medicine.''

''Grim Diagnosis'' provided warnings that the employer mandate would lower incomes and result in hundreds of thousands of jobs being lost.

We are still watching that one very carefully because we do know that with the employer mandate, there have been stories of businesses with 50 employees saying: We are going to have to get below 50. We are not going to hire more people. We have to get below that number.

The President is working to maybe make that a higher number, but no matter where that number line is drawn, people are finding that from a business standpoint, there are advantages to being below a certain number of employees and then not having to comply with the expensive mandates of the law.

We warned that the law included a risky insurance scheme that would cost taxpayers dearly.

That original diagnosis is confirmed as well with something called the CLASS Act. Folks who looked at it carefully on both sides of the aisle called it a Ponzi scheme—a Ponzi scheme—that would never work, could not be afforded. They said it was something Bernie Madoff would even be proud of. Yet the Democrats forced it into the health care law in spite of warnings against it.

Our final report was called ''Warning: Side Effects,'' released in 2012. We started talking about the side effects of the health care law. We warned that the law includes hundreds of billions of dollars of tax hikes.

Well, that has been confirmed. All one has to do is look at the list of new taxes brought on by the health care law. It goes on and on with one new tax after another. These are taxes on real people that get passed on to others if they are applied to a business, totaling

$1 trillion in gross tax increases over the next 10 years, from 2013 to 2022.

We warned that the new insurance cooperatives would waste taxpayer dollars.

That is exactly what this report confirms. It goes State by State, where we see significant wasting of money, as reported in the Washington Post and in USA TODAY.

We warned that the medical device tax would stifle innovation.

That original diagnosis has been confirmed as well. We see the medical device tax, which, when we talked about it as part of a budget amendment, there was bipartisan support for repealing it. Why aren't we voting to repeal it when it matters, when we could actually get this repealed? The Senate majority leader continues to block a vote on that.

So I come to the floor, the day after the President held his ''mission accomplished'' speech at the White House, to say that the prognosis for this health care law continues to be grim, the points we have made throughout continue to be true, and the people all across the country are experiencing it day-to-day.

They are experiencing it in their lives. They are experiencing it when they try to continue health insurance that works for their family. They are paying more out of pocket. Their premiums are higher. They may not be able to keep the doctor they had and liked. They may not be able to go to the hospital they had gone to previously.

It is interesting that in the State of New Hampshire where there are 28 hospitals, 10 of them are excluded—10 of the 28 hospitals in the State of New Hampshire are excluded—from the insurance being offered on that State's exchange to be sold in that State. Even the doctor who is the chief of staff of one of those hospitals—well, her insurance does not permit her to go to the very hospital where she is the chief of staff. Is this what the Democrats had in mind when they passed this health care law, people paying more in premiums, people losing their doctors, not having access to the hospitals in their community, higher copays, higher deductibles? That is what the American people are facing.

It is time for the President of the United States to acknowledge the pain that his health care law has caused people across the country. I know he watches the polls, and the polls continue to show that for every one person who says they may have been helped by the health care law there are more than two people who say they have been harmed.

People knew we needed health care reform in this country, and they knew the reason. People knew what they wanted. They wanted the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs.

This health care law has failed to deliver to the American people what they wanted, what they asked for, and instead is trying to deal day-to-day with something the Democrats in this Senate and in the House shoved down the throats of the American people.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. 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. COONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 30 minutes as if in morning business and to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from Maine.

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

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I come to the floor again today to talk about good jobs and how we can work together in a responsible and bipartisan way to create high-quality and lasting middle-class jobs. All of us hear from our home States about how they want us to work together to produce for America today and America tomorrow.

As someone who worked for 8 years for a manufacturing company in the private sector before going into public service, I can tell you we can win in manufacturing. We can learn from our competitors, we can strengthen our workforce, we can strengthen our access to foreign markets, and we can strengthen our access to credit. We can do all of it and we can compete and win in advanced manufacturing in the United States.

One of the aspects of my own experience in the private sector that has stayed with me is that more of our manufacturing employment was in Germany than any other single country, and that often seems unlikely given that Germany actually has higher labor costs, labor protections, environmental protections, and in many ways a higher cost of doing business than almost any other advanced country. So how is it possible they are so successful? In fact, more than twice the percentage of their GDP is in manufacturing than is the case in the United States.

Why would we fight for manufacturing jobs? Why would we fight to emulate Germany's example? Because manufacturing jobs are great jobs. As the Presiding Officer and our colleague from Maine know, manufacturing jobs are high skill, high wage, high benefit, and have a positive impact on their surrounding community. They also need something. They need ongoing R&D, cutting-edge research, continuous improvement and innovations in order to remain at the cutting edge of productivity.

What we are going to talk about on the floor today is a bill that learns from the lessons of our most successful European competitor, Germany. Germany has more than 60 manufacturing hubs located all over their country. These manufacturing hubs are in places where universities are doing cutting-edge technical research and companies are beginning to deploy these new technologies in manufacturing and the workforce that are needed to acquire the skills to be successful in these new areas of manufacturing all work in coordination. That is something we can, by working in a bipartisan way here in this Senate, advance, and advance rapidly, here in the United States.

The Senator from Maine and I are going to talk about a bill—the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act—which has 14 cosponsors and is an indication of its broad base of bipartisan support. It has long been led by Senators BROWN of Ohio and BLUNT of Missouri, a bipartisan team, and to that they have added a great initial leadership team with Senator STABENOW, Senator LEVIN, Senator REED, and Senator SCHUMER, all Democrats, as well as Senator GRAHAM, Senator KIRK, Senator COLLINS, Senator WICKER, and Senator BOOZMAN, all Republicans. Most recently our wonderful colleague, Senator ANGUS KING of Maine, an Independent, has joined us.

This bill has been endorsed by folks ranging from the National Association of Manufacturers to the U.S. Conference of Mayors to the United Auto Workers, and many more organizations at the national and local level, which is another indicator of how diverse its support is from across the country and many different sectors. This is a bill I have reason to hope can not just get a lot of endorsements from the private sector and not just a lot of endorsements from cosponsors here in the Senate but can actually move through regular order to be taken up and considered by the committee of jurisdiction, to be taken up here on the floor, and actually signed into law by the President of the United States. I am hopeful that could happen partly because this is good policy.

There are already a number of hubs that have been established by Federal agencies spending money that has already been authorized and appropriated for specific research areas where the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense need to do work to develop cutting-edge manufacturing capacity in the United States.

I think if this law gets taken up on a bipartisan basis and is improved, refined, and debated in committee and here on the floor, we actually have a shot at advancing a process that will be wide open and will allow elements of the Federal Government, in partnership with the private sector, to leverage cutting-edge research and deploy whole new technologies across this country.

I am excited by it, and I know my colleague is as well. I will briefly state why Senator KING is a great colleague

to join all of us who have served as sponsors on this bill. He has previously worked in the private sector in clean energy. He has previously served as the Governor of the State of Maine and worked closely with the University of Maine and has a sense of how publicly funded research at a cutting-edge university, investment in workforce skills, and the deployment of new and innovative technologies in clean energy can work together to grow manufacturing, grow job opportunities, and grow our economy.

I invite my colleague to address his experience in Maine and why he has joined this broad group of cosponsors on this promising and bipartisan manufacturing bill.

Mr. KING. I thank my colleague from Delaware for his leadership on this issue. He has been indefatigable. He has been very strong on this issue. I think it is one of the most important issues that faces us.

I am not an economist; I am a country lawyer from Maine, but one of the things I know about any economy is you can't build an economy by taking in each other's laundry. Somebody somewhere has to make something, and that is the basis of wealth creation. Somehow in the 1980s, 1990s, and the early part of this century, we sort of lost sight of that and manufacturing took an enormous hit. We lost 32 percent of our manufacturing jobs in the decade from 2000 to 2010. We lost 42,000 factories—not people, 42,000 factories. Manufacturing was literally withering away in this country.

I think a lot of people sort of wrung their hands and said: Oh, well, I guess that is just the way of the world. It is all going to Asia, China, and Mexico. It is going to low-wage countries, and that is just the way it works.

The problem is, as my colleague from Delaware pointed out, Germany has gone in the opposite direction, and their country has the same standard of living, the same labor standards, the same employment cost levels, and yet 20 percent of their economy is based upon manufacturing; whereas, it is only 10 or 11 percent in this country. So that tells me it is not impossible. It tells me there is an opportunity here and that we can't just lay back and say: Well, I guess that is going to go away. Woe is us. That is never the way to seize the future.

Why do it? The Senator from Delaware said it: Better pay. In Maine, in looking at the data, employees in manufacturing on average make twice as much as employees in other areas—twice as much. There is a tremendous difference in pay, and of course a better difference in benefits. There is also a bigger multiplier for manufacturing. Manufacturing creates more jobs down the line and around a manufacturing facility. It is important for national security.

We are in danger of losing our industrial base, which is part of our national security infrastructure. If we can no longer make things—whether it is destroyers at Bath Iron Works or jet airplanes or uniforms or boots or other things that are necessary to support our national security apparatus—we are in trouble, and that is a danger to our country. That is a national security danger because if we are dependent upon other countries that may or may not be our friends for essential components of our national security infrastructure, that is a very dangerous and risky place to be. That is not often talked about, but the maintenance of manufacturing jobs in the United States is a critical part of our industrial base and a part of our national security strategy.

Manufacturing allows for more exporting. It brings money into our country. Eighty-three percent of the exports from Maine come out of the manufacturing sector, and that is bringing money into our country rather than sending it out to other countries.

Also, I think it is very important to remember that this is a way of dealing with what I think is one of the most serious issues of our time, which is income inequality. It is the widening gap between those at the top and those at the bottom, and what is really a concern is the stagnation, and, in fact, the decline of the American middle class.

Manufacturing was the path into the middle class for our parents and grandparents. The manufacturing resurgence after World War II—by the way, part of that resurgence was based upon the GI bill, probably the greatest economic development program ever fostered by any government anywhere in the world—which helped to create the middle class is in danger. One of the ways to preserve and strengthen the middle class—and to deal with this problem of income inequality—is more manufacturing and more of those good jobs.

This is the 100th anniversary of one of the most amazing and transformative actions in American corporate history. The year was 1914 when Henry Ford doubled the pay of all of his workers. Everybody was astonished. His competitors were aghast. The advocates of unbridled capitalism said: How can he do this? Henry Ford was a genius in many ways. But one of his insights was he wanted his workers to be able to buy his products, and one of the problems in our economy today is a lack of demand. The people of the middle class don't have enough income to buy the products and it becomes a downward spiral. It is a lack of demand that is truly at the heart of the weakness of the current economy, and it is because people don't have good enough jobs and they are not being paid enough.

Henry Ford realized if he paid his workers more—and, by the way, that munificent sum in 1914 was $5 a day, but it was a doubling of what the rate of pay was everywhere else in American society at that time. That was a huge breakthrough intellectually, economically, and socially for this country.

OK. We talked about the losses. There is some good news. In the last 2½ years we have gained 500,000 jobs. We lost 6 million in that decade, but now we have gained 500,000 back. So something is happening. A lot of different things are happening. The low price of natural gas I think is helping to rejuvenate manufacturing. I know it is in Maine. I think there is more innovation happening around the country. People are realizing—I have talked to manufacturers who have been offshore and have come back because they said the offshore factory was a little cheaper, the labor costs were less, but the hassle factor was higher, and what I have learned is I can control costs, I can control transportation, I can control time limits better if the manufacturing is in the United States.

So what do we do? What do we do if we want to increase manufacturing? We can't wave a wand here in Washington. We can't say, well, go out and create jobs. We have to create an atmosphere where we can create jobs.

When my little girl Molly, who is not so little anymore, was in the third grade, I used to teach her things with pneumonics. I would say the three Xs or the three Ys or whatever. In this case, if she were here and she were still in the third grade, I would say it is the four Ps, Molly. It is the four Ps that are going to make this happen. The first is a plan. Nothing happens without a strategy or a vision or a plan. This bill has a vision of how to link innovation and the American economy and manufacturing in such a way as to create and rejuvenate this sector. A plan—we have to start with a plan or a vision.

The second P is partnerships, and this bill is based on partnerships. Nothing good happens without partnerships. It is based upon linking the academic world with the manufacturing world with government; putting those partnerships together, mostly universities and manufacturing, to create innovation, to create new jobs, to create new ways of building wealth. We don't have to look much further than Silicon Valley in California. That is a perfect example of a natural born innovation hub built around several knowledge factories: Stanford University, University of California, University of San Francisco. Knowledge factories, together with manufacturers, created one of the greatest hotbeds—probably the greatest hotbed—of innovation, creativity, and new wealth creation in the history of this country and perhaps in the history of the world. We want to create these kinds of hubs all over the country, putting together the academic community and the business community to develop the capacity for innovation and creativity.

I should mention—it is not part of this bill, but the other thing I think we have to do a lot of thinking about is the skills gap. I got a call right after my election from a chamber of commerce director in southern Maine and

he said: Senator, we want you to come down and talk about jobs.

I said: Oh, OK. I will. And I was prepared to talk about how to create jobs and add jobs.

He said: No, no, it is not that. The problem is we have 500 jobs and we can't fill them. These are good-paying jobs in manufacturing, and we can't fill them because the people we need aren't available with the skills we need. There is a mismatch.

I believe one of the things we have to do around here is think hard about all the programs—I think there are something like 59 different Federal job training programs—how to integrate them, coordinate them, and focus them on business-ready jobs, not 10-years-ago jobs but the jobs of today. Therefore, I think the coordination and cooperation between business and the job training infrastructure has to be much closer than it is today.

That gets me to S. 1468. I think it is a wonderful idea. One of the best parts of it is that it is bipartisan. This is an idea that is supported—SHERROD BROWN and ROY BLUNT were the spearheads of it, and then we have people such as ROGER WICKER, the Senator from Mississippi, and the Senator from Delaware; we have a good bipartisan group from around the country geographically and across party lines. This is what we have to do. Why is it so important? Because what drives new manufacturing jobs is innovation.

When I was Governor of Maine, somebody gave me a cap and on it it said ''innovate or die.'' Bill Gates once famously said: Every product we make today is going to be obsolete in 5 years. The only question is whether we make it obsolete or someone else does.

Innovation is the heart of this economy. That is why we have to put together the knowledge factories with the production factories—the knowledge factories, the universities, such as the University of Maine, that has the advanced composites lab that has created amazing new ways to deal with composites. One of their creations is the bridge and a backpack. The bridge and a backpack is a composite system which I have seen in action. They are long tubes made of fiberglass. You spread the tubes out, fill them with concrete, mold them into the shape you want, and in about 3 or 4 days you have a bridge, and you put the deck over it. It is a wonderful system. It came out of the University of Maine and now it is being used across the country.

The other piece I like about this is that it isn't a government program. Government is the catalyst, the convener, the pulling together of these hubs, and that is, I think, our function. We shouldn't be doing it. We shouldn't be steering it, but we should be launching it, and that is what this bill is all about. Does it solve all the problems of manufacturing? Of course not. There are dozens of things we have to do in order to support this industry, whether it is tax reform, job training or innovation hubs and more support for R&D. All of those we have to do, but I think this is one of the most important, and we don't have to guess about it. It works in Germany. They have twice the role for manufacturing in their economy as we do. It works. So let's see what we can do here with the same idea.

I compliment the Senator from Delaware and the others who have led this bill, and I am delighted to be able to tag along. I think this is a great idea. It truly can make a difference, and I think we will see that difference in the coming years.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Maine for sharing his personal experience both as Governor and for his work and partnership with the University of Maine and their composites center and his understanding of the importance of a modern, skilled workforce in order to take advantage of the work we are hoping to catalyze through this bill.

I wish to summarize across three large areas. This bill, if enacted, would take advantage of linkages, leverage, and labor in a way that would grow lasting middle-class jobs. All of us want to work together to find a way to give American workers and families a fair shot, to give them a fair shot at the kind of middle-class quality of life that dominated over the last 50 years. As my colleague said, it was because of the GI bill and its investment in education, it was because of innovation and competitiveness, and it was because of a skilled workforce that we were able to dominate the world in manufacturing for much of the last 50 years of the last century. If we are to seize this moment and regain our global leadership not just in the productivity sector of our manufacturing but also in the base, in the employment of our manufacturing, we have to do the sorts of things this bill imagines.

We have research being done in national labs, in federally funded national labs—fundamental research. That is wonderful. We have applied research on composites being done at the University of Delaware and at the University of Maine and every other State university that does higher research. We have manufacturers trying to take advantage of new technologies and new opportunities. This bill will link them all together to create regional hubs that allow the researchers, the private sector, and the new employees to all come together.

It also, as my colleague mentioned, leverages private sector funds. Every one of the four hubs announced to date is a more than a 1-to-1 match; 2 or 4 or, in one case, 8-to-1 match of private sector dollars to public sector dollars.

Last, it invests heavily in training and in skills and making sure the workforce is ready as these new technologies get out there.

I wish to describe the reach of some of these linkages and partnerships for a moment. Let me take a second and take a walking tour, if I could, of the four hubs that have been finalized so far.

For example, the one in Youngstown, OH, deals with 3D manufacturing. This is a relatively new, cutting-edge technology that radically alters the scale of early stage manufacturing and what is possible in terms of prototyping, and then, I think fairly soon, what is possible in terms of customized, unit-by-unit manufacturing. It has enormous promise. But if we are going to stay competitive globally in manufacturing, when there is something new invented in the United States, we have to also make sure it is made in the United States. So this is the sort of hub that makes that possible.

There are four hubs, and I will mention them briefly: the one in Ohio, the one in Raleigh, NC, the one in Detroit, and the one in Chicago. But they don't just engage the universities and the workforce and the companies right in that immediate community. They benefit from national networks. For example, General Dynamics and Honeywell are two of the very large national footprint firms partnering with the Youngstown hub. Universities from Arizona State to Florida State are collaborating in the wide bandgap semiconductor work in Raleigh, NC. Researchers from the University of Kentucky, the University of Tennessee, Notre Dame, and Ohio State are partners with the hub that is in Detroit. There are researchers from Boulder, Indiana, Notre Dame, Louisville, Iowa, Nebraska, UT, Austin, and Wisconsin that are partnering with the hub in Chicago.

So what are these hubs? Are they just some diffuse academic teams that share names and a little bit of data with each other? No. If there were, for example, to be a hub in Maine on composites, we would find researchers at the University of Delaware who have done great work in composites and companies doing work in composites partnering with the fundamental research being done, let's say, hypothetically, at the University of Maine, and learning about how to deploy that new technology in ways that would benefit the local workforce and the local manufacturers.

That is why there is so much leverage coming out of these linkages. That is why these hubs have been so generative and so powerful in Germany's experience. It is a way to harness our Federal investment in research by the national labs and by State universities with the energy of the private sector and the capacity of our manufacturers to relentlessly innovate.

We have a very broad menu of bipartisan manufacturing bills that have been taken up and discussed in this Chamber. This one—this manufacturing hubs bill—has some of the broadest support and I think some of the best reasons for it to be considered in committee and taken up on this

floor later this spring. It is my real hope our colleagues will join us in doing so.

Let me yield back to my colleague from Maine.

Mr. KING. I like the Senator's suggestion of a hub in Maine involving composites. Could we write that in the bill? I wouldn't object to that amendment.

Mr. COONS. If there is a footnote that says ''and Delaware.''

Mr. KING. I think this is such an important idea, and in my comments I outlined how we get here. We start with a vision or a plan which the bill entails, and we start with partnerships, which is truly the essence of the bill, but there are two more pieces. There are two more Ps. One is perseverance. Any Member of this body knows about perseverance. That is what this place is all about. We have to stick to it. We have to not take no for an answer. We have to listen to our colleagues to find out how they feel about the bill and try to form a consensus and then move this bill through.

Last Friday was the 100th birthday of Ed Muskie of Maine. Ed Muskie was the father of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. Talk about perseverance. He spent 2 years, hundreds of hearings, hundreds of hours of markup and ended up with that bill passing the Senate unanimously—unanimously. That is a monument to perseverance.

Normally, I would say those are the three Ps: plan, partnership, and perseverance, but I think there is one more, and I am sure my colleague from Delaware agrees with me.

Nothing is going to happen without passion. We have to care about this. The people of America have to care about this. We have to say that this is something we are going to do. We are going to rebuild the manufacturing centers that made this country what it was—a sector that made this country what it was. We are going to have to do it with passion and commitment. I believe this bill is an opportunity to restart that process.

It will, and as I mentioned earlier, it can change us and provide benefits everywhere from higher wages to better national security to a stronger middle class. A plan, a partnership, perseverance, and passion—that is what changes the world.

Mr. COONS. I thank my colleague for joining me in this colloquy on manufacturing, both broadly and more specifically on this bill. I am grateful for the leadership that Senator STABENOW and Senator GRAHAM, as the cochairs of the Senate Manufacturing Caucus, have shown on this particular bill and the passion and the perseverance that Senators BROWN and BLUNT have shown in bringing this great idea into legislative form and in advancing it.

There are so many other bills that we can and should take up that will bring strength and vitality to the American manufacturing sector. But it is my real hope that S. 1468, the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act will be the next in a series of important bipartisan manufacturing bills that we will take up to make sure we are doing our job to help grow high quality American jobs.

I yield the floor.

REINSTATED AMENDMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair was in error in striking down amendments Nos. 2877 and 2878. Those amendments are reinstated.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to talk a little bit today about the Affordable Care Act and its benefit to America's women. I want to thank Senators MURPHY, BOXER, and WHITEHOUSE who have organized a few of us to come to the floor today. They will be on the floor later this afternoon.

But with so much discussion in the news about the recent completion of the March enrollment period—over 7 million people enrolled in the Affordable Care Act through the exchanges—I feel it is a good time to look at some of the benefits of the ACA, but also where there is more work to do.

I know the Presiding Officer has been very focused on ''where there is more work to do.'' I applaud the Presiding Officer for that. I will talk about some of those issues as well. But first, let me start with a couple of Virginia stories because we hear stories from our constituents about the Affordable Care Act.

There is a 27-year-old woman in Charlottesville who was diagnosed with uterine cancer. Before the ACA, her previous insurance plan refused to cover her surgery because cancer was a preexisting condition. She is now enrolled in a health plan under the ACA, and her doctor and hospital where she is planning the surgery were confirmed to be in the provider network.

In Alexandria, VA, there is a woman by the name of Aqualyn Laury. She is 43 years old. She suffered a stroke and a heart attack at a young age and had been on a preexisting condition insurance plan that was extremely expensive for some time. With her coverage scheduled to end, Aqualyn recently enrolled in coverage through the health insurance marketplace. She found a plan through the marketplace with a reputable company with a premium of approximately $245 a month, with copays and deductibles that were easy to understand.

Angelette Harrell from Norfolk was able to purchase a plan on the exchange. Now, she had a problem with ACA because she could not work the Web site. But she did not give up. She called the phone number. She was able to find a plan that is $85 a month with a tax credit. She works in a care facility for adults with autism. She says she could not afford a plan that would have been $280 a month without the tax credit. Because she is under 200 percent of the poverty level, she gets a credit, and she gets a plan for $85 a month. That makes her a more reliable employee. She said: ''It felt great. I finally got insured.''

She was able to enroll. I will tell a story about another great Virginia woman, my wife, and her experience with the Affordable Care Act. We had to buy insurance on the open market for the first time as a family in the summer of 2012. Like any good husband who wants to get something done right, I asked my wife to do it.

My wife comparison shopped with a couple of insurance companies. Two insurance companies told my wife: We can give you insurance, but we can only give you insurance for four of your five family members because of preexisting conditions—one because of me and one because of one of my kids. We have to be about the healthiest family in the United States. The only hospitalizations our family of five have ever had are the three times for child birth for my wife.

Yet insurance companies told her when she called in that we—boy, I tell you, do not tell my wife we can insure four of your five family members—an important safety tip. They told her that. She said: That is now against the law.

The company said: No, it is not. This is what we do.

Well, talk to your supervisor and call me back. It is against the law.

The company had to call back in both instances within a few hours and say: You are right. It is against the law. Here is a quote for your entire family.

The ACA is helping women and families in all circumstances, people who are working in low-income jobs and cannot afford insurance or people who are well off like me but need protection from the former practice of denying people for preexisting conditions.

Here are some ways the ACA works for women in particular. The law eliminates the ability of insurers to charge higher rates due to gender. Do you know that the unfair practice of charging women more, a gender rating system, was resulting in women in this country paying $1 billion more in annual premiums than men prior to the passing of the ACA. That is now illegal. Nearly 30 million women are receiving free coverage for comprehensive women's preventive services, including diabetes, cancer screening, contraception, and family planning. That is an important benefit for women.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, both women and men are free from lifetime annual limits on insurance coverage in 10 essential health benefits, like hospital visits and prescription drugs. It is not only about health, the ACA is also helping the financial health of women and families. Insurance companies under the ACA are now subject to a national rate review provision if they want to increase premiums higher than 10 percent. In 2012 alone, those rate reviews saved 6.8 million Americans an estimated $1.2 billion in premiums just in 1 year.

Insurance companies are also required to spend their premium dollars in a smart way. They have to spend at least 80 percent of premium dollars on patient care and quality improvement. That is at least 85 percent for large insurers. In 2013—just in calendar year 2013—8.5 million Americans received rebates averaging $100 per family because of this particular provision.

An estimated 3.1 million young Americans are able to stay on family policies—that is also affecting my family in a positive way—up until age 26. Families with incomes between 100 and 400 percent of the poverty line are eligible for tax credits. So as an example, a family of four in Virginia making $50,000 can access a health plan with premiums as low as $48 a month—health care for your family for less than your cell phone bill, for less than your cable bill. This is remarkable. Plans are required to limit family's out-of-pocket health care costs to less than $12,700 a year.

Like the Presiding Officer, I am a fixer; I am not a repealer. I think there are a lot of fixings that are still needed in the Affordable Care Act and, frankly, in our health care system generally, not just in the ACA. There is more that we can do to make the ACA work better for women and families.

Medicaid expansion is an example, a critical step that my State, Virginia, has yet to take. Without Medicaid expansion, uninsured women will face a coverage gap. With Medicaid expansion, over 400,000 Virginians will receive health care coverage. The ACA was designed to provide subsidies and tax credits to individuals and families who are making between 138 and 400 percent of the poverty level. But without Medicaid expansion, it is these families—working people—who remain uninsured.

We also have to work on some proposals to continue to improve affordability and choice for all consumers. The Presiding Officer has led an effort with others to put a number of positive reforms on the table. Let me mention a couple that I am very excited about: The Expanded Consumer Choice Act, S. 1729, would create a new tier of coverage, copper plans, and would give people shopping for health insurance more options to meet their family's needs.

Everybody's financial and health situation is different. So more options are great because that gives people more ability to meet their particular needs. That is a very important piece of legislation. The Presiding Officer played a leadership role in it.

I supported expanding the small business tax credit to incentivize more businesses to participate in the tax credit program, to make it easier to access and easier for the small businesses to use. One I am particularly focused on is that we need to close the family glitch loophole. That is not a technical term, the family glitch loophole. The Affordable Care Act says an employee is eligible for subsidized health coverage through the new exchanges if their employer does not offer ''affordable coverage'', which is defined as more than 9.5 percent of the employee's household income.

But the way the law is written, the affordability definition only applies to the price for the employee, not for the family coverage that an employer may offer. So if an employer does not offer affordable family coverage, there is no eligibility for a subsidy for that particular very important coverage, since most people's families are covered through their employer plan. I think that is an important thing we should fix.

So look. There are plenty of things to fix. There are plenty of things about our health care system outside of the Affordable Care Act that we ought to be focusing on and fixing. But repealing the Affordable Care Act, as some colleagues in this body and in the House continue to advocate, would mean turning back on all of these advances: Letting women be discriminated against because of gender, letting families be turned away because of preexisting conditions, saying to folks: Do not worry, you are not going to get a rebate; we can charge whatever premium we want.

The last thing we need to do is repeal the ACA or to go into the homes of nearly 10 million Americans who have received coverage and yank that coverage back from them and put them back out into the wilderness of the individual market where they were not protected before. What we need to do is to be embrace the good and embrace the fixes to make it better. That is what I certainly intend to do working with my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Madam President, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Virginia. I think they were timely and important. I wanted to add one note. The Senator and I were in a hearing yesterday in the Budget Committee with three eminent economists—one was a Noble Prize winner—talking about income inequality and the status of our economy and where we are going.

But there was one aspect of the Affordable Care Act that came up in a discussion that really has gotten essentially no play whatsoever, no discussion in the press or in the media. I think in the long run it may turn out to be one of the most important aspects of the Affordable Care Act. It came home to me 2 weeks ago. Every Wednesday morning I have a coffee in my office here in the Senate office building for anybody from Maine that happens to be in town, whatever reason they are here, whether they are touring or have business in Washington. They can come in and have some blueberry muffins and some Maine coffee.

I met a couple there. The woman, in talking to us—she was down touring and everything. She said: By the way, thanks for supporting the Affordable Care Act.

I said: Oh, well, that is great. I appreciate that. Why do you say that?

She said: Because I have been in a job for a number of years that I do not like. But I could not leave it because it was how I got my health insurance. My husband does not have health insurance. So I had to stay in the job in order to keep the health insurance. She said: Now under the Affordable Care Act, I have an option to get health insurance at a reasonable price so I can leave this job and start my own business.

After I had this discussion, I did a little research. It turns out there is an economic term for this. It is called job lock. All over the country there are thousands, perhaps even millions, of people who are locked into a job where they are not feeling very appreciated, where they are not really enjoying it, where they are not expressing their productivity and their talents fully because they could not leave their insurance.

Now they can. There is a lot of talk around here about job creators. The job creators are the people that start businesses, the entrepreneurs. Those are the job creators. This is going to lead to an explosion of new businesses, of people who do not have to stay in the job that they are in simply because of their health insurance but have the option to go out and start a business of their own because they can get their health insurance at a reasonable price through the Affordable Care Act.

So there is a lot to discuss about the Affordable Care Act. But this is one of the aspects of it that has been underappreciated. As the years go on, we are going to see a decrease in people uninsured—which we are already starting to see—and we are going to see an increase in small businesses because people no longer have to stay in their jobs simply to maintain their insurance.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. HATCH. I rise to speak once again about the process we have been following in the Senate when it comes to major pieces of legislation.

The Senate has been called the world's greatest deliberative body. However, if you look at how it operates these days, I don't think anyone would say that anymore unless they were being sarcastic. We no longer have real debate. Most bills don't go through committee, where they can be refined and improved.

When the Senate Democratic leadership decides to bring a bill to the floor, far more often than not we are blocked from offering any amendments. The unemployment insurance legislation before us today is a good example. Republicans have filed dozens of amendments to this bill. Some of them would definitely improve the UI legislation. Others would address the underlying

problems that have led some to call for another extension of Federal unemployment benefits—namely, the stagnant growth in our economy and jobs. Yet it appears that none of these amendments will get a vote because the Senate Democratic leadership has decided it is more important to protect their Members from having to take difficult votes than it is to actually legislate.

I filed several amendments. Two of them in particular would help to create jobs and prevent further job losses. One of those amendments would repeal the ObamaCare tax on medical devices. We had 79 votes for that. Yet we can't get a vehicle that will put it through. The House will overwhelmingly vote for it. Yet we can't even get time on the floor to take care of it. That shouldn't even be considered controversial. Indeed, a large majority of Senators have already voted in favor of repealing this job-killing tax and protecting an important American industry—I should say important American industries because there are a lot of industries in this area. Repeal of the medical device tax has bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate, as I have mentioned.

I have another amendment that would repeal the ObamaCare employer mandate. On the face of this, this may seem more controversial, but it shouldn't be. After all, the Obama administration has already delayed the mandate for 2 years. If the mandate is so harmful that the administration is afraid to let it go into effect, why don't we simply do away with it altogether and ensure that it doesn't kill any more jobs?

These are reasonable amendments. They deserve a vote. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2905.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, reserving my right to object, the underlying emergency bipartisan legislation is critical to helping 2.7 million Americans, and I would hope we could expeditiously move to that legislation. Therefore, I would object to the unanimous consent request by the distinguished Senator from Utah with respect to his amendment No. 2905.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HATCH. You can imagine how disappointed I am in that.

I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2906.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, the same logic—given the emergency nature of the legislation before us, I would urge immediate action. Therefore, I would object to the senior Senator's unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, the Senate didn't used to operate this way.

I have been to the floor many times over the past few years to talk about the deterioration of the Senate procedures under the current majority and to call for a return to the deliberative traditions of this Chamber. Many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle have done the same. Sadly, it appears our calls have fallen on deaf ears.

I have been in the Senate a long time, and I have never seen it worse than it is right now. There have been some very rough times in the Senate over the years, but I have never seen it worse. Over the past number of years, the majority has called up a bill and then immediately filed cloture as if we were filibustering, when we don't have any intention to filibuster. All we want is to be able to call up amendments. But, in addition to filing cloture, the majority will fill the tree, making impossible for anyone to call up an amendment.

Frankly, this is not the way to run the Senate.

All I can say is that the Senate is not being run the way it should be run.

I have no objection to filling the tree after a full and extended debate when people have an opportunity to bring up their amendments, full-blooded Senators here on the floor, who have the right to bring up those amendments.

I have no problem with amendments that I totally disagree with being brought up, but you can't even do that most of the time on these bills unless, basically, the leadership on the Democratic side approves. Until recently, this body has always had the position that we can call up germane and nongermane amendments. That is what makes this body great. It is what has given it such prestige over the years. Now, with it being run this way, we've just become a rubberstamp for the leadership. That can work both ways. I think it is a bad thing to do. However, the principle has been started and the precedent has been set.

I lament this because I have been here long enough to see some of the greatest debates in the history of the Senate done right here on this floor. Some were initiated by Democrats who wanted their right to be able to bring up everything and to really have it debated—whether it was germane or nongermane—and assert their rights on the floor. Others were brought up by Republicans filing amendments that Democrats didn't like. But the Democratic leadership in the past acknowledged that, my gosh, you have the right to do that in the most deliberative body in the world. But we have made it anything but the most deliberative body in the world with this type of procedure.

It is my hope that the Republicans will be able to take over the Senate in 2014. Perhaps that won't happen, but I would like to see it happen. If it does, I think my friends on the other side are going to feel very badly if this same type of maneuvering is done to prevent them from bringing up the amendments they would like to bring up. But, I personally believe that, with Republicans in the majority, we would get back to the regular order that the rules were before these types of shenanigans took place.

This is important stuff, and there is a lot of concern on our side regarding how the Senate is currently being run. As the most senior Republican in this body, I understand those feelings. I have them too.

It is wrong, certainly not right, and we need to change this. We need to make it back to the most deliberative body in the world. Should we do that, I think everybody here will breathe a sigh of relief and say: My gosh, each side will have these rights restored that have been so distorted during the last number of years.

I am sorry I couldn't get these two amendments. One of them was the medical device tax repeal. We brought it up before during the debate over the budget. Seventy-nine of our colleagues—79 of us—voted for that amendment. It was a bipartisan vote, a vote that had tremendous leadership on the Democratic side through the distinguished Senator from Minnesota, Senator KLOBUCHAR, who has been a wonderful leader on that issue. If it wasn't bipartisan, maybe I would understand it, but it is not only bipartisan, it is crucial to all of the medical device companies throughout the United States that have set the standard for the whole world.

We are going to get that passed sooner or later, but in the meantime we are having medical device companies leaving the United States because of that stupid gross tax on gross sales, if you can believe it. There is only one reason it was put into the health care legislation, and that was because they needed about $30 billion—with a ''b''—for ObamaCare. It was basically a phony approach to come up with $30 billion that has deliberately hurt one of the greatest budding industries in America.

I can't think of a more stupid tax than one that taxes the gross sales of these companies. That is a dangerous, debilitating, disgusting, wrongful tax. Yet we can't even get a vehicle over here to put it on—the other body would pass it quickly—so that we can get rid of it.

All I can say is that I am very disappointed, but I do understand how this body works.

With that, 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. CARDIN. 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. CARDIN. Madam President, the numbers are in—over 7 million Americans have enrolled through the health exchanges around the Nation.

When we passed the Affordable Care Act 4 years ago, projections were that we would hit the 7 million mark of enrollees at the close of the first year of enrollment. We have exceeded those numbers. We have exceeded those numbers even though we had a very rough rollout of the exchanges and people were frustrated when they couldn't get information as quickly as they wanted. But Americans wanted insurance, and they knew they could get affordable coverage, so they stuck with it and now we know that, in fact, over 7 million have enrolled.

When we see the final numbers, those numbers are going to go up because there were a lot of people in the process of signing up online on March 31 and the processing has not been completed. So we will see more. Plus, we have the Medicaid expansion, which is going to bring millions more with health insurance coverage than we had before.

Over the last 4 years we have seen incredible progress and help going out to all Americans with their health coverage and their health costs. No longer do we have preexisting conditions. A family who has a child with asthma doesn't have to worry whether that asthma will be considered a preexisting condition to full coverage. A woman does not have to worry about having a child being a preexisting condition to full coverage. Parents can keep their adult children on their insurance policies until the age of 26. There are no longer any caps on insurance. Many Americans thought they had insurance coverage only to go through a serious illness and find their insurance had a cap that did not cover all the expenses. No longer do families have to worry about being forced into bankruptcy because of an illness or an injury.

Our seniors now have much stronger coverage under Medicare, with preventive care covered without any deductibles. Prescription drug coverage is now more complete with that so-called doughnut hole—that coverage gap—being filled. And the solvency of the Medicare trust fund has been extended by a decade.

Small business owners have a choice of the types of plans they want. They do not have to worry about one person in their employment getting sick during the year and causing an astronomical increase in their premiums. They also have help and affordability in paying for their health insurance for their employees.

Community health centers have been expanded and offer such coverage as prenatal care. In my own State of Maryland we are seeing the low birth weight baby numbers declining and infant mortality rates going down. We are now providing more pediatric dental services within the community. That is all as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

So we now have passed the March 31 date and the first year of enrollment. Many Americans now have affordable quality health care and a choice. They have a good product at a reasonable cost.

Everybody hears the numbers, but I want to go through a few—and I have literally hundreds—of the letters I have received from real people whose real lives have been affected. They are one of those 7.1 million people, and we could read millions of accounts just like this. This is from Dr. Michael L. of Cecil County in a letter to the Baltimore Sun. He said:

> My wife and I would like to thank President Barack Obama for helping us save almost $4,000 a year on health care. I am 61 years old with a preexisting condition of asthma, which is under control with medication. Yet before the Affordable Care Act, my insurance company felt it necessary to charge me 25 percent more for my insurance coverage. I'm sure there are many others like myself with preexisting conditions who will see a savings on their coverage. The public should know that since Fox News and the GOP would have us believe ObamaCare helps no one and will cost everyone more.

This is from Colleen F. of Anne Arundel County, and she posted on our Facebook.

> Senator—I am 26 years old and have been on COBRA paying $570 a month for coverage because of a pre-existing condition—asthma. I want to thank you for fighting for the ACA!! I applied recently . . . and was accepted into the program. I now pay $243 a month with a $500 deductible! Thank you thank you thank you! Affordable health care is a human right—thank you for fighting on my behalf!

Kelly ''M'' wrote:

> I have a new plan. I haven't had insurance for years. When I applied for insurance before, I was denied for pre-existing conditions, even for plans with huge deductibles. I signed up on the Maryland Healthcare Exchange back in October, and by January 1st, I was holding an insurance card from Carefirst Blueshield and have already had my first doctor's appointment. It works. I am proof. And I'm so grateful that I can take care of myself with dignity without having to go to the ER whenever I'm sick or have to spend half my paycheck at an urgent care center. I can do all of the preventative measures that I have been putting off, and get back on the road to health. It's a good feeling.

Pam S. of Frederick County, MD, wrote:

> My daughter and I met with a Navigator from the ''Door to HealthCare'' . . . to discuss applying for health care. We had been having problems with the enrollment process. I had been paying for a separate plan for her and now she is paying $55 less per month. Now my daughter gets to have a comprehensive plan, cheaper than before and without any interruption on her coverage. Thank you!

Ryan, from Prince George's County, has aged out of her parents' insurance. Ryan was suffering from asthma and a sinus infection, but she was unable to afford a doctor's visit on her own. After attending a local Affordable Care Act information session, she logged onto the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and was able to go through the entire process and pick an affordable health plan. She is now insured and able to get the treatment she needs.

Ryan is 26 years old. Those under 26 can be on their parents' policy. We talk about young people who think they will never need insurance. I was in downtown Baltimore over the weekend at a fair where we were enrolling people in the Affordable Care Act. I saw many people of Ryan's age—young people over 26 years of age, who were there to find out whether this was right for them. When they left, they held an insurance card. They had enrolled because they found out how reasonable the price was for a young person to get comprehensive coverage.

I have quite a few more, and maybe on a later date I will come back and read some of the other letters I have received. But the point I want to bring up is we have fundamentally changed the health care system from a system that was basically a sick system—only if you got sick, figured out how to pay your bills, maybe you went through bankruptcy—to a health care system where we keep people healthy, where we provide for comprehensive preventive health care so people can stay out of emergency rooms and hospitals.

Yes, we have benefited those who had no health insurance. Millions of people now have coverage who didn't have coverage before the Affordable Care Act. We have brought them into the system. They don't have to fear bankruptcy. They can take care of themselves, and they can do it in a more cost-effective way for all of us.

We have helped our seniors. No question about it. They now have more comprehensive benefits, and they have a system that is on a more stable financial footing.

But we also have helped those who already had insurance. We have helped them by giving them a better product, by making sure the premiums insurance companies charge are used for patients' benefits and not excessive profits. They must spend 80 to 85 percent; otherwise, they have to give a rebate.

We have gotten people out of the emergency room. I was asked on C–SPAN today: Well, aren't we helping the providers? After all, people who go to hospitals now are more likely to pay their bills. Absolutely right. But guess who paid for that uncompensated care. Those of us who had insurance. Our premiums were higher as a result of people not paying their bills. Well, now they are going to be paying their bills. First of all, they are going to stay out of the hospital which will save us all money. But if they need to be in the hospital, they will have the insurance coverage to pay for it.

The Affordable Care Act has worked for all of us by bringing down the growth rate of health care costs, by making the system more efficient. Today I think we can acknowledge the fundamentals are sound. People are taking advantage of it. We hope, as we go forward, more and more will.

One final point. When Medicare Part D was passed and we projected the number of seniors who would take advantage of it, we hit about 70 percent of our projection in the first year. On the Affordable Care Act and the health exchanges, we are over 100 percent. This program is working. People know it. The more they know about it, the more they like what they see.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I rise today to speak about a critical disaster relief bill I recently introduced here in the Senate.

In the West, we have a saying that ''Mother Nature bats last.'' For millions of Americans, that saying is a reminder that often entire communities are at the mercy of the raw force of nature and natural disasters. Sadly, we are reminded of this truism every year with wildfires in the West, hurricanes in the South, and ice storms along the Atlantic seaboard. The devastating and tragic mudslides that have recently devastated Oso, WA, are the latest example.

First, and most importantly, I wish to express my deepest and most heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of this tragedy in Washington State. I assure the people of Washington that Coloradans stand ready to assist in whatever way we can with a recovery process we know all too well ourselves. We are all in this together.

In times of disasters such as these, I believe there are no Democrats or Republicans. We put aside partisan divides to unite in the face of tragedy. When confronted by these dire situations, we stand united to support our fellow Americans who have been shaken by the destructive forces of Mother Nature.

When the Northeast was rocked by Superstorm Sandy in 2012, a majority of the Congress stood together to fund relief and recovery efforts, not because it benefited their State or because they expected anything in return, but because it was simply the right thing to do. Similarly, when Hurricane Katrina devastated the gulf coast in 2005, we united to support our fellow Americans who lost their homes and livelihoods in the hurricane and its aftermath. And when ice jams just last year caused the Yukon River to spill its banks, flooding Galena, AK, and the surrounding towns, Congress stood as one to provide aid and assistance for those in need.

My State too has felt the pain of destructive and unprecedented natural disasters in recent years. In fact, many parts of Colorado are still reeling from the September 2013 floods that resulted in 10 deaths, washed away homes and businesses, and literally redrew the map across parts of my State. In my travels to places such as Evans, Jamestown, and Estes Park, I witnessed firsthand how thousands were impacted by this disaster, which spanned 200 square miles and 15 counties.

Fortunately, in spite of a destructive and partisan government shutdown that forced all of us to scramble just days after the flooding, many of the 18,000 evacuees in my State have returned home and are working on rebuilding their lives and their communities. This is thanks to the assistance from Federal and State agencies, including important relief funding made possible by the Superstorm Sandy relief package we passed here in Congress in a bipartisan manner.

In sum, we in Colorado are on the road to recovery thanks to the tremendous efforts of thousands of people, including many of our colleagues here in the Senate. But as my colleagues who have dealt with their own natural disasters know all too well, the initial relief efforts are only the first step.

Looking ahead over the next couple of months, Colorado—like many other Western States—may be facing another round of devastating floods, wildfires, and mudslides. Why? Colorado, like Washington, has received an above-average snowpack this year. We have more snow than normal and we are expecting 127 percent of average snowmelt this spring. So when we combine this increased snowpack and the impending spring runoff with streambeds still jammed full of debris, crumbling riverbanks, and waterways that the flood rerouted out of their original path, Colorado still has a recipe for disaster on our hands.

I will share a photograph of what happened in one of our communities. We can see the culvert washed out, the vehicles embedded in the cobbles and sand and boulders of the riverbed. The riverbed itself was completely rerouted during the flooding when it took out the road in that particular area. The good news is, as we look at the potential for additional disaster, we have the power here in Congress to confront the disaster before it has a chance to occur.

I wish to speak to the history of what Congress did. Congress recognized the importance of stabilizing waterbanks, preventing soil erosion, and clearing debris from waterways back in 1978 through the Agricultural Credit Act. As part of that important law, Congress authorized the Emergency Watershed Protection Program—or EWP for short. As many of my colleagues know well, EWP provides critical disaster relief assistance for families and communities which have suffered severe damages from flood, fire, drought, or other natural disasters.

The EWP Program focuses on funding critical emergency recovery measures for runoff mitigation and erosion prevention that will relieve imminent hazards to life and property presented by natural disasters. Protecting and repairing these watersheds, wherever they may be, is critical in preventing the type of erosion that leads to massive mudslides and future disasters.

Unfortunately, even though our country is rocked by these natural disasters every year, the critical EWP Program does not receive consistent funding. The sporadic and inconsistent way we fund it—via ad hoc supplemental bills—has created a backlog in need of over $120 million nationally.

For my colleagues in the Chamber who may not immediately recognize the importance of EWP and the program attached to it, let me make clear that there are 14 States which have projects left unfunded because of this backlog, meaning there are up to 28 Senators who could see relief in their home States if we pass this bill.

This backlog is unacceptable. It is preventing us from funding dozens of projects that can help reduce the frequency and severity of mudslides, projects that can protect our watersheds, and projects that can save lives.

So with this in mind, I rise today to ask this Congress to come together yet again and pass legislation, which I introduced last week, supporting a more permanent funding stream for the EWP Program. I have introduced the bill with my home State colleague, Senator BENNET, and it has been cosponsored by the senior Senator from Washington, PATTY MURRAY.

It will not cost a dime, but it will finally change the way we structurally fund the EWP Program by creating a common, unified account to provide support to families and communities around the country.

This commonsense legislation would also free up dollars that have already been appropriated in the past but have not been used. Unlocking these dollars will not create additional spending but will infuse this newly created account with seed funding to begin clearing out the backlog and helping States such as Colorado finance critical projects that can save lives.

Moving forward, my bill sets up a system where appropriators and States impacted in the future can ensure that every dollar made available to the EWP Program is used when needed, and put back into this important, permanent fund when it is not, reducing the threat and the cost of future disasters.

As an avid outdoorsman, I am well aware of the dangers presented by the forces of nature. I have been a longtime supporter of EWP and its vital relief efforts. The importance of this program was only further emphasized to me last September when boulders, water, and debris came roaring through Eldorado Canyon, which is just a short mile from my home, and there were scenes like this as well near my home.

It has become very clear that every moment we spend trying to piece together ad hoc funding for this program every year—after these disasters have already occurred—is another moment that could be spent rebuilding the homes and the livelihoods of Americans who have been struck by Mother Nature.

Americans should not be forced to wonder or worry about partisan divides undermining their ability to access

critical resources and services. They shouldn't have to face the uncertainty of whether Congress will pass supplemental funding to support their families and communities after a devastating event such as the one we see here that forever changes their lives. And they certainly shouldn't have to wait for Congress in order to access essential and proven services from the EWP Program when a disaster leaves their homes and communities in shambles. Unfortunately, some in this Congress have shown that they are incapable of rising above partisan posturing to help those in need. The reckless partisanship of these individuals nearly prevented us from passing a bill to help the storm-ravaged States affected by Hurricane Sandy and kept the government shut down 16 days, even as we in Colorado were struggling to take the important first steps toward recovering from our historic fall flooding.

We cannot let funding as critical as EWP be subjected to this kind of rancor, which is why my bill is so important. That is why it is long past time EWP receives a solid, dependable funding stream. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation, and I look forward to working with Senate appropriators to actively finance this fund for years to come.

With the funding structure created by my bill in place, communities around the country that have been knocked off their feet by brutal and unanticipated disasters will be able to count on this program to immediately help them get back up and onto the road to recovery. This is not only responsible to do, it is right to do.

I wish to briefly touch on a slightly different topic but one that is also very important specifically to Colorado; that is, the national security, economic, and job-boosting potential of exporting liquid natural gas or LNG.

This is a topic which I and many Senators from both sides of the aisle have been talking about over the recent weeks, particularly in light of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and Russia's use of its natural gas exports as a weapon. Russian aggression and its incursion into the Crimean peninsula illustrates precisely the reason we cannot wait any longer to responsibly develop our natural gas reserves and to export this resource abroad.

Unfortunately, new facilities to export LNG are on hold right now waiting for approval at the U.S. Department of Energy. While the Department of Energy approval is only one step in a complex process to construct a new export facility—a process that includes environmental access and public input—it has become an unacceptable logjam. That is why I introduced a bill a few weeks ago that would break the logjam and pave the way for approval of LNG exports to World Trade Organization nations, in effect approving the pending applications in the queue.

My bill is bipartisan and bicameral, and it would send a signal to international markets that the days of Russia's monopolistic stranglehold on energy supplies is waning. My bill would pave the way for more American jobs and provide a shot in the arm to our economy. That is why I was disappointed to learn that several of my colleagues have decided that another political vote is more important than good policy and decided to push an LNG amendment tied to the approval of the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline.

I voted against both Republican and Democratic Keystone Pipeline amendments because I believe these political votes by both sides only set back progress on the real review process. Tying good LNG policy to a political vote about an unrelated topic doesn't lead to progress on either issue. Instead, it shows the political motivations of those who are deciding to go this route.

My friend from Wyoming, Senator BARRASSO, has a strong bill that would open LNG exports to a targeted group of countries in Europe, which he tried to attach to the Ukraine aid bill. I agreed with that effort. He also filed my bill, which opens LNG more broadly, as an amendment to that same legislation during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee markup. Both of these approaches have bipartisan support, both of them would make a difference, and both of them are worthy of consideration.

So I invite all of us who want to get something done to abandon election or political gains and focus on what matters. We can leverage our natural resources to promote global security, create jobs, and prevent power-hungry leaders such as Putin from using energy supplies as a weapon. Let's get this done and work together to find a real way forward, and let's have a vote.

Madam President, thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I see Senator BLUNT. I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of Senator BLUNT's remarks, I be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment on this bill, No. 2885.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, because of the emergency nature of the underlying bipartisan bill to aid about 2.7 million Americans, I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, let me talk about why I think we should have this and other amendments on this bill.

My friend from Colorado just talked about an amendment that he said he supported last week. Of course, none of us got to support it on the Ukrainian bill because it wasn't allowed to come up, just like on this issue of talking about unemployment extension or the other things that our friends on the other side have announced in a pretty aggressive way that they intend to bring up because they just hope to have a political issue rather than a process that will actually work.

I believe we should have these energy amendments such as the one I am proposing on this bill because getting people back to work and being concerned about people's take-home pay, being concerned about what people get to keep of what they earn is an important part of this whole process.

So the amendment my friend objected to would be an amendment that would make it very difficult—it would establish another hurdle before anyone could have a carbon tax. This amendment is similar to the one I offered during the budget debate this year, and 53 of my colleagues supported it, so a majority of the Members of the Senate are for this but just not the majority it would take in the Senate to get it done.

A carbon tax would force families to pay more at the pump. What is a carbon tax? It is a tax on fuels that have some carbon component, and that means fuels such as gasoline, coal-based electricity, and other fossil fuels. For this component, you would have to pay more at the gas pump, you would have to pay more for your heating, more for your cooling, more for virtually every product we make in America.

The energy bill, the utility bill is a big component of what we make in the country today, and it could be one of our huge advantages in manufacturing and job creation, but we are headed in a direction with our view of energy that is not the most focused on more American energy and that doesn't take advantage of the moment we could be in.

Areas where I live in Missouri, people in the South and Midwest—frankly, from about the middle of Pennsylvania to the western edge of Wyoming—are heavily dependent on coal for electricity. About 50 percent of all the electricity in that vast majority of the land mass of America is from coal. Eighty-two percent of the electricity produced in Missouri is from coal. There are at least five States that have a higher dependency on coal than we do. If we had a cap-and-trade bill, the estimates are that our bill would have gone up about 40 percent since 2013.

A carbon tax is disproportionately impactful on people who are struggling to get by. If you want to really do things that impact the vulnerable in our society, make the utility bill higher. If you want to really do things that impact the vulnerable in our society who are looking for work, make it harder to put those jobs in the United States of America.

About 40 million U.S. households that currently earn less than $30,000 per year spend almost 20 percent of their income already on energy. Why would we want that percentage to be higher. What you make is not nearly as important as what you are able to use to advance your family. If the utility bill is 30 percent of what you make or 40 percent of what you make instead of 20 percent, obviously the other things you would have done with that money could not have been, done.

These are the households that can least afford to have the new energy-efficient refrigerators. These are the last households to get the better windows, the last houses to get more insulation in the ceiling and the walls, the first houses where people have to think about, What room do we shut off this winter because we cannot use all the rooms in the house in the way we would like to? It would be nice to be able to fill up your tank rather than stand at the gas pump and wonder, Can I possibly afford to put more gas in than that pump has already shown on prices that are already too high.

There are lots of amendments on this bill about energy, none of which, I am told, will be allowed, and I think that is a tragedy.

A 2013 study by the National Association of Manufacturers found that the overall effect of a carbon tax on American jobs would be staggering, with a loss of worker income equivalent to about $13 million and 1.5 million jobs. Why would we want to take that out of our economy when we can not only keep it there, but by enhancing more American energy, we could expand it?

The utility bill is an increasingly important part of job creation. Energy-sensitive industries such as chemicals, auto manufacturing, iron and steel manufacturing, cement, mining, and refining sectors are the hardest hit by a carbon tax, and these sectors would see a big drop in their manufacturing output.

So if we had the kind of debate we ought to have, it would be a debate about how we get people back to work rather than how we continue to extend benefits in a policy that was never intended to have never-ending benefits. This system doesn't work. It doesn't work for people who pay into the system or draw out of the system if we abuse it.

I think we all know this is not the debate we should be having this week, and I would like to see us have a debate on how we could improve the economy while we deal with this so-called immediate need that we are talking about on the floor instead of the things we ought to be talking about.

I wish to talk for a few minutes about the announcements yesterday about how many people have signed up for the President's health care plan. As I said when the Web site wouldn't work, it is not about whether the Web site works. Frankly, it is not even about how many people sign up. This is about whether this is the right direction for us to go as a country. Is this health care more affordable, and will more people be insured, and will the people who are insured be insured with policies they can afford and coverage they want?

The President, of course, and everybody understands the Web site had its problems. I think we would be really remiss if we decided—if making the Web site work was the test of the program or, frankly, making people sign up was the test of the program.

This debate is not over. It shouldn't be over. We need to continue to look for ways to try to make this work better because I certainly continue to hear from Missourians who tell me that the course they are on is hurting their families, hurting their job opportunities.

The law of unintended consequences appears to be the law here that is most likely to be applied, the unintended consequences of people who are going to work part time, the unintended consequences of people who are looking at a job that used to be a full-time job but now the government said: You don't have to provide benefits unless somebody works 30 hours a week. I guess what the government really said was that you have to provide benefits when they do work 30 hours a week. But people immediately look at that and the society adjusts to that government determination. So suddenly people are working 28 and 29 and 20 hours without benefits where they might have been working those same hours before with some level of benefits or might have—more importantly for their families—been working full time before.

We are going to continue to talk about this law and how it serves people. Let me give a couple of quick examples as I conclude this morning.

I had a person in the office this morning who was here for another purpose. He is a radiologist from Cape Girardeau, MO, and he said he received notice that his insurance was going to go up $500 a month for the same coverage until the President made the decision to suspend the law, which is a totally different debate topic, whether the President can do that. But when the President suspended the application of this law, which everybody is supposed to be so excited about, they were able to keep the policy they had for another year, and it was $500 a month less—$6,000 a year less for that family.

Here is some information I got today from Sherry in Shelbyville, MO, who said that her 18-year-old son has had cerebral palsy his whole life. They had a medicine that works that allows him to deal with this. Last year a 3-month supply of this particular medicine went from $125 to $1,086—almost a $1,000 increase. But that may or may not be impacted by what is happening with overall health care policies. What was impacted this year was her family's deductible. Their deductible went from $500 to $5,000. They were paying $500 on a 3-month supply of medicine. A 1-year supply of that medicine cost a little over $4,000. They were paying $500 of that, and now they are paying all of that.

Her view—which would be the view of most working families—is: We had insurance we could afford, we had insurance that met our needs, and now we are paying $3,500 more than we were paying. For almost any family, $300 a month makes a big difference. It particularly makes a difference for families who are struggling and already dealing with a health problem.

Pete from Jackson, MO, receives health care benefits through his employer, but his wife and two children had health insurance through an independent carrier. His wife and children's plan will be dropped November 30 of this year. Their new plan will cost $1,200 per month instead of $530 for similar coverage they have right now.

By the way, these are just a few of the letters from the top of the list. If I had more time, I could certainly read more letters.

I have a letter from Greg who is from St. Joseph. His out-of-pocket expenses went from $2,500 per year to $10,000 per year. He is paying that by going into his 401(k) retirement plan. If anybody thinks Greg and his family are better off from this new change in the law by paying $10,000 out of pocket instead of the $2,500 out of pocket—and he is having to dip into his retirement plan to help pay for his health insurance—I would like to hear from them.

There are people who had insurance before this new law, and although they have insurance now through the exchange, they just happen to be paying in many cases a lot more and have a deductible that is a lot higher. I think that would be a great debate for us to have on the floor now that we know, as a country, what is at stake.

What do we do to be sure the best health care system in the world works better for everybody? How do we make changes so that those who are outside of the system have a better chance to be a part of that system rather than penalizing everybody who had insurance they thought was working for them?

I yield the floor to my friend from Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise today to discuss the underlying legislation, which is so critical. It is an emergency. On December 28, we stopped extending unemployment benefits for at that point 1.3 million Americans. These are individuals who were working and who are looking for work, since that is the only way you can collect these benefits.

Since that time, they have been without the very modest support that emergency unemployment insurance provides. It provides about $300 a week. We are trying, on a bipartisan basis, to

move this legislation through this body and get it to the House so these people can get some help and support as they continue to look for work.

This legislation will support a program that is vital to 2.7 million Americans, and it is a bipartisan compromise. This is not something that is being jammed through exclusively at the will of the majority. This has been an effort that began months ago. First we worked with Senator HELLER and then other colleagues—Senator COLLINS, Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator PORTMAN, and Senator KIRK.

We listened to their suggestions and incorporated them so we could move forward on a bipartisan basis as we have done on so many different topics. We would like to have a vote, move it to the House, and have it signed by the President so we can get the relief, support, and assistance to these Americans. Again, I have to emphasize that they are only qualified for this program because they lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and they are continuing to look for work in a very difficult economy.

The one other thing I wanted to mention, which is very important, is we are building on significant changes to the unemployment compensation laws that were passed in 2012. At that time the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee in the House of Representatives, Chairman DAVE CAMP of Michigan, described these as historic reforms. Our goal, as I said many times during the past few weeks and months, and prior to and since the ending of these benefits on December 28, is to find a path forward to a rather straightforward extension of the benefits. Again, this is a temporary extension. It is a 5-month total window, but with each day more of it is retroactive. The reason we wanted to look for a very straightforward proposal is that, first, it would recognize the important changes and reforms that were made in 2012. Many of the ideas I have seen and heard discussed around here actually were considered thoughtfully in 2012 and incorporated in many cases—not all cases—into the legislation.

The other thing we want to do is make this as administratively feasible as possible to implement by the State agencies. Adding significant changes, such as adding a training component that didn't exist before, not only complicated the implementation, but when you stop and step back, it usually costs money.

One of the underlying premises, particularly from my colleagues who worked with us from the Republican side, is that this whole effort has to be fully funded. This bill is fully offset during this ten year budgetary window. This is paid for, it incorporates the ideas and suggestions from my colleagues on the other side, and it is now time to move for passage.

I recognize there are many issues we could deal with in the Senate. Many of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have come to us with their issues. But to do that would undercut the ability to, in timely manner,—today or I hope tomorrow, but certainly this week—pass this legislation and move forward.

Millions of Americans are facing a crisis. They are out of work and looking for a job. In my State there are probably two applicants for every job, and in many cases there are probably three or four applicants for every job. We also recognize this is a long-term unemployed population that is different in some respects than previous episodes of unemployment. There are indications and suggestions that they are older on average. They are also facing a situation where the economy has been very difficult for many years.

Many of them are homeowners who can't sell their house because of the market so they can't move to an area where there is work. Many of them, particularly if they are middle-aged, have responsibilities to mothers and fathers who may have health issues, and children they have to support. The overall situation is that these individuals are facing a very difficult challenge.

There is a very thoughtful paper by the former chair of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Alan Krueger, and his colleagues. They described the difficulty of these unemployed Americans in this economy, particularly for the long-term unemployed.

We have seen periods of significant unemployment. I can recall the 1980s, when unemployment hit 10 percent, but normally there is a relatively fast response once the right fiscal and monetary policies are put in place. Some of that was because of the mobility of the American people back then, contrasted to people who are now tied to their home because they can't sell it, and some of it is due to the relative age of the unemployed back then where the mobility was not as much of a factor as it is today.

We are trying to help these people who have, in many cases, worked for decades and now for the first time find themselves in a very difficult situation.

If you look overall, there are 10.4 million Americans who are out of work but are looking for that job—for that fair shot—so they have a chance to move on and be a part of the American economy. Extending emergency unemployment benefits to these 2.7 million people is just one part of the efforts we have to undertake. No one should be under the impression that this is a solution. No. This is just a response to the incredible need of these very worthwhile Americans who are looking for work.

I do note that this aid is very targeted. I cannot repeat it enough. There is this sort of notion out there that this is sort of a giveaway to people who are undeserving. Well, the benefits are targeted to people who meet very specific criteria and, most importantly, they have to have an adequate work history to be eligible for unemployment insurance in the first place. They have to be workers. We are trying to help workers. They have to have lost their job through no fault of their own—they were laid off. It is not as though they didn't like their job and left, or had problems in the workplace and were not fitting in. These are people who want to work, and they were told they cannot work any longer. They were downsized, they were outsourced—all the 10K euphemisms for saying, ''We don't need you anymore.'' Well, they are important people who want to work, and they have to actively look for work in order to qualify for benefits. This is not an open-ended benefit to individuals who have no end in sight. They are either going to find a job or exhaust these benefits.

One of the reforms we did in 2012, frankly, was to shrink the period of time. Previous to 2012, there were 73 weeks of emergency extended benefits. We shrunk that down to 47 weeks. So this notion that this is an unending, indefinite, long-term benefit to people who don't earn it is completely incorrect.

This program has been in effect for a very long time. Indeed, some form of it has been put in place since 2008 when George W. Bush was the President, when we first started seeing the signs of increasing unemployment. This was in conjunction with the near collapse of many financial institutions, in 2007 and 2008. The housing market was literally coming off the tracks. The consequences for the American economy at that time were probably the most severe since the Great Depression. One of the ways we have been dealing with these issues began with President Bush, and continuing now with President Obama, is emergency unemployment compensation benefits for Americans.

I think we have to look at and be conscious of all of the facts and data. We are also at a point where we have to recognize there are two programs. There is a State program, which covers the first 26 weeks, and then there is the emergency Federal unemployment benefits program.

This emergency program, in some respects, is becoming much more critical, because what we find now is that the long-term unemployed are probably twice the number you would typically associate with an economy such as ours at the present moment. We have unemployment rates that range from the high—unfortunately Rhode Island is at 9 percent—to the very low. There are some States because of the commodities—particularly energy commodities—that virtually have no unemployment.

At this point we should not see the kind of long-term unemployed we are seeing. The Federal program—not the State program, which is the first 26 weeks—is going to help these people

who are particularly struggling. It is a targeted program—very much targeted—but it has an outsized impact. Not only are the workers who are receiving this very modest weekly stipend of roughly $300 a week able to pay for essentials, but it has a very positive effect on our overall economy.

All of my colleagues are here today saying, listen, not only do we have to help these people, but more importantly, we have to grow this economy. Well, by the way, the legislation we are proposing does both. These emergency benefits have been repeatedly analyzed by economists, and they have been determined to provide a significantly greater bang for the buck than many other programs being talked about today on the floor that are being suggested as alternatives or complements to what we are talking about. That is why the Congressional Budget Office, in a very modest and conservative analysis, projected that if we fail to extend these emergency benefits through 2014—through the whole year—it would cost our economy 200,000 jobs. So those people who are opposing these benefits are basically saying we are not interested in at least part of these 200,000 jobs.

It is not, as they often say, rocket science. What happens to this money is it goes to a family who desperately needs it immediately to repair the car, to buy groceries, to take care of the necessities of life. So this money is not going to be put aside for a rainy day. It is not going to be exported overseas for a venture some place. It is going to be used locally in the economy—at the grocery store, at the service station, at the dry cleaners, and to pay for the cell phone so a person can stay in touch to see if they get that job and if they are offered a job. That effect of immediately putting money in the economy immediately generates more economic activity. It is the fact that at the local coffee shop a person will come in and get a cup of coffee and maybe be able to afford something else too. That goes to the ability of that local coffee shop to keep some more people on to work the counters. It has a cumulative effect.

The economists have measured it, and it is much more than the dollars we are putting into it. It has a multiplier effect. So what we are doing is not only providing the necessary support for these deserving families; we are providing an injection of economic activity into our economy—precisely what all of my colleagues are saying we have to do. Let's do it. We can do it. We are very close. On a bipartisan basis, we are hopefully hours away, I hope, from getting this done, and then sending it over to the House.

Then, we need to ask our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol to consider not only the bipartisan nature of this bill but also the fact that it not only provides economic stimulus, but it also is fiscally responsible. We have paid for these efforts. That was insisted upon, and we have certainly acceded to that request by so many of our colleagues.

Now, with respect to reforms of the temporary program, and even the permanent State program, as I said before, we made significant reforms in 2012. I was a member of the conference committee, at the request of the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee to participate, particularly in the deliberations about the unemployment insurance compensation program. These 2012 reforms go a long way to make the system better. Can we make more improvements? Of course. Can we shift to a related but an important topic, which is job training, through the Workforce Investment Act? Yes, we can, and we should. But we shouldn't hold this legislation hostage to training improvements and to additional reform.

One of the reforms which we worked to enhance in the bill before us today, which was implemented in 2012, is the Reemployment Service and Reemployment Eligibility Assessment, or the RES and REA. I have to thank Senator COLLINS, particularly. She was insistent that we provide a way to better link up individuals looking for work and the jobs that are available. This is a mechanism that does this. This is an evidence-based reform that has been successful in getting individuals back to work sooner. It also helps to ensure individuals are receiving the proper benefit. It addresses one of the major concerns we received from the House Ways and Means Committee Republicans with respect to overpayments. Essentially, what it does is it requires—there is one assessment in the program right now—a second assessment at a certain period during the extended benefits. So an individual would have to come in and essentially be counseled. They would also verify the person is searching for work, that the benefits are appropriate, and also give the kind of counseling and assistance and help that is shown by evidence to be effective in linking job seekers to jobs. We are very committed to this improvement. This is one of the improvements we put into the legislation. We have provided the funding for State agencies to take care of it.

So this is something we think is going to be a direct beneficial solution to a legitimate issue raised by so many. How do we connect those who are unemployed today with the jobs that are out there?

I will say something else, too, about this. There has been some suggestion that there are a lot of overpayments in the system and that people are really getting more than they should. Well RESs and REAs play an important program integrity role, not just providing counsel to the individual. They also have to ensure that the people are, in fact, actively seeking work. This legislation is saying these individuals have to physically come to the State agency, not just at the first tier, when they start it, but at the third tier—that is the way we break it up—several weeks into the process of emergency unemployment benefits. Doing that—their physical presence in the office, talking to a counselor—helps the system be more legitimate, and it helps the accountability because the individual State counselor will be able to check on how faithful they are to the program and how consistent their benefits are. That double check is part of the legislation which I think will be effective and efficient. We want both effectiveness and efficiency. As I indicated before, it is fully paid for, so it is not an additional burden to States.

In the 2012 reforms, we also included my work-sharing initiative. This is critical. I have heard from so many companies in Rhode Island that before the 2012 legislation, there were a few States—Rhode Island was one—that were actually doing something very creative. They said that instead of laying a person off totally, if you keep the person employed for a certain number of days and provide their benefits, we will pay for the one or two days they don't work. It is a partial payment. That has been able to allow companies to really keep their core group of workers together. Instead of throwing someone out and saying they are sorry, as well as losing their expertise and losing their skills, they have been able to keep their operation moving. It is a smart way of doing it. It has been very successful in Rhode Island, and it is now a national option. That is because of an initiative from 2012 that was a good reform and a smart, efficient way to use the taxpayers' dollars.

With respect to work search generally, the 2012 reforms for the first time created a uniform standard for both the State-based program and the temporary emergency program to ensure that States require that in order to be eligible, individuals need to be ''able, available, and actively seek[ing] work.'' We also passed a reform to better recover improper payments by requiring States to offset their current State benefits in order to recover overpayments owed to other States and the Federal Government. So program integrity, program efficiency, and program effectiveness were significantly embodied in the 2012 amendments.

We are looking at a program that just 2 years ago has been significantly reformed—in fact, as I said, according to the chairman of the Republican Ways and Means Committee, historically reformed. So this program is one that we can support and we should support.

Back in 2012 we also provided up to 10 demonstration projects in States that could be granted waivers on their State-based unemployment insurance program if they could come up with proposals that would improve the effectiveness of their reemployment efforts. This was an opportunity to give the States flexibility, to test out new ideas. Some of the new ideas my colleagues have shared with me—we

should do this or that—the States—at least 10 States—have that opportunity to apply today to do that. I don't think we need to reinvent that opportunity in this legislation since it is on an emergency, short-term basis. That authority sunsets at the end of 2015. But it is very telling, because since 2012, 10 States have had the option, but no States have taken up these proposals. So many of the good ideas my colleagues have suggested haven't passed muster at the State level. One would think if they were that compelling, if they were that efficient, that affordable, that one State, at least, would have taken the option, out of 10 available, to try these proposals.

The 2012 reforms also allowed States to drug screen and test individuals if they were terminated from prior employment for drug use or if they were applying for work for which passing a drug test was a standard eligibility requirement. I mention this because we have persistently heard proposals—particularly from the other side of the Capitol—oh, we have a drug test proposal, et cetera. Guess what. States already have the option to do that now. So it is not a reason to stop today and say we have to fix this problem.

I think this whole issue of drug testing, though, deserves a further comment. It is somewhat of a presumption that people who are applying for these benefits somehow are more susceptible to drug dependency, and that is not accurate. In fact, reflecting back to my previous comments, there are so many people now, particularly the longer term unemployed, who are middle-aged colleagues or slightly younger than I am, who have spent 20 or 35 years working, et cetera. They are not the typical person who one would suspect of that. But when we looked at data from the TANF realm—there were related arguments for testing in TANF—it turns out that individuals who are tested in these TANF programs, which is a welfare program, actually show an average of slightly less drug usage than the average American. So this whole drug issue has to be disabused. But, for the record, there are in the 2012 reforms, opportunities for States if they feel so compelled to exercise some of these options.

So the record demonstrates clearly that we have made extensive reforms. Additionally, as I said, in this legislation, we are requiring a second assessment process which I think is going to be very efficient and very effective.

This raises the final point. We have tried to keep this very simple. Even so, the State administrators came forward with a letter saying: This is going to be very difficult for us. The letter was refuted point by point by the Secretary of Labor, Tom Perez. Secretary Perez was the former director of these programs for the State of Maryland. He knows better than anyone what it takes to make these programs work. He has committed that the Department of Labor not only will—but can—be sure that these programs, as we have written them today, will be fully and effectively implemented.

So I hope my colleagues really come together. I thank my colleagues who already have joined together to get this legislation moving. Time is literally ticking. This is a 5-month bill. This is not a long-term, indefinite bill. The clock is ticking, so that every day more benefits are retroactive than prospective. We want to give people the chance. They have worked for it all of their lives—many of them—and now, in many cases, this is the first time they have really struggled.

With that, I yield the floor because I see my colleague, the Senator from Kansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order for me to offer an amendment that has been designated No. 2911.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, reserving the right to object, and not elaborating much further than the comments I already made, but in order to get this bipartisan emergency legislation completed which will affect 2.7 million Americans, I would respectfully object to my colleague's amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, we were here last evening on this topic for consideration by the Senate. The amendment I was offering that the Senator from Rhode Island has objected to in my view is one of the many amendments that could be considered in this legislation—certainly should be considered by this Senate. While I am certainly interested and willing to have a discussion about the extension of unemployment benefits, it seems to me that this Senate ought also to be looking at issues that would reduce the chances that individual Americans—workers across the country—need that extension. We ought to be doing the things we are not doing here in the Senate. In fact, in my view, this Senate and this President have done nothing to increase the opportunities for Americans to keep their jobs, to increase their employment opportunities, to get a higher wage, to expand their economic opportunity in this country.

The amendment I was offering, which has been objected to, is one of those many examples of legislation that, once again, gets ignored on the Senate floor. It is not considered by any committee and is not allowed to be made in order.

Again, the process in the Senate has broken down so that individual Senators who have good ideas, at least who believe they have good ideas about how we can make life better for Americans, are not being enabled the opportunity to offer those amendments for consideration by the Senate.

In fact, there have now been 70 amendments offered to this legislation. It appears that none of those 70 will be considered while we consider this issue of extension of unemployment benefits. The amendment would, in my view, increase the opportunity for every American to find a better job.

We know that if we are going to increase economic activity, create jobs in this country, the statistics show, the facts show, academic and real-life experiences demonstrate that entrepreneurs—individuals who have a dream to start a business, who work in their garage or their backyard or their barn, decide that they have something they can contribute to the consumer in this country and they pursue that dream—have the best opportunity that we have in this country to create jobs for other Americans.

So the amendment I offered would be legislation called Startup Act 3.0. This is not just the Senator from Kansas or not just a Republican Senator in the Senate offering this amendment, it is a bipartisan amendment offered by me and one of my Democratic colleagues, but the underlying legislation actually has more Democratic sponsors than it has Republican sponsors. Again, it is the kind of thing that one would expect some consideration in the Senate.

Unfortunately, this legislation was offered 3 years ago, shortly after I came to the Senate. So my frustration is not that just this opportunity today is being denied me and my colleagues who support the concept of promoting entrepreneurship, but it has been denied for certainly more than 2 years, almost 3 years, when we have facts, academicians who tell us these are exactly the kind of things that would increase the chances that Americans are better off today and in the future.

This legislation deals with the regulatory environment, the Tax Code, access to capital, federally funded research put into the hands of the private sector more quickly, the opportunity for Americans to better compete in the battle for global talent, all things that are just common sense and my guess is would be agreed to. If we would ever have a vote on the Senate floor about this concept, I would not be surprised that overwhelmingly my colleagues would support this.

There is nothing in here that is a partisan issue. There is nothing in here that is significantly controversial. We can argue or debate the details, we can improve this legislation, but we are never given the chance to pursue that goal. It is certainly disappointing to me that once again legislation that would address the underlying problems we face in this country, the inability of Americans to keep jobs, improve their job circumstance, and create a brighter future for the next generation of Americans, is something this Senate, for the last 3 years, has determined does not

have merit for even consideration, either in a committee or on the Senate floor.

For those who are interested in the details of this legislation, I would refer them to my remarks on the Senate floor last evening.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. 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. VITTER. Madam President, I rise to try to advance important legislation to fully authorize 27 Veterans Affairs clinics around the country in 18 different States, in communities that desperately need these facilities for our veterans, including two in Louisiana, Lafayette and Lake Charles.

These clinics have been on the books, planned for, approved for quite a while. Unfortunately, they ran into several bureaucratic glitches and hurdles. In the case of our two clinics in Louisiana, the first thing was a flatout mistake, a screwup at the VA, which they fully admit to. They made some errors in the contract letting process. Because of that, they had to stop that entire bidding process and back up and start all over.

That basically cost us 1 year in terms of those vital community-based clinics in Lafayette and Lake Charles. Then, as they were into that year of delay, out of the blue the Congressional Budget Office decided to score these sorts of clinics in a different way than they ever did before. That created a scoring issue with regard to all 27 of these clinics in 18 States.

On a bipartisan basis, a number of us went to work on that issue to clear that up. We have solved that issue, and the House has put a bill together with strong bipartisan support—virtually unanimous support—and has passed the bill that resolved that issue.

It came to the Senate. I reached out to all of my colleagues. There were a few concerns, and I addressed those concerns proactively by finding savings in other parts of the budget to off-balance, counteract any possible costs of this bill, and so we added that amendment to that proposal. Through all of that hard work, we have addressed all of the substantive concerns with moving forward on these 27 clinics.

I have been trying to pass this bill with an amendment at the desk so that these 27 clinics can move forward as expeditiously as possible. As I said, every substantive concern about this bill, as it would be amended, has been met—everybody's concerns, conservatives, moderates, liberals.

The only objection to the bill now is from the distinguished Senator from Vermont, who, quite frankly, wants to hold it hostage, wants to object to it, simply to try to advance his much broader veterans bill which he brought to the floor and was unsuccessful in passing several weeks ago. While I appreciate the Senator's passion on this issue—I appreciate his legislation and his focus on it—the problem is that legislation does have many Senators with concerns about it, including me. Forty-three Senators, forty-three percent of the overall Senate, 43 out of 100, have serious, substantive concerns with that much broader bill.

In contrast to that, no one in the Senate has substantive concerns with my narrower bill with regard to 27 VA clinics around the country.

I simply suggest that we agree on important matters we can agree on; we use that to begin to build consensus to move forward constructively, do what we can agree on, and continue to work on that on which there is some disagreement.

In that spirit, I come to the floor again to ask unanimous consent that the Veterans' Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of the narrow veterans clinics bill I was referring to, H.R. 3521, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that my amendment, which is at the desk, which I also referred to, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object, I thank my colleague from Louisiana for coming to the floor today to talk about, in fact, an important issue.

Before I respond to him directly, I did want to comment he is right, there were 43 Members of the Senate who voted against what is regarded as the most comprehensive veterans legislation to have been introduced in several decades, legislation that was supported by virtually every veterans organization in the country, including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Gold Star Wives, and dozens and dozens of other veterans organizations.

If I might point out that while my colleague from Louisiana is, of course, right that there were 43 Senators who voted no, he neglected to mention that there were 56 Senators who voted yes. There was one Senator who was absent on that day who would have voted yes.

We are now at the stage where we have 57 Senators, which I would suggest to my colleague from Louisiana is significantly more than 43 percent, it is 57 percent.

If we could have the cooperation—and I hope we can maybe make some progress right here, now, from my colleague from Louisiana who has shown interest in veterans issues—do you know what, we can do something that millions and millions of veterans and their families want us to do.

If my colleague from Louisiana would allow me, I would like to quote from what the Disabled American Veterans, the DAV, has to say about this legislation—which, unfortunately my colleague from Louisiana voted against. He was one of the 43 who voted against it.

DAV says:

> This massive omnibus bill, unprecedented in our modern experience, would create, expand, advance, and extend a number of VA benefits, services and programs that are important to the DAV and to our members. For example, responding to a call from DAV as a leading veterans organization, it would create a comprehensive family caregiver support program for all generations of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans. Also, the bill would authorize advance appropriations for VA's mandatory funding accounts to ensure that in any government shutdown environment in the future, veterans benefits payments would not be delayed or put in jeopardy. This measure would also provide additional financial support to survivors of servicemembers who die in the line of duty, as well as expanded access for them to GI Bill educational benefits. A two-plus year stalemate in VA's authority to lease facilities for health care treatment and other purposes would be solved by this bill . . .

—which, of course, is what the Senator from Louisiana is referring to. Then they continue:

> . . . These are but a few of the myriad provisions of this bill that would improve the lives, health, and prospects of veterans—especially the wounded, injured and ill—and their loved ones.

That is the DAV. I ask my colleague from Louisiana—you are raising an important issue, and I agree with you. But what I cannot do is take this issue over here, separate it, and that issue over here, because tomorrow there will be somebody else coming and saying: You know, Senator SANDERS, I want you to move forward on this. Then the next day somebody else comes forward and says: I want to move forward on that.

We have a comprehensive piece of legislation, supported by millions of veterans, and supported by 57 Members of the Senate. I ask my colleague from Louisiana—who is concerned about veterans' issues—work with us, support us, give us the three Republican votes we need. We had 55, 54 Members of the Democratic Caucus. We only had two Republican votes. Help me get three more votes. You will get these facilities in Louisiana, we will get these facilities all over the country, but we will also address many of the major crises facing the veterans community.

With that, Madam President, I would object to my colleague's proposal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Reclaiming the floor and reclaiming the time, I find this approach very unfortunate. To follow through on the scenario the Senator from Vermont himself laid out, yes, we can find agreement here on the floor,

but then, ''Katy, bar the door.'' That might lead to our finding agreement on other important matters that can help veterans, and we might be moving forward in this area and that area and the other one. God forbid that we make progress to help veterans and actually get something done versus having a hostage standoff. God forbid. I think the more productive way of working together is to agree on what we can agree on and keep talking about those areas where we have disagreement.

In fact, in the past Senator SANDERS has endorsed that approach in the area of veterans affairs. He has said, in the past, working on another issue in November of 2013:

> I'm happy to tell you that I think that was a concern of his . . .

This was referring to another Senator. He continues:

> . . . we got that UC'd last night. So we moved that pretty quickly, and I want to try to do those things, where we have agreement, let's move it.

He agreed on a small focus bill where we did have agreement. He said, let's do that by unanimous consent, let's agree where we can agree and be constructive and move on. He said, ''I want to try to do those things where we have agreement, let's move it.''

Well, I would say to Senator SANDERS, through the Chair, we have agreement. This is an important matter. Twenty-seven clinics isn't the world, but it is an important matter that affects hundreds of thousands of veterans in 18 States, including in my Louisiana communities of Lafayette and Lake Charles. We have agreement, so let's move it. I agree with that approach. I think that is a constructive approach versus saying: I have majority support, but not the 60 required, so I am holding everything else veterans-related hostage, I am not agreeing to anything else.

I don't think that is a constructive approach. I don't think that reflects the spirit of the American people who want us to try to reach agreement where we can reach agreement. I don't think that is a constructive way to build goodwill and to build consensus.

I would urge my colleague, with all due respect, to reconsider. Let's agree where we can agree, where we have agreement. Let's move forward where we have agreement. Let's move it.

This isn't the world, but it is meaningful, it is significant, and it does not relieve any pressure in terms of the broader veterans discussion regarding the Sanders bill or the Burr alternative or anything else. Those bills are so much massively larger that these 27 clinics, being done separately, do not change the discussion or the dynamics of this in any way, shape, or form.

I would urge my colleague to reconsider. I would urge my colleague from Louisiana, Senator LANDRIEU, to urge Senator SANDERS to reconsider, something she has not done to date. A lot of us are waiting for her support of these important community-based clinics in Lafayette and Lake Charles. She hasn't been on the floor. I urge her to join me on the floor to get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. First, I would tell you that—two things in terms of Senator LANDRIEU. She has, in fact, spoken to me on numerous occasions about her concerns about this issue but, more importantly, she has shown a willingness to stand for all veterans in this country, and she voted for the legislation supported by the American Legion, the DAV, and the Vietnam Veterans of America and virtually every veterans organization. So I thank Senator LANDRIEU very much for her support for comprehensive legislation that would benefit millions and millions of Americans.

Essentially, what the Senator from Louisiana is saying is let's work together. I agree with him, let us work together. I have 57 votes for this piece of legislation. Right now, I ask my friend from Louisiana, work with us. What are your objections at a time when we have given huge tax breaks to billionaires and millionaires, and when one out of four corporations in this country doesn't pay a nickel in Federal income taxes. Does my colleague from Louisiana think that in this country we should not take care of the men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend this country?

I am prepared, my staff is prepared, to sit down and hear the Senator's objections. I am not sure what his objections are. He hasn't told me. Is the Senator opposed to an expansion of the caregivers program? Is he? So that 70-year-old women who have been taking care of their husbands who lost their legs in Vietnam get a modest bit of help? Is that an objection the Senator has? Is the Senator objecting to the fact that maybe we provide dental care to some veterans whose teeth are rotting in their mouths? Is the Senator objecting to advance appropriations so we are not in a situation where if we have another government shutdown, disabled vets will not get the checks they need? Is the Senator objecting to the fact that right now we have young veterans who are trying to go to college through the GI bill but can't get in-State tuition? Is the Senator objecting to that? Is the Senator objecting to helping veterans find jobs in an economy where it is very hard to do so?

I am not quite sure what the Senator's objection is. Tell me. Tell me now or sit down with my staff and me, and maybe we can work it out and do something of real significance for the veterans of this country.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 297, S. 1950; that a Sanders substitute amendment, the text of S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Pay Restoration Act, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Reserving the right to object, I would again point out that I am not only going to object to this, there are 43 Senators who have serious substantive concerns with this very broad and expansive bill, and those concerns and objections have been laid out. They have been laid out by my staff, in meetings with the staff of the Senator from Vermont, and they have been laid out by the Republican ranking member on the committee, Senator BURR. I share the general concerns of Senator BURR about the bill. So if the distinguished Senator from Vermont doesn't understand those concerns, quite frankly he hasn't been listening very hard. We have laid them out, and they are shared by 43 Senators, versus a bill, as amended at the desk, with no objections to its substance—none, 100 to 0. Big difference. Big difference.

So on behalf of the total of 43 Senators, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, retaining the floor, I would also ask the distinguished Senator from Vermont through the Chair—because he mentioned Senator LANDRIEU—has Senator LANDRIEU asked him to remove his objection to this bill so we can get a clinic in Lafayette and Lake Charles, No. 1; and No. 2, all those veterans groups he mentioned, do they oppose moving forward with this bill as it would be amended at the desk? Do they publicly oppose moving forward with those 27 veterans clinics?

I would ask those two very important, pertinent questions of the Senator from Vermont through the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I believe at this point—please correct me if I am wrong—that I control the floor; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. SANDERS. While my friend from Louisiana is still here, let me answer yes in response to his question. Senator LANDRIEU has asked me, very forcefully, to move forward on this provision on more than one occasion, and my response to Senator LANDRIEU, who voted for the comprehensive legislation, unlike Senator VITTER, is the same.

Secondly, what the veterans organizations of this country want is for the Congress to recognize the very serious problems facing the veterans community. What I can tell my colleague from Louisiana is that to the best of my knowledge the veterans organizations have been to my colleague's office, and we are trying to get some specific objections as to why he is not supporting this legislation and we have not gotten that.

So I would ask my colleague from Louisiana to come forward and tell me what he disagrees with, which he has not done yet, and I look forward to working with him. I agree we have to work together. I am offering him that opportunity to tell me what he doesn't like. Let's get a piece of legislation the veterans of this country need and want and that we will be proud of.

With that, I believe I have the floor; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is correct.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has 53 minutes remaining in his postcloture time.

Mr. SANDERS. I will tell my colleague from Louisiana that I don't intend to be addressing this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, in that case, I ask unanimous consent to wrap up this discussion in about 45 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. VITTER. I thank my colleague.

Again, Madam President, I think this is very important. I agree with what Senator SANDERS said last November—where we have agreement, let's move it. We have agreement about these 27 clinics, 18 States, including Lafayette and Lake Charles. Let's move it.

I didn't hear him say that any of those veterans organizations he continually cites oppose this because they do not. They take the commonsense approach the huge majority of Americans take: Where there is agreement and we can constructively move forward for veterans, let's do it and let's build on that.

Finally, if Senator LANDRIEU has forcefully asked the Senator to remove his objection to this, apparently she has not been very effective. I think that is very unfortunate because veterans in Louisiana are suffering today. They have been waiting for this. They have been waiting for years for this, and they still wait, even though there is no substantive disagreement with this bill.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, it is not my intention to get involved in Louisiana politics, but just let me say that Senator LANDRIEU has voted for this legislation, she has been a champion of veterans rights, and I look forward to continuing to work with her on comprehensive legislation that will benefit all of the veterans of Louisiana and those in the other 49 States.

Madam President, I wish to change subjects, if I might, and I wish to touch upon an issue which I believe is far and away the most significant issue facing the American people; that is, a struggle not just to make sure we can preserve and expand the vitally important programs that are life or death to tens of millions of working-class and middle-class families—programs such as Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid. The issue we are discussing now is not just whether we must create the millions and millions of jobs that we need. Real unemployment is not 6.8 percent. It is close to 12 percent and youth unemployment is close to 20 percent. We have to create millions of jobs for our young people and for working families around this country.

We have made some progress with the Affordable Care Act, announced just yesterday. About 10 million more Americans will have access to health care who formerly did not, but we have to go further. We have to join the rest of the industrialized world, all of which have stated—every country has stated—that health care must be a right and not a privilege. When we do that through a Medicare-for-all, single-payer program, we can do it much more cost-effectively and end the absurdity of the United States spending almost twice as much per capita on health care as do the people of any other nation.

All of those issues, and education and climate change, are all enormously important for the future of this Nation. But the issue that is even more important than all of those is whether we can prevent this country from moving to an oligarchic form of society in which virtually all economic and political power rests with a handful of billionaire families.

I know we don't talk about it too much. Most people don't raise that issue. Certainly we don't see it in the corporate media. That is the reality. Right now in America we have, by far, the most unequal distribution of wealth and income of any major country on Earth.

What we are looking at is the top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the financial wealth of America. I have very little doubt the overwhelming majority of Americans have no idea what the bottom 60 percent looks like. The top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the wealth of America, and the bottom 60 percent owns all of 2.3 percent. That gap between the very rich and everybody else is growing wider and wider. We have one family—one family—the Walton family, who owns Walmart, that owns more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of the American people.

In terms of income, the situation is equally bad. In the last number of years since the Wall Street collapse, 95 percent of all new income has gone to the top 1 percent.

So we have an economic situation where the middle class is disappearing, and more people are living in poverty than at any time in the history of the United States. We have 22 percent of our kids living in poverty, the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major country on Earth. All the while the middle class disappears, more and more people are living in poverty, people on top are doing phenomenally well. Almost all new income goes to the top 1 percent.

It is not just a growing disparity in terms of income and wealth—that is enormously important—but it is what is happening to the political foundations of America. What we are now seeing as a result of Citizens United—and we are going to see it more as a result of the disastrous Supreme Court decision of today in McCutcheon—will enable the billionaire class to play an even more prominent role in terms of our political process.

The Koch brothers are worth about $80 billion—$80 billion. They are the second wealthiest family in America. Working with other billionaires, such as Sheldon Adelson, the Kochs are prepared to spend an unlimited sum of money to create an America shaped by their rightwing extremist views—and I mean unlimited.

If your income went up, Madam President—and I know our Presiding Officer is not quite there in this status—from $68 billion to $80 billion in 1 year—a $12 billion increase in your wealth—and you believed passionately, as the Koch brothers do, in this rightwing agenda, why would you hesitate in spending $1 billion, $2 billion on the political process? Last year, both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney spent a little more than $1 billion for their entire campaigns. These guys can take out their checkbook tomorrow and write that check and it will be one-twelfth of what their increased wealth was in 1 year. It doesn't mean anything to them. It is 50 bucks to you; it is $1 billion to them.

So we have to be very careful that we do not allow this great country, where people fought and died to protect American democracy, become a plutocracy or an oligarchy, and that, frankly, is the direction in which we are moving.

I suspect that many of our fellow Americans saw a spectacle in Las Vegas—and this was not the usual Las Vegas spectacle, with the great shows they have there—this was the Sheldon Adelson spectacle. This is what the spectacle was just last weekend. Sheldon Adelson said to prospective Republican candidates for President: Why don't you come on down to Las Vegas and tell me what you could do for me because I am only worth $20 billion. I am only the largest gambling mogul in the entire world. But $20 billion isn't enough, so I want you to come to Las Vegas and tell me what favors you can give me if you happen to be elected President and, by the way, if you sound the right note—if you kind of do what I like—I may put a few hundred million into your campaign. Maybe if I am feeling good, I will throw $1 billion into your campaign.

The media has dubbed this the Adelson primary. What primaries generally are about are hundreds of thousands of Republicans getting together

and they vote on whom they want their candidate to be in a State—Democrats do the same—and candidates make an appeal to ordinary people to get votes. Some of us are old-fashioned and we kind of see that as democracy.

I come from a State which proudly has town meetings. I have held hundreds of town meetings in my State. I know it is old-fashioned. I know it is getting out of step, but I actually listen to what people have to say. They walk in the door free, occasionally we actually even serve some lunch, and they don't have to be a billionaire to ask me a question. I answer questions and I talk to people. I understand that is old-fashioned, not the way we do it anymore.

The way we do it now is the Adelson way: walk in the door and I will give you hundreds of millions of dollars or come to a campaign fundraiser, and if you make the largest contributions—tens of thousands of dollars—I will listen to you.

We have to turn this thing around, because if we don't, we are going to end up in a situation where not only the economy of this country is going to be controlled by a handful of billionaires and large multinational corporations, but we are going to be living in a country where the political process is controlled.

Somebody mentioned to me—and I don't know, maybe I will introduce this legislation. We all know what NASCAR is. These guys who drive the racing cars have on their coats they are being sponsored by this or that oil company or this or that tire company. Maybe we should introduce that concept in the Senate. You could have a patch on your jacket that says: I am sponsored by the Koch brothers. Eighty-seven percent of my funding comes from the Koch brothers.

Maybe we will give you a special jacket, and then you have the Adelson guy or this person or that person. But it might tell the American people why we continue as a body to give more tax breaks to billionaires and yet we are having a heck of a tough time raising the minimum wage to $10.10 an hour. It might tell the American people why we do nothing to close corporate loopholes, but we are having a hard time addressing pay equity in America so women get the same wages that men do.

I think when we talk about issues such as campaign finance, a lot of Americans say: Well, yes, it is a problem, but it doesn't really relate to me.

Let me suggest that it absolutely does relate to every man, woman, and child. It is imperative people understand what the agenda is—the Koch brothers, for example. These are people who have been very clear that they want massive cuts in Social Security or the privatization of Social Security. They want massive cuts in Medicare or the voucherization of Medicare, and massive cuts in Medicaid. As some of the largest polluters in America in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, the Koch brothers want to crack down on the ability of the EPA to regulate pollution. These guys want to cut back on funds for education so our kids can afford to go to college.

So if we think the issue of campaign finance does not relate to our lives, we are very mistaken. We are moving toward a situation where people with huge sums of money are going to spend unlimited amounts to elect candidates who reflect an extreme rightwing agenda which will make the wealthiest people in this country even richer while continuing the attacks against the middle class and working families in this country.

I will conclude by saying this—and I mean this quite honestly. As somebody who grew up in a family that didn't have a lot of money and as somebody who represents the great State of Vermont, where people constantly tell me they ask for so little, I have heard veterans say: I don't want to use the VA because another veteran really may need it more. I don't need this program and somebody else may need it more.

I don't understand how people worth $80 billion are spending huge sums of money to become even richer. They are doing it by trying to attack life-and-death programs for the elderly. Why would somebody want to cut Social Security when they are worth $80 billion and have more money than they can dream of for retirement? Why would somebody want to do that when they are worth billions and have the best health care in the world? Why do they want to make massive cuts in Medicare or Medicaid? What motivates somebody with so much money to go to war against working families and the middle class?

I frankly don't understand it. I can only think that this has to do with power—the drive for more and more power, the thrill it must be to tell candidates: Do you want my support? This is what you have to do.

But I think this is just a huge issue that we as a nation have got to address. Too many people have given up their lives fighting for American democracy to see this great Nation be converted into a plutocracy or an oligarchy. We must not allow that to happen.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, can you tell us the order of business pending on the floor?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is considering H.R. 3979.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes in morning business.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I start by commending my colleague from Vermont.

What happened today across the street at the Supreme Court will be lost on most Americans. They can't understand why they should even care about it.

The Supreme Court was asked whether it was proper under the law to limit the number of Federal campaigns and the total dollars an individual can give to candidates. To no one's surprise, the Supreme Court said there should be no limitation. People can give as much money as they want to as many Federal candidates they want with no limitation.

Most Americans will say: So what? You know, these politicians run against one another. During the campaign both sides spend too much money. I am sick and tired of their ads. I don't care how you pay for it; it is all bad.

But I have to say, Senator SANDERS put his finger on it. What is at issue here is not just how we finance campaigns. It is who we elect. What we are faced with is a Supreme Court across the street which celebrates oligarchs. They happen to believe that the wealthiest people in America deserve the strongest voice in American politics. I couldn't disagree more.

Sadly, many of us are caught up in this system of campaign financing where we literally have to raise millions of dollars to run for election and reelection. In my State multimillionaires are running for the highest offices against what I consider to be mere mortals—those of us who aren't in the multimillionaire class—trying to compete with them, always wondering if tomorrow the Koch brothers—with an $80 billion net worth—will say: Spend $10 million there; spend $20 million there.

I say to my friend from Vermont, as best we can count, in the last election cycle the Koch brothers—not to be confused with the soft drink—spent over $250 million in ad campaigns. I think the figure, frankly, is much higher, and the suggestion is they are going to double that spending this time. They have already spent $10 million in the State of North Carolina with negative television advertising for 12 months against the Democratic incumbent Senator KAY HAGAN, trying to beat her down, so they can defeat her in November.

Make no mistake. There is a lot of money being spent on both sides. But Sheldon Adelson, who—as the Senator from Vermont said—runs one of the biggest gambling operations and maybe is the wealthiest man when it comes to that in the United States, maybe in the world, has become a player. Can you imagine if those who want to run for the Republican nomination for President come hat in hand, land at the Las Vegas airport, walk into a room and see if they can say something that appeals to this man who is worth billions of dollars? Last time he fell in love with Newt Gingrich, and he was going to make Newt Gingrich President. People in many of the Republican primaries saw it differently. Well, this

time he wants to pick another horse to run.

Why are the richest people in America so intent on owning our political process? Because they have an agenda. It isn't just because they love the Constitution. They have an agenda—an agenda which makes the Tax Code work for them, an agenda which makes sure that government spending and things that aren't priorities for them are reduced.

We saw some of that yesterday, when Congressman PAUL RYAN in the House of Representatives introduced his budget, his vision of what America should look like. What is it? It is a budget amendment which cuts back on some basic things. One thing the Ryan budget cuts back on that everybody listening to this debate ought to take note of is domestic discretionary spending for medical research—seriously.

Today happens to be World Autism Awareness Day. Do you know a family with an autistic child? Do you have any idea what they are going through? I know a few. Sadly, the number of people suffering from autism and the autism spectrum disorder seems to be growing by the day. We look at these families struggling to give their son or daughter a chance and think: If we only knew a little bit more about this disease, if we only knew a little bit more about the human brain, if we only could see this coming and do something to avoid it, if we could find a way to treat it, what a difference it would make for all of these families on World Autism Awareness Day. But the answer from Congressman RYAN is to cut back on medical research. That is not the answer. It is not the answer for any of us.

God forbid we go to the doctor's office tomorrow with a child, and the doctor says something awful has happened. But the first question we would ask the doctor is: Is there something you can do? Is there a medicine? Is there a procedure?

How many families have been in that position where they have asked that physician, praying to God that the answer is yes? The answer will not be yes when we cut back on medical research. The answer is going to be no.

That is why we have to really reflect on our priorities—not only in Congress but in elections. If we are going to let people take over the American political scene through the Citizens United case across the street or the McCutcheon case which was decided today, we are going to turn our government over to people who are totally out of touch with the reality of American families and American working families. That would be a serious mistake.

While we are on the subject, these are the first people in line who want to eliminate the Affordable Care Act. I was in the Rose Garden yesterday, invited by the President with a large group to celebrate the announcement that more than 7.1 million Americans have now enrolled by the deadline under the Affordable Care Act, and more than 3 million young people, fresh out of college, looking for jobs are covered by their mom and dad's health insurance while they are looking for work. Then add another 8 million people across America who now have health insurance protection through Medicaid—meaning their income is so low that they qualify for this basic health insurance. Add those numbers up, and they come to somewhere in the range of 15 million to 18 million people who benefited by the Affordable Care Act—people, who until they had this opportunity, some of them, many of them had no insurance. I have met them. I have met them across my State. I have met those in downstate Illinois who worked all their lives. They are 62 years old.

A friend of mine never had health insurance one day in her life, never missed a day of work in her life. Now she has the protection of health insurance at age 62 for the first time—and thank God she does. She has just been diagnosed with diabetes. She has a chance now because she has health insurance under the Affordable Care Act. So what is the response from the other side? Repeal it. Get rid of it. We don't need it. It is a waste—too much government.

We are not going back. We're not repealing. We can make it better, and we ought to do it on a bipartisan basis. But we are not repealing the Affordable Care Act.

What would repealing the Affordable Care Act mean to the rest of us who have health insurance? The Affordable Care Act guarantees that if you have a child or a spouse with a medical condition—a medical history of asthma, diabetes, survived cancer—you cannot be discriminated against when you buy health insurance. What we are talking about here is giving families a fair shot at affordable health insurance—giving them a fair shot even if their child is born with a serious medical issue.

Secondly, the Affordable Care Act says: When you sell me a health insurance policy, it ought to be worth something when I need it. They used to sell these policies and put limits on them. God forbid tomorrow you are diagnosed with cancer and facing radiation therapy, chemotherapy, surgery, and hospitalizations. But there is a limit on your policy, and pretty soon you bust through the limit, and now it is all coming out of your meager savings. That is the number one reason people declare personal bankruptcy in America—health bills. The Affordable Care Act puts an end to that and says that your health insurance policy has to be there in an amount when you need it.

The third thing it says is if you are a senior citizen getting prescription drugs—there used to be something called the doughnut hole. It was a crazy thing. You couldn't even explain it. I pay for prescriptions—no, wait a minute. I don't pay for prescription drugs for the first 3 months, and then I pay for them for 4 months, and then the government pays for them. It was called the doughnut hole. It made no sense at all. We closed the doughnut hole, saying to seniors: We are going to make sure that your prescription drugs are covered and you don't have to pay out of pocket, and you can get that annual checkup that you need to stay healthy. Those who want to repeal the Affordable Care Act want to do away with that, and that is just plain wrong.

As I mentioned earlier, if you happen to be a family with a child under the age of 26, you can keep that child on your health insurance plan while they are finishing college and looking for a job, maybe getting that first job. It may not be the best, may not have benefits. They are still covered under your policy.

Have you as a parent ever called your 24-year-old daughter and asked her, as I have: Jenny, do you have health insurance?

No, Dad. I'm fine. Don't worry about me.

Right. I will stay up all night worrying about you.

You don't have to do that anymore under the Affordable Care Act. Those who want to repeal it want to go back to those days where young people fresh out of college had no health insurance protection. We are not going back. We can make this bill stronger and better, and I will work to do it. But for the millions of Americans who now have a chance at affordable, accessible health insurance, we are not turning the clock back.

There is one other thing worth mentioning. Not only are millions now on health insurance, the good news is for the last 5 years since we passed this bill, the rate of increase in costs for health insurance has been going down—yes, going down. Not as fast as we want it to, but it used to be trending up in a way we couldn't even manage or control. Now we are moving in the right direction in terms of health care costs. So for those who come to the floor of the Senate or the floor of the House growling and whining about the Affordable Care Act, the good news is that this debate is over in America. The Affordable Care Act is here to stay.

We could make it better. We should work to make it better. We should do it on a bipartisan basis. But there are 18 million reasons why we are not going to repeal the Affordable Care Act—18 million Americans that have peace of mind with health insurance because of this law.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. I ask unanimous consent to offer my amendment No. 2935.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, in order to keep this bipartisan emergency legislation

pending on the floor and to benefit 2.7 million Americans, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you, Mr. President.

I think it is unfortunate that we are not allowing amendments to be offered here for extending unemployment benefits. The least we ought to do is make it easier to find a job. Unfortunately, there is no room in the legislation to do that.

I would like to talk about one area where we could offer some help and relief. Hearing some of the discussion over the past few minutes in this Chamber, it seems that this Chamber has become an echo chamber for happy talk about the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately, for those who talk about figures—enrollment figures and whatever—we seem to forget about the number of people who had their health care canceled, who may have been able to pick up new coverage under the Affordable Care Act, but it is hardly—hardly—affordable. In fact, in most cases the cost has gone up significantly.

So I am here today to join a number of my colleagues who are seeking to offer amendments to this legislation, to make it easier for those who don't have jobs and who cannot easily access jobs. As we all know, the ACA or Affordable Care Act placed requirements on what new plans are mandated to cover, including coverage of things—I think they named 10 essential health care benefits, essential being used loosely—like pediatric dentistry, maternity care, mental health.

We have all heard stories of those squeezed by the ACA's new mandates and regulations. For many, if it isn't higher premiums, it is higher deductibles, increased copays or even greater out-of-pocket costs. That is the case for most but not all. I think all of us should freely acknowledge that some people have been able to buy more affordable care, but I think those examples are overshadowed completely by those who are facing higher costs.

The Wall Street Journal noted in a March 22 article—they cited an eHealth report—that the average premium for an individual health plan that meets ACA requirements was $274 a month, up 39 percent from last year, before the ACA provisions took effect. The same article reported that family plans averaged $663 a month, a 56 percent increase from last year. These facts have real world implications and have a bearing on both a family's financial realities as well as their employment.

For instance, I previously referenced a case of Leanne from Eager, AZ. Her family is facing what she calls ''sky-high'' rates now. This is thanks to the Affordable Care Act. If that isn't bad enough, it looks as if she and her husband will have to put off buying their parents' business.

In January I introduced the ReLIEF Act as a response to the administration's announcement that those facing health cancellations due to the ACA will be able to enroll in catastrophic coverage. The relief act would allow health insurance providers to provide catastrophic coverage to everyone and would deem these plans as meeting the minimal essential coverage requirement. The bottom line is, if we are going to delay benefits, delay mandates on the Affordable Care Act or delay implementation of certain parts of the Affordable Care Act for some, we ought to do it for everyone. I get a real kick out of hearing everybody reference the happy talk about the Affordable Care Act, but the reality is that much of it has been delayed or postponed or changed. If there are no problems with it, why do we keep doing that? If we are doing that for some, why don't we delay the mandates for everyone or allow others to buy more affordable coverage by giving some relief on these mandates?

This ReLIEF Act that I have introduced will allow health providers to offer catastrophic plans that may cost a lot less, that families used to be able to access and simply no longer can because too few insurance companies will offer them because at a certain point they will have to offer compliant plans that are much more expensive. My goal is to provide affordable insurance options and to give individuals who don't need or don't want more extensive coverage options to purchase these plans.

I applied the relief act to this bill as an amendment. I hope to bring that up. That was the purpose of the unanimous consent request that was just rejected. Unfortunately, it appears that very few, if any, amendments will be allowed to this legislation. I think that is unfortunate.

If we are concerned about the unemployed, as I know we all are, then we ought to at least offer them alternatives, offer them ways to more easily find employment to give them some more relief.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I come to speak about the economy in terms of wages, but I do want to respond to the last discussion in terms of health care for a moment. Part of the fair shot is to make sure they have a fair shot that they need for their families, and thank goodness, under the Affordable Care Act, now folks are going to get what they are paying for. They cannot just get dropped if they get sick or if their child has juvenile diabetes or they have heart disease or some other condition. They are going to be able to know they can get insurance without preexisting conditions.

But it is also going to be incredibly important moving forward for women. As the author of the provision to improve maternity care, I do want to say to my friend who just spoke that prior to health reform, about 60 percent of the plans in the private market wouldn't provide maternity care for women, amazingly. Being a woman was viewed as a preexisting condition because you might be of childbearing age or maybe you are not.

I remember hearing from one young couple where the husband couldn't get insurance because his wife was of childbearing age. They couldn't get maternity care. This is not true anymore—not true anymore. Thank goodness for the comprehensive care that our friends on the other side call regulations on insurance companies—and actually that regulation is a requirement—so that women can get maternity care, and there is a requirement that we treat mental health and physical health the same in terms of insurance, which by the way affects 1 out of 4 people in our country. I think that it is a good thing.

We can always improve on it, and we will, to make it better, listen to the concerns and do what needs to be done to make it work better. But I think that families now have a fair shot to get health care coverage and not as parents go to bed at night worrying about whether their kids are going to get sick. It is a good thing, and we will move forward in a positive way.

Mr. President, let me tell you now about a business owner who said the minimum wage wasn't good enough—wasn't good enough—and his employees needed more. So he doubled everybody's wages. He doubled everybody's wages, and people thought he was crazy. He was shunned by the business community. People said he would go bankrupt. His name was Henry Ford—Henry Ford. Because of his decision to pay his workers $5 a day, which was unheard of 100 years ago, he became one of the richest men in America.

When he first announced a $5 workday, not everybody was happy. Economists had a fit. Ford's competitors were furious. The Wall Street elite were calling the $5 day ''an economic crime.'' They said Ford wouldn't be competitive in the economy anymore. They questioned his judgment and his business sense.

They were wrong. His decision to pay his workers $5 a day not only was a brilliant business decision, it created the middle class of this country. We are very proud in Michigan that it started with us.

A hundred years ago $5 a day was a lot of money. A loaf of bread cost 6 cents. A gallon of milk cost about 35 cents. At 3 a.m., the day after Henry Ford made his announcement, a bitterly cold day in Detroit, something started to happen on Woodward Avenue.

Picture it. In the middle of a cold night—and we have a lot of cold nights in Michigan—people all around Detroit

at 3 o'clock in the morning began walking through the snow-covered streets to Woodward and Manchester, the site of Ford's Highland Park plant. A line was forming, getting longer every minute. Tens and then hundreds and then thousands of people were getting in line. Traffic came to a standstill. There were too many people in the road for the cars to get by.

The hours passed. The lines got longer. By 10 a.m. there were 12,000 people standing in line waiting in the freezing cold for the chance to get one of those jobs—one of those $5-a-day jobs that Henry Ford was offering, to be able to work hard, get that job, and build a better life. They were just looking for a fair shot to get ahead, like the millions of workers today who work 40 hours a week, such as the single mom who scrubs floors and works 40 hours a week and is still living in poverty, and the millions of other Americans still looking for work. Like most Americans and like those Ford workers 100 years ago, they just want a shot to work hard and play by the rules and be able to get ahead with their family.

Henry Ford knew that when his workers had money in their pocket, when they had enough money to put food on the table, when they were caught up on their bills, it meant they could afford to buy one of those cars they were building at the plant.

In fact, that is what he said when folks called him crazy. He said, ''I want to make sure I got somebody who can afford to buy my car.''

For families in 1914, a job in the Ford factory was a ticket to the middle class, and that is still true today. Henry Ford knew that paying a higher wage would mean happier workers and lower turnover, instead of workers who were frustrated about not being able to make ends meet. Henry Ford had workers who were proud to work for him. This meant greater productivity and greater profits because if the workers could make more cars he could sell more cars. If they could sell more cars, they could make more cars, so this was a win-win situation.

Henry Ford made more money than he had ever dreamed of, and his workers made more money than they had ever dreamed of. The effect this new wage had on Ford's employees went deeper than their wallets. In the first 3 weeks after the raise began, more than 50 of his employees applied for marriage licenses because they said they could now afford to get married and start a family. A lot of folks talk about the importance of starting a family. Having money in your pocket to be able to get started in life is a pretty big deal.

When the workers made enough money to live on, they were able to spread the wealth. Their local grocery stores, restaurants, and hardware stores and others also benefited from the increase in wages, which was reflected all around the neighborhood and the plant in 1914. A sandwich cart operator near the plant was interviewed about the new wages by the Detroit News in February of 1914, and he said: ''I'm for this raise in wages. I sell nearly twice as much as I did a month ago.'' Those who sold food and goods, such as hats, scarves, and gloves near the plant said the same thing. One vendor said that if things kept going like this, he would have to hire a new employee to help out with the new business.

It is simple: When workers have more money in their pockets, they have more money to spend at businesses both large and small. When businesses have more customers, they can pay their workers better and hire more of them. When the workers have more money in their pocket, they can go out and buy more things, and that is called the demand part of the economy.

Our colleagues are always talking about the supply side. They like to say: Let's just give it to the top and it will trickle down. Most people in Michigan are still holding their breath waiting for it to trickle down. We know if you put it in the pocket of workers—people who are, frankly, fighting to hold on to stay in the middle class or working to get into the middle class—you create the demand side of the economy.

As Henry Ford found out, things started turning. This kind of virtuous cycle that Henry Ford helped create in Michigan and in America 100 years ago is what we need to do today to restore our economy. We can't do that with a minimum wage that has lost most of its value in the past few decades.

Those Ford workers worked hard, saved their money, bought homes, built communities, and gave their children opportunities, such as being able to go to college. In Michigan, you can buy a little cottage up north where you can have a boat, a snowmobile, or be able to go out hunting on the weekends and enjoy life—that is the middle class.

Because of what was done by doubling people's wages—when everyone said Henry Ford was crazy—created the middle class of this country. But today everything the middle class worked for—what they built with their bare hands, elbow grease, and blood, sweat, and tears—is at risk. The Federal minimum wage has been stuck at $7.25 for nearly 5 years. That single mom with two kids working for minimum wage today earns about $15,000 a year, which is $4,000 below the poverty line. That is not right, if you work 40 hours a week and make less than the poverty level. That is not how we built the middle class 100 years ago, and it is certainly not how we are going to grow it today.

Too many Americans rightly feel they are trapped in a rigged game where heads, the wealthy win, and tails, the rest of us lose. What we need is an economy that gives everybody a fair shot. That is what we are fighting for, that is what we believe in, and that is what we are promoting in everything we are doing. We want a fair shot and a fair economy for everybody—not a free shot but a fair shot for everybody who works hard. Being rewarded for your hard work is what makes this country great. You can take a good idea, you can work hard, you can build a better life, and that is the American dream.

Today there is less opportunity for people who do that, unfortunately. People need to have a chance to build something—to build a career, a company, and a future—or we will fall behind the rest of the world. They need a fair shot. They deserve a fair shot. The middle class we built over the last 100 years could cease to exist if we don't act together and understand what drives the economy.

To turn things around, we need to make sure people can get jobs that pay a fair wage just as we had 100 years ago. Let's talk about what that means. We can start by raising the minimum wage. What is appalling to me today is that the $5 a day Henry Ford paid his workers for 8 hours of work is the equivalent of $14.67 an hour. If we did what Henry Ford did 100 years ago by paying $5 to his employees to help drive the economy and create the middle class, employees today would have to be paid about $14.67 an hour.

Think about that for a minute. The millions of Americans across this country who are working today for a minimum wage are only making the equivalent of half of what Henry Ford paid his workers 100 years ago. Meanwhile, the average CEO in this country today now makes as much as the wages of 933 minimum wage workers combined. I could not fit quite that many people in here, but imagine 933 people—all working 40 hours a week, making minimum wage, and maybe working 2 or 3 jobs—combined equals the average salary of a CEO.

We are going to move this country and working-class people forward again if we understand that people need a fair shot to get ahead and we do something about it. That is why we are going to vote soon on the Fair Minimum Wage Act which does just what it says. It makes sure all of our workers are getting paid a fair wage. An hourly wage of $10.10—not even as much as I was talking about with Henry Ford—is the right number because it gets people out of poverty. That is the number that gets people out of poverty.

Some places across the country are seeking a minimum wage hike that is higher than that, while too many States are stuck at $7.25 an hour, which is the national average. The bill before us in the Senate strikes the right balance by raising the minimum wage to the point where people are above the poverty line and have a fair shot to get ahead. If it made sense for Henry Ford in 1914, it makes sense for us today in 2014. The American people know this, and that is why raising the minimum wage enjoys broad bipartisan public support. If the public were voting, this would be done.

Democrats, Republicans, and Independents understand that it makes

sense, just as Henry Ford realized it 100 years ago. If families are making more money, it is better for everybody in the economy, and it is better for taxpayers. All of us, as taxpayers, know that higher salaries mean we are not spending so much money on food assistance. If we can get $10.10 an hour, we are saving money on SNAP and people will not need or qualify for food assistance anymore. That is the way to cut the food assistance budget the right way. We need to give people access to work that pays above poverty line. Give people a handhold on the ladder to opportunity.

This is about the future of our country. If we want to continue to be a world leader, we have to make sure everybody has a fair shot at a good education, to get a good job, start a business, and make enough money. When they can do that, they will be able to support their family.

Nobody who works 40 hours week should live in poverty. Yet that is exactly what is happening today. We can change that. We can do what Henry Ford did. This man became one of the wealthiest men in the world by lifting people up and giving them a fair shot with a fair wage. I hope that in a few days we will do that. The American people get it, and I hope we will too.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I ask to speak in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, this morning the Supreme Court announced its decision in the McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission, the latest in a series of rulings that have done away with any meaningful limits on money in politics. Since the Supreme Court issued its ruling in Citizens United in 2010, we have witnessed the systematic unraveling of our Nation's campaign finance laws.

I am sure this is a cause for celebration for some—the superwealthy and well-funded corporate interests—because, after all, these rulings give them more influence, more access, and more power, as if they need it. Then there is everybody else—the everyday folks in Minnesota and around the country who don't have the luxury of pouring millions of dollars into political campaigns.

There is the senior on a fixed income who gives $25 to a candidate she likes—maybe someone fighting to contain the cost of prescription drugs. That $25 donation is real money for that senior, but it is nothing compared to the $25 million the pharmaceutical industry can now spend to elect the other candidate.

There is the middle-class mom who has just enough money to buy her kids' school clothes, but surely doesn't have enough money left over to buy an election too.

There is the small business owner in the suburbs who is so concerned about making payroll that she cannot even begin to think about making a huge campaign contribution.

Our democracy can't function the way it is supposed to when these voices are drowned out by a flood of corporate money, so for those who believe the measure of democracy's strength is in votes cast, not dollars spent, well, for us there is nothing to celebrate today.

Citizens United was, in my view, one of the worst decisions in the history of the Supreme Court. By a 5–4 margin, the Court ruled that corporations have a constitutional right to spend as much money as they want to influence elections. If Big Oil wants to spend millions of dollars to attack the guy who is advocating for more renewable fuels, the Supreme Court says: Sure. Go ahead. If huge corporations want to run endless radio ads against a candidate who promises to raise the minimum wage, the Supreme Court says: Fine. Go ahead. If the Wall Street banks want to pour money into a campaign to undo consumer protection laws, the Supreme Court says that is their constitutional right so there is not much you can do about it. That is the way the Court sees it, but it is not the way I see it and it is not the way most Minnesotans see it either.

I think we should be able to say: Enough is enough. There is too much corporate money in politics and some reasonable limits on campaign spending are not just appropriate, they are necessary. Really, that is what Citizens United is all about—the case that got us into this mess. It sort of came down to the question: Can we, the people, place any real limit on the amount of money corporations can spend on elections? The answer should have been, yes, of course we can, but five Supreme Court Justices said: No, we can't. Their logic was literally unprecedented.

To reach the result it did, the Supreme Court had to overturn the case Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce. The decision had been on the books for 20 years. Overturning Austin wasn't some minor technical change to the law; it was a radical shift, an exercise in pro-corporate judicial activism. Just compare what the Court said about campaign expenditures in Austin to what it said 20 years later in Citizens United. In Austin, the Court refused to strike down a Michigan law that limited corporate spending on elections. The Court explained that the lawsuit served a ''compelling interest''—namely, preventing corporations from gaining an unfair advantage in the political system. The Austin Court said that ''corporate wealth can unfairly influence elections.'' Those were the Supreme Court's words in 1990, that ''corporate wealth can unfairly influence elections.'' The Court explained that campaign finance laws prevent ''the corrosive and distorting effects of immense aggregations of wealth that are accumulated with the help of the corporate form.'' In other words, there is good reason—no, a compelling reason—to be worried about unlimited corporate money in politics.

Had today's Supreme Court followed the precedent, Citizens United would have been an easy case. I mean, I would have written the opinion in a couple of minutes. It would have gone something like this: Laws limiting corporate campaign expenditures are constitutional. See Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce. The end.

Of course, that is not the opinion the Court wrote in Citizens United. The Court's opinion was a lot longer and a lot worse.

Here is the one phrase that sums up the Citizens United decision: ''We now conclude that independent expenditures, including those made by corporations, do not give rise to corruption or the appearance of corruption.'' The majority of the Court told us that there is no reason at all to be worried about unlimited corporate money in politics anymore, that it does not give rise even to the appearance of corruption. And, the logic goes, since there is no reason to be concerned about it, there is no constitutional basis to regulate it. That is what the Court tells us, but we know better. The Court's analysis not only is disconnected from precedent, it is disconnected from reality.

The Minnesota League of Women Voters recently issued a report in which it concluded that ''the influence of money in politics represents a dangerous threat to the health of our democracy in Minnesota and nationally.'' That is the Minnesota League of Women Voters. That sounds right to me because here is the thing: In our democracy, everyone is supposed to have an equal say regardless of his or her wealth. The guy in the assembly line gets as many votes as the CEO—one. You don't get extra votes just because you have extra money or greater say because of greater wealth. It doesn't work that way—or shouldn't.

Citizens United turned the whole thing on its head and basically said that those among us with the most money get the most influence, and not only that, there is no limit to the amount of money the wealthy can spend or the amount of influence they can buy. I think that is inherently corrupting.

Unfortunately, Citizens United was just the beginning of the story, and in the years since we have seen courts across the country strike down campaign finance laws, ushering in what are known as super PACs—wealthy groups that can raise and spend unlimited money to influence elections.

Today, in McCutcheon, the Court took Citizens United a step further, striking down a law that limited the amount of money people could give directly to candidates and political parties. In doing so, the Court overturned a key holding from Buckley v. Valeo, a case from 1976. Until today, the law said that direct contributions to candidates, parties, and certain PACs

could not exceed about $125,000 in the aggregate per election cycle. The law was intended to stem the tide of money in politics and maintain the integrity of our public institutions. But as of this morning, that law has been taken off the books at the Supreme Court's direction.

As Justice Breyer explained in his dissenting opinion in McCutcheon today, ''Taken together with Citizens United, today's decision eviscerates our Nation's campaign finance laws, leaving a remnant incapable of dealing with the grave problems of democratic legitimacy that those laws were intended to resolve.'' He is right.

Changing law has real consequences. What happens when we get rid of the speed limit? People with fast cars drive faster—as fast as they want to drive. What happens when we get rid of campaign finance limits? Well, special interests with a lot of money spend more of it on politics—as much as they want to spend. That is not a theory; it is empirical fact. According to data collected by the Center for Responsive Politics, spending by outside groups more than tripled from 2008 to 2012, with overall outside spending topping $1 billion—billion with a ''b''—for the first time in history. Where is the new money coming from? Well, in most cases we don't know. More on that a little later. What we do know is pretty much what one would expect. According to one study, 60 percent of super PACS' funding in the 2012 election cycle came from just 132 donors, each donating at least $1 million. So we have a relatively small group of super-wealthy people accounting for most of the money.

Remember when the Citizens United court decision assured us that all of this new money in politics is OK, that we shouldn't be worried about it, that it ''will not cause the electorate to lose faith in our democracy''? Wow, were they wrong. People are losing faith in our democracy, and can we blame them?

The system is broken, and we need to fix it. There are a number of good proposals out there, and I wish to use this opportunity to mention three of them: disclosure, public financing, and a constitutional amendment.

First, we need greater disclosure. The problem in the post-Citizens United world isn't just that there is now unlimited money in politics, it is also that we have no idea where that money is coming from. Billionaires and big corporations want to influence elections by giving unlimited money to super PACs, but they don't want anyone to know they are the ones pulling the strings, so they do something that looks a lot like money laundering—except that it is perfectly legal.

Let's say there are a bunch of corporations and billionaires out there who want to preserve indefensible tax loopholes that really only help their bottom lines. Their allies form a super PAC with a mission to do just that—preserve their big tax breaks. Now, a super PAC needs a name. ''Americans for Indefensible Tax Loopholes'' probably doesn't achieve their end, so the super PAC decides to go with something such as ''Americans for a Better Tax Code.'' After all, who could be against that? Remember, the corporations or the billionaires who are behind this whole thing don't want their fingerprints on this, so they pass their money through shell corporations before it ends up in the super PAC. That way the actual donors don't show up on the Federal disclosure forms. So now the TV is flooded with attack ads and something like ''paid for by Americans for a Better Tax Code,'' but nobody has any idea who is actually behind the advertisement and there is no good way to find out.

But hang on. It gets worse. In addition to all of the secret money being spent by these super PACs, there are a bunch of nonprofit organizations that are using a glitch in the Tax Code to keep all of their campaign activities secret. These groups, liberal or conservative, don't have to disclose a single penny. Combine them with the super PACs, and we have a lot of money and very little information. Voters aren't just being flooded, they are being blindfolded too.

We have a bill called the DISCLOSE Act that would go a long way toward fixing this problem. It would put in place a clear set of rules requiring disclosure whenever anyone spends more than $10,000 to influence an election, even when that money is being funneled through back channels. The idea is pretty simple: If someone is going to spend that kind of money to influence elections, people should know about it so they can make informed decisions and effectively evaluate what a candidate has to say. This is all about transparency and accountability.

All of us should be able to get behind that. Indeed, most of us already have. The last version of the DISCLOSE Act had support from a majority of Senators, and I am proud to have been one of the bill's cosponsors. Several of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have spoken enthusiastically about greater disclosure. They have said things such as ''sunshine is the greatest disinfectant.'' Even the Supreme Court has endorsed disclosure laws in both Citizens United and in today's decision. Poll after poll shows that the vast majority of Americans support greater transparency in campaign financing.

This is a basic step we should be able to take pretty easily—or one would think so. It turns out that one would be wrong. In July 2012 we brought the DISCLOSE Act to the Senate floor and Republicans blocked it. The bill died before it could get an up-or-down vote. But we are not going to give up on it. I will continue to work with my colleagues to make the campaign finance system more transparent.

Here is another thing we can do: Fundamentally change the way candidates finance their campaigns. Senator DICK DURBIN of Illinois recently reintroduced the Fair Elections Now Act, which basically says that candidates who refuse to accept contributions of more than $150 will be eligible for public financing of their campaigns. This would level the playing field. Instead of campaigns that are funded by a handful of wealthy donors, we will have citizen-funded grassroots campaigns where candidates focus their attention on people who donate $5, $10, $50, up to $150. We will restore power to that senior who makes the $25 donation.

I have cosponsored the Fair Elections Now Act in the past, and I am proud to cosponsor it again in this Congress. This isn't going to solve all of the problems created by Citizens United and McCutcheon, but it is a step in the right direction.

Finally, there is something else we can do, and honestly it is the one thing we most need to do if we are going to repair all the damage the Supreme Court has done; that is, amend the Constitution to reverse the Citizens United and McCutcheon decisions.

Let me be clear. Amending the Constitution is not something I take lightly. I think it should be done only in extraordinary circumstances. But the Supreme Court's decisions present us with one of those situations because they erode the very foundation of our democracy.

I know what my colleagues are thinking: Constitutional amendments are really hard to come by. They require agreement by two-thirds of both Chambers of Congress, and they have to be ratified by at least three-quarters of the States.

It is no wonder that constitutional amendments have been so rare in our history.

Just because a constitutional amendment takes a long time to accomplish doesn't mean it is not worth trying. It took a long time—much longer than it should have—to enshrine women's suffrage into the Constitution, but it got done because it would have been an affront to our democracy had it been otherwise.

These things take time and patience and persistence and perseverance, but they happen. In fact, there is already momentum building. I am proud to cosponsor a constitutional amendment that has been proposed here in the Senate that would restore legal authority to the people to regulate campaign finance. The States are moving in the right direction too. According to Public Citizen, 16 States have already called for a constitutional amendment. I believe it is time for us to answer the call.

Mr. President, thank you. I yield the floor for the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Connecticut.

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

Yesterday, the administration announced that 7.1 million people had

signed up for private health care all across the country in exchanges that range from the national exchange down to the State-based exchanges. Many of those who signed up are women who are enjoying new benefits and new protections under the health care law. So I wanted to come down to the floor, as Senator KAINE did earlier today, as Senator BOXER will in a few moments, to talk about why women all across this country have a completely different health care experience today under the Affordable Care Act and why they have no interest in going back to the days before the Affordable Care Act, and to talk also about what it means to have 7 million people all across this country who now have access to private health care insurance who did not have it before.

The story for women all across this country, as Senator BOXER will talk about in far more articulate terms than I can, is pretty stunning. Mr. President, 8.7 million women will gain maternity coverage in 2014; 8.7 million women did not have maternity coverage either because they did not have coverage to begin with or because they had a plan that did not provide maternity coverage. The health care law says if you buy insurance, we are going to expect that insurance has just a basic, commonsense level of benefits, and I think every American would agree with the fact that insurance for a woman should probably cover what for many women will be the most expensive intersection with the health care system they have in their life: And that is when they get pregnant. For families across the country, getting pregnant can bankrupt a family if they do not have maternity coverage. That changes with the Affordable Care Act.

Twenty seven million women can receive lifesaving preventive care without copays all across this country. A copay for many people is just $5 or $10. But for some cancer screenings, it can be a significant amount of money, running more than $100. For low-income women, who are the primary breadwinner for their family, who are perhaps only making about $25,000 a year, that is a barrier for them in seeking this basic preventive care, seeking care that could catch a cancer when it can be treated before it becomes a killer. Because of the Affordable Care Act, 27 million women now can receive lifesaving preventive care.

But maybe the most important statistic for women is this one: zero. Zero women can be charged more just for being a woman. The reality was, as Senator BOXER will talk about, if you were a woman in this country, you were sometimes paying 50 percent more simply because insurance companies believed in many cases that being a woman constituted a preexisting condition.

So we have 7.1 million people who are now on these private exchanges. Many of them are women who are already enjoying the benefits of the Affordable Care Act but now are going to be able to get lifesaving treatment because of the ACA.

There were a lot of people who said this day was not going to happen. There were a lot of naysayers out there who said there was no way we were ever going to be able to hit the 7 million mark.

It is kind of interesting to look back now on all of the folks who predicted catastrophe for the Affordable Care Act who have been proven wrong. Before I yield the floor for Senator BOXER, I want to go through a couple of these statements.

A lot of people in the House of Representatives have spent the majority of the last several years trying to destroy the Affordable Care Act. I was a Member of that body, and I probably was down on the floor of the House of Representatives for about 40 different votes to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act. I think we are now at about 50 or 51 votes.

But when the Web site ran into some troubles in the beginning of the year, they all went down to the floor and went on the cable news networks and said this was an example of how bad this law is and there is no way to fix the law, there is no way to fix the Web site.

Representative BILL JOHNSON of Ohio said this:

> This may be the most stunning example of overpromising and under delivering in recent U.S. history. Based on my review, the problems with the Healthcare.gov website are catastrophic.

That is a bit of hyperbole to suggest that the problems with the Web site were the most stunning example ever in recent U.S. history of overpromising and underdelivering. But, of course, the Web site problems were fixed. They were fixed within a few months such that we have actually gone straight through the CBO's estimate—after the Web site troubles—of 6 million people enrolling and we now have 7 million people enrolling.

But as early as this month, Republicans and mass media sources were telling us there was no way we were going to hit 7 million or 6 million. An Associated Press article said:

> . . . the White House needs something close to a miracle to meet its goal of enrolling 6 million people by the end of this month. With open enrollment ending March 31, that means to meet the goal, another 1.8 million people would have to sign up during the month. . . . That's way above the daily averages for January and February. . . . The math seems to be going against the administration.

Well, what the Associated Press did not get is that there is desperation out on the streets. People who have not had insurance for years, if not decades, well, they might have taken their time to price out the right plan for themselves. Some of them might have simply waited until the last minute. But the reality is, the demand there is, frankly, almost insatiable, such that the Web site actually came down for a portion of time on the 31st because so many people were going to it. The number eventually eclipsed even the CBO's rosiest estimate of enrollment.

Bill Kristol said this:

> If the exchanges are permitted to go into effect . . . there will be error, fraud, inefficiency, arbitrariness, and privacy violations aplenty. . . . Just as economic shortages were endemic to Soviet central planning, the coming Obamacare train wreck is endemic to big government liberalism.

Well, the exchanges are working pretty well, such that we broke through the 7 million barrier. In my State of Connecticut, which has run a really good exchange, we are coming close to doubling our expected enrollment. Senator BOXER will talk about her numbers in California. But when you actually work to implement the health care law, rather than work to undermine it, as several States are, the exchanges work very well.

So then they turned and said: Well, yes, lots of people are signing up, and, yes, the exchanges seem to be working, but the wrong people are signing up. So one conservative scholar said:

> They have thrown the entire health-care system into unprecedented chaos for a population—

The uninsured—

> that is, it seems, staying as far away from it as possible. Little has been fixed. . . .

Well, Kentucky, just in the first 6 months of implementation, has reduced its uninsured population by 40 percent. The RAND Corporation said that 9 million Americans who had no health insurance now have health insurance. The reality is that people without insurance are signing up for the new health care law. Why? Because they can afford it and they desperately need it.

The fact is Republicans are going to continue to attack this law, and they are going to continue to change their arguments, they are going to continue to be shifting in the messages they send to the American people because every time they tell us that something is wrong, they are wrong.

Now they have said—do you know what—that 7 million figure, well, that just cannot be right. They are cooking the books. That cannot be right. There has to be something wrong with the methodology. Well, it is not just the Obama administration that says it is 7 million; it is independent analysts who say it is 7 million. And guess what. By the end of the year it could be 8 million once people who have had life-changing events sign up for care, once we incorporate all the State numbers.

Nobody is cooking the books. The uninsured are not staying away. The exchanges are not catastrophic. The Web site is not unfixable. All of these things have been proven untrue. Yet we still have people come down to the floor and tell us why this thing cannot work.

I listened to one of my colleagues come down to the floor earlier today and tell a story about a family in Wyoming. I do not know the specifics of the

family there. But let's talk about families in a State like Wyoming that is on a Federal exchange—the real story of the options that are out there for families out there.

I think my friend from Wyoming was talking about a family of five. Again, I cannot know all of the specifics of that family. But let's say that family of five in Carbon County, WY, was making $100,000 a year—which would be about twice the average salary in that State and across the country. Well, that family of five making $100,000 a year would qualify for a $677 per month tax credit. A bronze plan would be about $550 to $750 per month. That is about 40 percent cheaper than a lot of private plans that may be available today.

Now let's say that family is actually making the median income in Wyoming, which is around $56,000. Well, if you are making $56,000, and you are a family of five in Wyoming, all your kids will qualify for Medicaid, which is virtually free, and the parents would qualify for a tax credit of $528 per month. A bronze plan could be as cheap as $171 per month.

That is the reality. That is affordable for a family of five making the median income. That is affordable. I understand people are having stories that do not match up with the 7 million people who have signed up for these plans over the past several months. I get that there is bad news out there. But there is a lot of good news out there as well. There are a lot of people who could not afford to buy a health insurance plan, who now can finally afford health care.

That is why Senator BOXER and myself and Senator STABENOW and Senator WHITEHOUSE and so many others have been coming down to the floor to talk about the fact that the Affordable Care Act is working. And for all of the naysayers, for all of the people who have predicted that this law could not work, well, the example has been set: 7 million people and counting signed up for health care exchanges all across this country—never mind all of the people who have gotten access to Medicaid, never mind all the people who have been able to stay on their parents' plan. We do not know what the overall number right now will be of people who have qualified for health care under the exchanges, Medicaid, and the provisions allowing people to stay on their plans. But this number could be 25 million by the time the year is out.

So I am thrilled to see the success of the Affordable Care Act and the number from yesterday. I am thrilled to see the life-changing benefits for women all across the country. I am pleased to be joined here on the floor by my colleague, Senator BOXER.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what is the time situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is postcloture on H.R. 3979 and a perfecting amendment thereto.

Mrs. BOXER. Do I need to ask permission to speak on health care?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator does need consent.

Mrs. BOXER. I would so ask.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you so much, Mr. President.

I want to say a big thank you to Senator MURPHY because he has been a great leader on this issue. He and I are coming from States where people are signing up and signing up and surpassing the goals. The stories are incredibly heartwarming and wonderful and are being told on the radio and being told on TV. The truth is coming out about the Affordable Care Act.

All of the scares aside, we see now it is working. Why is it working? Because there was a very simple premise when we passed this bill 4 years ago; and that was, people deserve a fair shot at affordable health care. That is all it was. They deserve a fair shot at getting affordable health care. They deserve affordable health care. They deserve to be free from discrimination by the insurance companies.

So I am so pleased Senator MURPHY has taken it upon himself to organize a few of us so we do not allow misinformation and lies to be spread about the Affordable Care Act.

What I loved about President Obama's speech yesterday at the Rose Garden was that he is so open about it. He said: Yes, we had a flawed rollout. We lost time. That was bad. And, yes, no bill is perfect. I think it was our colleague ANGUS KING who said it the best. He said: The most perfect document in the world is the Constitution, and it has been amended 27 times. So is any bill perfect? Is any document perfect? Of course not. But I am here to say, given the facts—not the made-up stuff—given the facts, I am so proud I was able to vote for the Affordable Care Act. I am so proud of that. And I am sad that not one Republican joined us in that vote—not one of them, not one of them.

When you go back to 4 years ago, we saw that millions of our citizens were uninsured because they could not afford insurance; or they were uninsured because their insurance company walked out on them when they were sick; or there were annual limits on their plans, and they simply went over that annual limit and they went broke and they could not afford insurance. Some had lifetime caps. And it sounded like a lot: Oh, you have a cap of a quarter of a million dollars. But then when you get cancer, that cap is reached a heck of a lot faster than you thought.

So we had kids kicked off their parents' health insurance at 18, 19 years old.

We had people with asthma, diabetes, cancer who could not get insurance until the Affordable Care Act passed. Being a woman was considered a preexisting condition. If you were a victim of domestic violence, forget it. The insurance company wanted no part of your risk. So Democrats took action—took action.

All the Republicans can do is come down here and say: Oh, here is one constituent's story. For every one constituent's story that they tell, No. 1, doublecheck the facts because sometimes we look at the facts and they are not exactly what they say. But I can give 100 stories to their 1 of people finally getting health care.

By the way, we can fix this law any day of the week with the help of the Republicans if they have an issue they think needs to be addressed. But their answer is: repeal, repeal, repeal. Why would they want to repeal a law that is helping, I will tell you, over 100 million Americans, not 7 million—7 million who are on the exchange—but I will show you more than 100 million of our people are getting preventive care, free cancer screenings, immunizations, contraception.

It has made a big difference in their lives. It is making a big difference that kids can stay on their parents' policies. Why do they want to repeal a law that does that, that gives us a patients' bill of rights, so insurance companies cannot look at you when you are sick, in your darkest moment and say: Senator or friend or Mr. Jones or Mrs. Smith, I am so sorry to tell you that you are not getting any more coverage because we just learned you had diabetes. You did not tell us. You did not mention it. You are out.

I do not know why Republicans want to take that away from people, but then again history is repeating itself. I tell my friends—I have so many friends on the other side of the aisle. We just see the world differently. When we go back to Medicare, you should see what the Republicans said in this Senate about Medicare: Socialism, let it wither on the vine.

Bob Dole was here. He was so proud he voted against it. He led the charge. ''It is terrible.'' Now you have tea party members come with signs to rallies that say, ''Don't touch my Medicare.'' They love their Medicare. They do not understand it is a government program, Medicare. The government is the insurer. Of course, PAUL RYAN wants to end it in his budget. So I guess nothing changes; it all stays the same. They hated Medicare. They still hate it. They wanted it to wither on the vine. They totally destroy it in Ryan's budget.

Social Security. You should see what they said about Social Security. It was an abomination. That is what they said. So nothing changes. We have different people in different clothes. I look a little different than the Democrats in the old days. There were no women here for starters. My colleague is very handsome. He had some predecessors that looked good, but they all say the same thing: Government should not be involved in any of this. It will all be great. You know what. I

wish they were right. I wish they were right.

My husband developed a small business. He managed to pay health care for his people. He was proud to do it. But you know not every business is fair and just and right. So, yes, once in a while we have to say let's all work together to make sure people are covered. When I was a little kid, my mother used to tell me all the time: Without your health care, you have nothing. If you are sick, you got nothing.

I used to say: Oh, God, I am so tired of hearing that. I remember she used to say: You see that beautiful actress over there? She has everything, but she got sick so she has nothing. Your health is everything, she told me. You have to protect your health. She was right.

How do you protect your health and the health of your family? By getting preventive care so you can catch something early. If you do not have insurance, you do not get that preventive care. You are in trouble. If something happens and you are in an automobile accident and you thought you were an invincible young person and nothing would happen to you and suddenly you find yourself with broken bones and everything else, including a broken heart, and you have no health insurance, you can go bankrupt. People did, because it was so hard to get affordable insurance before the Affordable Care Act.

So what you are hearing and will continue to hear are scare tactics, stories. I am here to tell you—and I want to say it very clearly—about the millions and millions of Americans who understand that the Affordable Care Act is working for them.

Yesterday was a historic day. They said: Never would you get 7 million people to sign up for private insurance on the exchanges—never. It happened. Why? Because this is a product people need, health insurance that is affordable. But that number is the tip of the iceberg. I will prove it.

Medicaid; that is, insurance for the poorest working people. We expanded it. We let more people qualify: 4.5 million Americans previously uninsured now have coverage through Medicaid. So let's do the math. There are 7 million on the exchanges—7.1; 4.5 million on Medicaid who did not have it before; 3 million young adults are able to stay on their parents' plan who were not able to do that before. How about this? Eight million senior citizens who have saved billions of dollars because of the fix in the Affordable Care Act that says they get more help paying for their prescriptions.

That adds up to, drum roll, 22.6 million Americans with those very important benefits, but then here is the other thing. One hundred million Americans are now getting help with preventive services that they used to have to pay for: immunizations, mammograms, vaccines, annual exams, and other lifesaving preventive care.

We are talking about millions and millions. Even with private health care now, you can have no annual limit, no lifetime limit. They cannot be turned away for preexisting conditions. Your insurance company cannot break out on them just when they are needing them. So that is almost everyone in the country who is benefiting from the law.

Let me tell you about California. We are the biggest State in the Union, 38 million strong. Covered California is the way we set up our exchange. It is coveredCA.com. Peter Lee is the head of that. I wish to thank Peter Lee today—he does not know I am doing this—for his extraordinary leadership.

Here is what happened. We exceeded our State's goal for enrollment through Covered California by not 100,000 people, not 200,000 people, not 300,000 or 400,000, but by 500,000 people we exceeded our goal. That is bigger than some States. Can you believe it? Half a million people, more than we expected.

I am sure Senator THUNE is shocked by this. This is a fact. We expected to have 700,000 sign up. Instead we had 1.2 million. That does not even include all of those who signed up on Monday or who were still in the process of completing enrollment.

We are going to hear a lot of stories about families who are paying what they think is too much—and I want to work with everybody to make this law better, believe me—but listen to a couple of my constituents. Julie Mims from Sacramento said:

> We no longer have to worry about being ruined physically and financially by a serious health issue. . . . We enrolled in a Bronze 60 plan that will cost us $2 a month.

This is a working woman who is getting the help she needs to have a decent—decent—health care policy.

Then there is Rebecca Tasker. She runs a small construction business in San Diego with her husband. They are saving $1,000 a month. They are saving $12,000 a year that they can spend on their family. They can spend that in their community boosting this economy.

She said, ''These savings will help our company grow and might allow us to be able to hire our first employee this year.''

So here is a small businesswoman who had to spend so much on health care, and now because of the Affordable Care Act she is able to save $1,000 a month and possibly hire her first employee. Have you heard of something called job lock? Before the Affordable Care Act, people said: I do not want to leave my job because I have health care. I am scared to go out on my own. I would not be able to get it. I would not be able to afford it. That is why we set up the exchanges. It is freeing people to move out of a job that maybe they think is a dead-end and start their own business.

Here is a woman who is going to be able to hire her first employee with the money she is saving. There are hundreds more stories. I will be coming to talk about those in the coming days and weeks. Stunningly, House Republicans keep bragging about their never-ending efforts to take health care away from millions of Americans.

Do you know the House has voted not once, not twice but more than 50 times to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They are doing it again. If they had spent as much energy working with us to make the law better, which the President said he is open to, we are open to, just like we worked with them on Medicare Part D when they carried that. We worked with them to make it better.

Can you imagine, we would be standing here talking about even more millions of people. I have to say and this—I know it might be viewed as controversial, but because this law helps women so much with mammography, with vaccines, with birth control, with the end of discrimination based on gender, with an end of discrimination if you have been the victim of violence, with the end of discrimination because you could carry a child and have a pregnancy and want coverage, this Affordable Care Act helps women.

So I am going to say this: When you vote 50 times to repeal a law that benefits women, you are voting against women. So you can say all you want to become—and I know Speaker BOEHNER said: I want to become more sensitive to women. I have an idea: Stop trying to take away health care from women and their families and then you will see women feel much better about you.

Women are smart. They know who is on their side. They know who wants to give them a fair shot. But it is not people who want to take away their health care. That is what you say day in and day out. Remember, under the Affordable Care Act, many women were denied health insurance because of preexisting illnesses such as breast cancer, depression or, again, even being a victim of domestic violence. They were charged more than men. Let us be clear. Now we are guaranteed access to free preventive care and maternity care. Women are now paying zero dollars for a checkup—zero. This is it. Zero dollars to get a test to check for cervical cancer, zero dollars for a mammogram, zero dollars for FDA-approved contraception. Why do the Republicans want to repeal this law and take away mammograms, take away tests for cervical cancer, and take away checkups and FDA-approved contraception? Why?

At the same time, they say they do not understand why women do not gravitate to their party. I have to say, we should be celebrating this law—yes, fixing it where it needs to be fixed. But I think if Republicans would join with us and say let's work together to make this a better plan—if you have someone who cannot find their doctor in their plan, let's try to work together to fix it. If you have someone who you think deserves a subsidy, let's work together and try to fix it.

But let's remember, folks, I just pointed out the millions of people who are benefiting.

House Speaker BOEHNER called the Affordable Care Act a ''rolling calamity.'' House Majority Whip McCarthy said the enrollment numbers would be ''staggeringly low.'' Several GOP Members tweeted excitedly about how enrollments in their States wouldn't even fill a football stadium to capacity, and former Gov. Mike Huckabee said: ''You've got more people wanting to go moose hunting in New Hampshire than want Obamacare.''

Wrong. Really wrong—really, really wrong.

It is time for Republicans to look at the facts. It is time for the GOP to accept the reality that this law is helping millions of people: seniors, women, men, students, children—all Americans.

It is time to recognize that one of the biggest problems facing our country before the Affordable Care Act was a lack of affordable insurance and millions of people are gaining the benefits.

So we are not going to go back to the days when our people were denied health care, where an insurance company would walk out on you, where you brought in a child with asthma when they were wheezing and the insurance company said: Get out. We can't insure that child.

I have seen the tears before the ACA when people were forced into bankruptcy because they had no insurance, and I have seen the tears of joy since the ACA.

So we will listen to our colleagues tell their tale of horrors, and that is fine. They have every right. I respect them. But remember, as we hear these stories, go back and make sure that is exactly what you thought you heard and then ask them what is their plan. How do they want to help women and their families and their children?

So far, we haven't heard much. All we have heard about is repeal, repeal, repeal. That is not a policy. Repealing the Affordable Care Act will hurt Americans and not just a few but many millions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with a number of my colleagues for up to 45 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, before I start, I noted that the Senator from Connecticut came to the floor in an attempt to debunk a letter from one of my constituents to me, a family from Rawlins, WY, whom I talked about earlier on the floor.

It seems the Senator is making the same argument the majority leader Senator REID has made time and time again that these letters are made up. That is what seems to be the case. Is that what the Senator from Connecticut is saying? These are letters, these are emails, these are news articles that are out there coming from our constituents and coming from our home States.

This was all supposed to be about affordable care. Care and affordability were the keystones of this entire piece of legislation.

So I heard the Senator from California talking about people being denied care. It is happening now because of the health care law—because of the health care law people are being denied care.

Let me reference where my colleague from Connecticut comes from. The State of Connecticut, the Hartford Courant, a major newspaper in the State of Connecticut, has a report that came out March 17 of this year, just a couple of weeks ago: ''Connecticut Is Less Competitive After Federal Health Care Reform.''

I heard the Senator from California saying there are people who have been helped, and I believe that, but for every one person who has been helped, I believe many have been harmed as a result of the law.

Let me tell you what our friends from the Hartford Courant wrote:

> The individual health insurance market is less competitive in Connecticut since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, sometimes called Obamacare, the Kaiser Family Foundation said in a report released Monday.
>
> Of the seven States to release enrollment data by insurer, Connecticut and Washington had fewer options—

Fewer options, not more options, as the President of the United States has claimed—fewer options. The article continues—

> for people buying health plans on the individual market, according to Kaiser foundation, a non-profit health policy research organization.
>
> California and New York, the largest States in the study, each has a more competitive insurance market today compared to 2012, Kaiser found.

But Connecticut, the State where my colleague had questioned where the woman from Wyoming comes from, is less competitive. The article continues:

> In 2012, Connecticut's individual health-insurance market was more evenly distributed among a number of insurers.

They list Aetna, WellPoint/Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield, UnitedHealth Group, EmblemHealth/ConnectiCare. It says:

> Connecticut has fewer insurer options available on Access Health CT, its public health exchange, which was created by the Affordable Care Act.
>
> As of February 18, two insurers dominated 97 percent of health plans sold through Access Health CT.

There is a ''less competitive exchange market and'' let me point out ''higher than average premiums.''

If that is what my colleague from Connecticut wants to say is a success, let him have it, but he has no right, in my opinion, to come and say that a woman who wrote to me is either not smart enough to know how to figure out how much of her premiums she is being asked to pay and what her premiums were prior to her losing insurance because of the health care law.

Then the Senator from California came to the floor to say: Well, people aren't losing the care they had.

NBC Connecticut, again where our colleague is from, says: ''Some Connecticut doctors said they will not accept certain health insurance plans offered on the state health exchange.'' The story goes on to say: ''It broke my heart,'' losing the doctor she had been to before whom she trusts and has faith in but because of the health care law is losing that care.

I come to the floor to just point out that Republicans have better ideas. Republicans have ideas about ways to help work to lower the cost of care so patients can get the care they need from a doctor they want at lower cost, not the situation we see across the country, where many individuals believe and truly feel harmed as a result of the President's health care law.

With that, in response to what my colleagues from Connecticut and California have just said, we are here today to talk about jobs, the economy, getting people back to work. As a doctor, I will tell you long-term unemployment, how it affects someone's life, how it affects, I believe, their identity, their self-worth, their dignity, and the way they think about themselves, and so it is much more important that we get Americans back to work.

I am on the floor with a number of my colleagues. The Senator from South Dakota is on the floor, and he knows as well as anyone the impact unemployment has in rural America, in the Western United States and how when jobs go away it makes it much harder for other jobs to come. I would ask that he share some of those thoughts with us right now.

Mr. THUNE. I thank the Senator from Wyoming for his observations about health care and more particularly about jobs.

We are talking about a 13th extension now of unemployment insurance benefits which, in my view, does treat a symptom, but it doesn't do anything to address the underlying cause. The cause is we have too many people in this country who are out of the work, which means we need to create more jobs, and that means making it less expensive and less difficult to hire people, not driving up the cost of hiring.

The Senator from Wyoming has just touched on one of the issues that is affecting hiring in this country; that is, ObamaCare.

You can say what you want—and the other side may have some stories, which we will not dispute, unlike when we come up here and we share the stories, the real-life stories of some of our constituents, and then we have the majority leader of the Senate say those stories aren't true, those stories are all made up. Then he came to the floor

last week in response to more bad news about ObamaCare and said the reason people aren't signing up for it is they just aren't educated enough about the Internet.

What he is essentially saying is that the people of this country, No. 1, aren't telling the truth and; No. 2, aren't very smart. That is not what I believe and I don't think that is what any of my colleagues believe.

We do believe there are things we ought to be doing to get Americans back to work. Repealing ObamaCare would be a good place to start because it is making the cost of growing your business, expanding your business in this country, dramatically higher. It is also raising the premiums and the deductibles for people all across this country, for middle-class families, and giving them fewer options when it comes to doctors and to hospitals.

I want to talk just briefly, if I might, about the cost of overregulation and what it is doing to our economy.

We have had an opportunity during this discussion on unemployment insurance to talk about some of the things that we would do if we would be given a chance to offer amendments. Typically, the case around here, what happens, the practice and pattern of late is that the majority leader fills the tree and blocks us from offering amendments. We have a lot of Members on our side who have great ideas about things that would actually create jobs, actually grow the economy. One of the things we know is costing jobs and hurting the economy is the cost of overregulation, destroying jobs and making it more difficult for our job creators.

In fact, the estimate is it is almost one-half trillion dollars in the cost of regulations since the President has come to office—almost one-half trillion dollars added—added cost in this country. That figure is larger than the entire economy of Peru. It is larger than the entire economy of Sweden. Think about that. The cost of regulation in this country since this President has come to office is larger than the entire economies of either Sweden or Peru.

One of the largest contributors to these new regulations and compliance costs is the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency. They came out with the Boiler MACT regulations, they came out with the Utility MACT regulations, and they came out with tier 3 fuel standards. All of these things that the EPA has finalized are some of the most costly regulations we have seen from any agency in recent history.

These rules will impose billions of dollars in costs on energy producers and manufacturers, which are going to be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. Unfortunately, for consumers already hurting in the Obama economy, more bad news is on the way. The EPA is currently working on regulations for ozone standards, greenhouse gas emissions for powerplants, and a dramatic expansion of the Clean Water Act that will reach into ditches and gullies all across America.

I would like to briefly touch on the impacts EPA mandates, including greenhouse gas standards, regional haze requirements, Utility MACT, and Boiler MACT, are having on energy prices back in my home State of South Dakota. Unfortunately, South Dakotans are on the frontlines of this administration's war on affordable energy.

In 2008, then-Senator Obama promised to make energy prices skyrocket. Today, in my home State, he is fulfilling that promise. Just Monday Black Hills Power, a utility company in western South Dakota, announced a proposed rate increase to cover the cost of new EPA mandates. If that rate increase is approved, the average customer's rates will increase by $130 a year. For a family living in western South Dakota, $130 can go a long way toward putting food on the table or making a car payment.

South Dakota is a rural State with energy-intensive manufacturing and agricultural sectors of our economy. Families have to travel long distances. We are a cold-weather climate. We see dramatic swings in seasonal temperatures that create uncertainty when opening monthly utility bills. Unfortunately, the EPA's backdoor energy tax, which is already beginning to hit South Dakota's families, is about to get even more expensive.

The tier 3 gasoline standards, greenhouse gas regulations, and new ozone rules are a train wreck of new regulations that are going to further drive up energy costs and destroy jobs. That is why I have offered two commonsense amendments to rein in these costly EPA regulations.

The first amendment would require Congress to approve any EPA regulation with a projected cost of more than $50 million a year. If Congress rejects that rule, the EPA would be forced to go back to the drawing board and pursue less costly alternatives.

From regulating greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act to regulating streams and ditches under the Clean Water Act, this EPA stretches authority well beyond what Congress intended when we created a Federal-State environment regulatory structure decades ago. This EPA needs to be reined in, and the best way to do that is by creating congressional oversight of major regulations.

My second amendment would create another check on the EPA's ever-expanding regulatory reach. This would require the Department of Energy and the Government Accountability Office to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of EPA's proposed greenhouse gas regulations on powerplants.

If, based on this study, the DOE, the Department of Energy, or GAO determined that the new regulations would raise energy prices or destroy jobs, the new regulations could not take effect. The EPA could still propose new regulations on new and existing powerplants, but those regulations couldn't be finalized until it certified that those new rules would not negatively impact jobs or energy costs.

We have over 10 million people who remain unemployed. Economic growth and job creation remain stagnant and middle-class incomes have dropped by $3,000 per family over the past 5 years. The last thing middle-class families need is for their pocketbooks to be further stretched by misguided government policies that drive up energy costs. It is time to put a check on the EPA. It is time to have an open debate, an amendment process on commonsense proposals to increase congressional oversight, and it is time to put consumers ahead of liberal environmental groups.

I encourage my colleagues on the floor with me today to continue pushing for policies that make energy more abundant and more affordable. Unlike the heavyhanded regulations we have seen from the Obama administration, these policies will actually create jobs and help grow the middle class. I will continue fighting, along with my colleagues joining me on the floor today, to make sure we get votes on these policies and begin to rein in the out-of-control regulations from the Obama administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I am pleased to be here with my colleagues talking about ways we can get people back to work, regulations that don't make sense, and energy policies that clearly every economist we talk to understands are a key to the future.

I know the Republican leader has joined us on the floor, and I think I will ask him if he has some comments he would like to make, and then we can come back to me at the end of his comments.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank my friend from Missouri.

What we have been talking about is how to create jobs. Unfortunately, the agenda of the Senate Democratic majority does just the opposite. It appears as if we are not likely to be able to get any amendments offered that would actually create jobs and opportunity for our people.

One of the things I have been so disturbed about over the years is the inability of employees to make a voluntary choice about whether they want to belong to a union.

In addition to the energy jobs measures we are discussing here today, I have another related measure I would like to highlight. As I mentioned earlier this morning in my opening remarks, enacting national right-to-work legislation is just plain common sense. My colleague from Kentucky, Senator PAUL, has been the leader on this issue.

This is a fundamental issue of worker freedom. This amendment would empower American workers to choose

whether they would like to join a union. It would protect a worker from getting fired if she would rather not pay dues to a union boss who fails to represent her concerns and her priorities. According to one survey, 80 percent of unionized workers agreed that workers should be able to choose whether to join a union.

It is an issue of upward mobility. A worker should be able to be recognized and rewarded for her individual hard work and productivity.

This is paycheck fairness. A worker should no longer be held back by an antiquated system where pay raises are based on seniority rather than on merit.

This is an issue of leveling the playing field. Workers in all States would have a more equal chance of finding work in every State, and they would no longer see their communities failing to secure new investments because their State hasn't passed a right-to-work law.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2910, which I have just described to my colleagues here in the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, reserving my right to object, the underlying measure is a bipartisan response to an emergency in terms of extending unemployment for 5 months—a temporary extension. Given the emergency nature of the underlying legislation, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, Senator THUNE, my friend from South Dakota, and I have worked for a long time on the kinds of economic and troublesome regulations he talked about earlier. Nobody appears to be answerable to the people—those who come forward with these regulations. I think he has an amendment on that, and I would afford him the chance to talk about that amendment.

Mr. THUNE. I thank my colleague from Missouri.

Senator BLUNT and I have, as he said, worked very hard when it comes to the overreach of government agencies and the burdens of regulations, the cost of regulations and what that is doing to a lot of middle-class families and their pocketbooks.

I mentioned earlier a couple of amendments I had filed here that pertained to energy costs in my home State of South Dakota, one of which sets a $50 million threshold over which a regulation proposed by the EPA would have to be voted on by the Congress of the United States, and if Congress rejected it, the EPA would have to go back to the drawing board to come up with an alternative approach. That amendment is amendment No. 2895, and I think it fits perfectly with what we are talking about today, which is growing our economy, creating jobs, and trying to do what actually would get people back to work. Certainly, the burdensome cost of regulation is a tremendous deterrent and impediment to job creation in this country.

I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2895.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Is there objection?

The senior Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, reserving my right to object, once again, given the emergency nature of this bipartisan legislation to address the plight of over 2 million Americans desperately looking for work, I object and hope we can press on with the passing of the underlying legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, let's talk about this topic a little longer—regulation. Again, in my view—and my friend from South Dakota and I have shared this view for a long time—when the Congress passes laws—and I think it is appropriate that we are not always in the best place to come up with the regulations that put those laws in place—I believe the country has clearly come to a place where nobody is then answerable for regulations that have a significant impact on our economy.

The Senator from Kentucky Mr. PAUL and I have cosponsored the REINS Act, which addresses these laws that meet this kind of threshold, and it is a bill that was before the Congress, but we can't get that bill to the floor.

Senator THUNE and I have worked for a long time on this kind of proposal that would simply create opportunity.

The emergency nature of the opportunity is really a 5-year emergency now where we have seen job opportunity after job opportunity go away. Part of that is surely because of what were the unintended but clear consequences of the Affordable Care Act, and part of it is rules and regulations that don't make sense to people who are about to take enough of a chance with their creation of opportunity for themselves and somebody else without having any idea that someone answerable to them is eventually going to have to answer for what the Federal Government does. And that is what bringing these regulations to the floor would do.

Nobody is saying Congress should be responsible for implementing every law and the goal of law, but we should be responsible for the impact of that law and should have the final say on rules and regulations that we have essentially started in motion. They should come back here.

If we don't do this on this bill today, we should do this. We should have done this years ago. Many of us in this body, in the Congress, have believed for a long time that this is one of the major impediments to job creation.

Another impediment is bad energy policy. That is why there are so many energy amendments. The amendment I offered where the Congress couldn't have a carbon tax unless it passed a threshold of 60 votes was offered in the budget debate last year, and 53 of my colleagues—Democrats and Republicans here on the floor—agreed that, yes, we should have a special threshold.

When we talk about a tax that makes gas at the gasoline pump more expensive; that makes diesel fuel that delivers products more expensive; that raises the utility bill of everybody who has some element of fossil fuel in their utilities, and that is virtually everybody; that makes it less likely that people will create manufacturing jobs and those kinds of opportunities here, of course we ought to be talking about those kinds of policies, whether or not it is the carbon tax.

In Ohio, in Missouri, in Wyoming, in the vast middle of the country, our energy comes from fossil fuels. Those are the resources we have. Our focus should be on using those more effectively, not figuring out ways we shouldn't use them at all or figuring out ways to double the utility bill.

That is the EPA's own estimate of their own rule, that the utility bill, they say, will go up 80 percent if the rule is in place. I think that is probably a little optimistic on their part. Eighty percent is almost doubling your current utility bill. Think about where you work or your daughter-in-law works or your son-in-law works or somebody in your family works, doubling the utility bill there and wondering if there will still be a utility there or if that company will decide to go somewhere else. The incredibly capable and competitive American workforce is being held back by utility policies that stop people from making the investments they want to make.

The energy cost of manufacturing, according to the National Association of Manufacturers and others, is a key element now in that final decision to decide where you are going to build something, where you are going to make something, and, most importantly for families, where you are going to create a job that has the kind of take-home pay families need.

When we talk about the Keystone Pipeline, the ability to maximize our use of natural gas, of fracking for oil, we are talking about the great resources we have, and we should use those resources to our benefit. Every other country in the world, when they look at their tableaux of natural resources, the first two words that come to mind in every other country in the world are ''economic opportunity'' or ''economic advantage.'' What does this allow us to do that we couldn't do otherwise? What advantage does this give us over our competitors?

We shouldn't let the first two words that come to mind when we look at our

natural resources be ''environmental hazard.'' What is the worst thing that would happen and what would happen if that happened every day? No. 1, the worst thing to happen is something we should think about but not be overwhelmed by. We should see that that doesn't happen, and if it does happen, what are we immediately prepared to do about it so it does not become an ongoing problem? That is the whole formula it takes on the energy side, on the natural resources side to create opportunity.

The one thing government policies can do, although they can't create jobs, is they can create an environment where people want to create private sector jobs. That is and continues to be the No. 1 priority domestically this Congress should be focused on—what we do to create more private sector jobs. I think energy is a big part of that.

Certainly, my friend from Wyoming Senator BARRASSO who has brought us together to talk about this, understands that so well. Energy and regulation policies that make sense are the kinds of policies that help us create the opportunities that hard-working families need and that families who would like to see somebody in their family have that job with great take-home pay are focused on.

I yield for my friend Senator BARRASSO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. I thank my colleague, and I appreciate the comments of my colleague Senator BLUNT, who has been a leader and champion on the issue of getting people back to work.

We heard the Senator from Rhode Island saying there are people out there desperately looking for work. What we are doing is bringing to the floor amendments to this piece of legislation that will actually get people back to work nearly immediately.

So I rise today to discuss how Congress can actually help the people who are unemployed get back to work. We have been debating all week whether the Senate should extend unemployment insurance to the long-term unemployed. And whether or not one supports extending unemployment insurance, we can all agree and should all agree that job creation should really be the top priority. This, to me, is where the unemployment insurance bill, as currently written, falls short. That is why I, along with a number of my colleagues, have filed amendments that would help create nearly 100,000 jobs.

Our amendment would do two things, and President Obama has failed to do them. The amendment I am here with Senator HOEVEN to discuss would permit—approve the Keystone XL Pipeline as well as liquefied natural gas exports to our allies and strategic partners.

The Keystone XL Pipeline has been pending for over 5½ years—over 5½ years. During that time the Obama administration has conducted five separate environmental reviews of this project—five environmental reviews in the last 5½ years.

Despite this scrutiny, President Obama continues to delay approving the Keystone XL Pipeline even though its construction would support over 42,000 jobs. That 42,000 jobs number is not my number. This is the jobs estimate from President Obama's own State Department.

The Keystone XL Pipeline has broad bipartisan support throughout the country. A recent Washington Post/ABC News poll found that 65 percent of Americans support the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Labor unions such as the plumbers and pipefitters, building and construction trades, international labor, and the union of operating engineers, among others, have all called on the President of the United States to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. Just over 1 year ago, 62 Members of the Senate voted in favor of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

If the Senate is going to extend unemployment insurance, it should also help Americans get back to work. We should adopt this amendment which approves the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The other part of the amendment deals with approving LNG exports—liquefied natural gas—to our allies and strategic partners. Before getting into the specifics of that, I ask my colleague and friend from North Dakota, Senator HOEVEN—who has worked closely with supporters of the Keystone XL Pipeline, a man who was Governor of the State of North Dakota during the early discussions—to express his thoughts on why we think this is important to the economy, to help those people who are unemployed, and help getting Americans back to work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I thank the esteemed Senator from Wyoming for leading this colloquy.

Our effort here is to address in real terms the problem—the legislation we have on the floor right now is the unemployment insurance bill—to truly address the problem, which is getting people back to work, rather than additional government payments added onto the payments already made.

What we are trying to do is make sure there are jobs to get people back to work. Energy is an incredible opportunity to do just that. So when we talk about this energy legislation, it is about producing more energy for our country. But it is about jobs, it is about economic growth, and it is about national security. So I commend the esteemed Senator from Wyoming for leading the charge on legislation which would allow us to export liquefied natural gas.

We currently consume in the United States on an annual basis about 26 trillion cubic feet of natural gas a year, but we produce 30 trillion cubic feet of natural gas a year. So we are already in a situation where we are producing more than we consume. We import some from Canada, and we are growing in terms of our domestic production in States such as Wyoming, my home State, and others. Across the country with the shale gas development, we are producing more and more natural gas. We need a market for that natural gas, and Europe very much needs natural gas so they are not dependent on Russia for their energy. So we are talking about an opportunity here at home to actually create more economic activity and put people back to work. That is the real solution. It doesn't cost the government one penny. Instead, we get revenue—not from higher taxes, but from a growing economy and people going back to work.

When we look at this legislation, we have taken legislation led by the Senator from Wyoming and we have tied it together with Keystone legislation I have submitted. We call it the Energy Security Act, and it does those two things—it approves the Keystone XL Pipeline, a $5.3 billion investment by private companies in our economy. By the Obama administration's own estimate, their State Department has said it will create more than 40,000 jobs in the construction phase. We tie that with legislation which has been put forward by the Senator from Wyoming, which I am extremely pleased to cosponsor. We put those two together, LNG exports with Keystone. We call it the Energy Security Act. We have submitted it and we have filed it as amendment No. 2891.

I therefore ask unanimous consent that it be in order for me to offer my amendment No. 2891.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REED. Mr. President, reserving my right to object, once again, the underlying legislation is designed to help 2.7 million Americans who need the support. It is a bipartisan agreement. There is a time and place to debate all these issues, but I think the time and place now is to move forward and vote on the underlying agreement.

Therefore, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. HOEVEN. With due deference to the good Senator, I understand his desire to make sure people who are unemployed receive assistance. I think he truly is a champion in that effort. I appreciate the opportunity to work with him in a bipartisan way. But I would submit this very legislation absolutely complements what he is trying to do, and does it in a number of ways, first, in terms of a permanent, real, long-term solution—meaning getting those people back to work, but, second, in terms of paying for it, in terms of actually paying for the cost of unemployment insurance, these provisions—this amendment and the other amendment we are offering—will actually help create revenue to do what the Senator is trying to do.

For that reason, I think it is absolutely complementary to the legislation at hand and will in fact add bipartisan support to passage of that legislation.

I will cite one more extremely compelling study which relates to this point before I turn back to the Senator from Wyoming.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 2011 commissioned a study. They had experts do an evaluation of energy projects awaiting approval to proceed from the administration—awaiting permits or other requirements so they could proceed with these energy projects.

What I am talking about are energy projects that total billions, even hundreds of billions, of dollars where private companies are willing to invest their money and develop energy resources across this great country.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce study I cite was performed in 2011. It came back and said there are more than 350 energy projects, both renewable type energy and traditional energy, that are stalled because of bureaucratic redtape on the part of the Federal Government at a cost of $1.1 trillion to the American economy and nearly 2 million jobs for the American people. Think about that, 2 million jobs for the American people, when what we are talking about here today is the unemployed.

What we are talking about here today is putting people back to work.

I will cite from that study:

> In aggregate, planning and construction of the subject projects (the ''investment phase'') would generate $577 billion in direct investment, calculated in current dollars. The indirect and induced effects (what we term multiplier effects) would generate an approximate $1.1 trillion increase in U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) including $352 billion in employment earnings, based on present discounted value (PDV) over an average construction period of seven years. Furthermore, we estimate that as many as 1.9 million jobs would be required during each year of construction.

Good-paying construction jobs. The Keystone XL Pipeline is just one of those more than 350 projects, and it alone is an investment of $5.3 billion. It alone, according to the State Department's own estimates, will create more than 40,000 jobs.

What are we trying to do here? I thought it was to put people back to work, trying to make sure they have an opportunity—in States such as Ohio. Of course, in my State we have an energy boom. We are trying to get people. We have more jobs than people because we have unleashed this investment in energy. We have done that in our State. Why not do it across the country? Why not do it across the country? There is no question we can.

We have offered other amendments as well. The other point I want to make is they are bipartisan amendments. They are amendments that don't cost the Federal Government any money but create incredible investment and incredible opportunity for our people, and they are bipartisan.

One of the amendments put forward by the Senator from Missouri passed through the House with 1 dissenting vote. I don't know if the 1 dissenting vote was Republican or Democrat, but I don't know how you get any more bipartisan than that, because they were one short of unanimous. So that is what we are talking about here.

I know negotiations and discussions are going on as to votes we may get on the legislation we are offering as part of this unemployment insurance bill. I ask the leadership on the majority side to allow us to vote on these amendments. We will accept the verdict of the Senate; all 100 get to vote, which is what we were sent here to do.

I will close with that. This isn't about either the Democratic side of the aisle or the Republican side of the aisle. This is about people who are unemployed and need an opportunity. We absolutely have the ability to give them that opportunity, so let's do it. Let's do it. That is what this debate is all about.

Again, I thank the distinguished Senator from Wyoming for leading the discussion. He has been an energy leader as well as a physician, so he certainly has been a leader on the health care issue too. But he has certainly been an energy leader, and his State is a leading energy-producing State.

As I said at the outset, and he has made the point so eloquently, this is an opportunity. Energy is an opportunity. It is jobs, it is economic growth, it is national security. Let's go. Let's get it done.

With that, I turn to my colleague from Wyoming and again thank him for his leadership of this important discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, how much time remains?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 5 minutes 20 seconds.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my friend and colleague from North Dakota, a State in which he served as a Governor, a business leader in the community, and knows the State very well and knows the importance of energy—not just to his State's economy but to the economy of the country and the importance for people who want work, who want jobs.

I think bringing together the issues of the Keystone XL Pipeline as well as the exportation of liquefied natural gas is what will help get Americans back to work.

Since September of 2010, the Obama administration approved only seven applications to export liquefied natural gas. The administration is sitting on 24 pending applications. Thirteen of those applications have been pending for more than 1 year. Some of these applications have been pending for more than 2 years. To put this in context: The United States has approved less than half of the LNG export capacity that Canada has approved. To me, this administration's delay is unacceptable and the excuses have run out.

I take a look at this from the standpoint of what is happening globally as well. Ukraine imports about 60 percent to 70 percent of its natural gas from Russia. Nine of our NATO allies import 40 percent or more of their natural gas from Russia. Four of our NATO allies import 100 percent of their natural gas from Russia.

LNG exports would help our strategic partners and allies free themselves from Russian energy. This is why our NATO allies are calling on Congress to expedite—expedite—LNG exports.

LNG exports will give our allies an alternative supply of natural gas and enable them to resist Russia's intimidation. LNG exports will also help create jobs right here at home.

In February, The Economist explained that LNG exports ''would generate tanker loads of cash'' for the United States.

More recently, Nera Economic Consulting suggested that LNG exports could help reduce the unemployment rolls by as many as 45,000 over the next few years. This is extraordinary. LNG exports would not only create new jobs but would employ Americans who cannot find work today.

LNG exports would help as many as 45,000 Americans find work. President Obama through his actions has made it very clear that jobs are not his priority. He seems to be more interested in inventing new delays and new excuses than in actually creating new jobs. That is why the Senate must act today and here in this place. That is why the Senate should approve the Keystone XL Pipeline and LNG exports and that is why we should adopt the amendment that Senator HOEVEN has offered.

So, Mr. President, I come to the floor today to say Republicans have now tried to offer 9 amendments we believe would get this economy growing again, amendments we believe would actually create jobs and put people back to work.

Now, to inform my colleagues of what I am about to do, I am going to move to table the pending Reid amendment No. 2878, which for everyone's information is an amendment which merely changes the date of enactment. So Senators voting not to table this amendment would rather change the date than vote on amendments that would help put people back to work.

In order for my colleagues to be able to offer amendments, I move to table the pending Reid amendment No. 2878, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

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

The result was announced—yeas 46, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 97 Leg.]

YEAS—46

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

NAYS—50

Baldwin	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Pryor
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Menendez	Walsh
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murray	

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Rockefeller
Markey	Warren

The motion was rejected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I have a germane amendment to this matter, which I have been trying to get recognized to present.

I call up my amendment No. 2931 to the Reid amendment No. 2874.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is not in order to be offered. It is inconsistent with Senate precedence with respect to the offering of amendments, their numbers, degree, and kind.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, in light of the fact that our practice of regularly shutting out Senators from the ability to offer reasonable and germane amendments is inconsistent with all of the history and traditions of the Senate, I appeal the ruling of the Chair that the amendment is not in order and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to table and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ).

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 29, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 98 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Hagan	Murray
Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Hatch	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Sessions
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Chambliss	Landrieu	Tester
Cochran	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Collins	Levin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Manchin	Walsh
Corker	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Durbin	Menendez	Wicker
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	
Franken	Murkowski	

NAYS—29

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Coats	Johanns	Scott
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Vitter
Fischer	Moran	

NOT VOTING—4

Cruz	Rockefeller
Markey	Warren

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to table the appeal on the ruling of the Chair is agreed to.

The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF TOMASZ P. MALINOWSKI TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

NOMINATION OF PORTIA Y. WU TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR

NOMINATION OF DEBORAH L. BIRX TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE AND COORDINATOR OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT HIV/AIDS GLOBALLY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, pursuant to an order that is now in effect in the Senate, I move to proceed to executive session to consider the Malinowski, Wu, and Birx nominations, and ask that all time for debate be yielded back on all of these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nominations.

The assistant bill clerk read the nominations of Tomasz P. Malinowski, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor; and Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I rise to express my support for the nomination of Dr. Deborah Birx to serve as the next Global Aids Coordinator at the Department of State. Dr. Birx's extensive leadership, experience, and research in the field of HIV/AIDS make her an ideal candidate to lead our Nation's response to HIV/AIDS around the world.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, has been a resounding success. Our investments in fighting HIV/AIDS throughout the world have resulted in access to treatment for millions of people and dramatic reductions in new infections. It has also garnered unprecedented respect for the United States in communities around the world. This is why it is important that we have a strong coordinator who will continue to lead on this important issue. Dr. Birx has a unique combination of scientific, technical, and leadership experience that makes her the best candidate for this position.

Dr. Birx began her career serving in the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, where she led the Department of Defense in its work on HIV/AIDS throughout the 1980s. In that role, she lead one of the most influential HIV vaccine trials in history,

which resulted in the first supporting evidence of any vaccine being effective in lowering the risk of contracting HIV.

For more than a decade, Dr. Birx served as the Director of the U.S. Military HIV Research Program at the Department of Defense. During her time there she brought together the Army, Navy, and Air Force in a new model of cooperation and greatly improved the U.S. military's HIV/AIDS efforts through innovative collaboration.

Since 2005, she has served as the Director of the Global AIDS Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. Through her leadership, CDC now has an infrastructure that supports HIV/AIDS programs in over 75 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America which are funded by PEPFAR.

Dr. Birx has dedicated her career to advancing and improving the field of HIV/AIDS. After three decades in the fight against HIV/AIDS, her passion and dedication to her work has not wavered, and she remains stalwart in her belief that we can put an end to this epidemic. Her leadership and expertise in this field is unprecedented, which is why I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Dr. Deborah Birx to serve as the next U.S. Global Aids Coordinator.

VOTE ON MALINOWSKI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Tomasz P. Malinowski, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON WU NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BIRX NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume legislative session.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I can still remember my first job as though it was yesterday. I worked as a busboy at a local family restaurant during our small-town fair. While that job only lasted a few days, I still remember how incredibly proud I was to have earned a few dollars myself. The next year that same family hired me to bus tables and wash dishes year-round at their family restaurant. I soon went from busing tables to bagging groceries and then stocking shelves at the local grocery store.

I grew up on a small farming and ranching operation. So whether it was drying dishes after dinner or helping my dad with the cattle, hard work was simply a requirement for every single member of my family. In addition to tending cattle, my dad worked as a utility lineman. And my mother worked in a factory inspecting wheels on the assembly line.

Like a lot of Americans, I learned the dignity of work long before I ever held a job. I learned at home.

Everyone deserves a fair shot at success in this country. That is at the heart of why raising the minimum wage truly matters.

Minimum wage workers are not just teenagers. They are single parents working two jobs to make ends meet. They are women working a minimum-wage job at a movie theater for 8 years waiting for a raise. They are students working toward a degree that they hope will make all the difference in their lives. They are mothers and fathers working 40 hours a week—sometimes many more—to support their families.

These are the Americans who work hard and earn the Federal minimum wage and still find it difficult—some would argue impossible—to get ahead.

At $7.25 an hour, the Federal minimum wage has lost more than 30 percent of its value over the past four decades. Groceries and housing, education and energy costs all continue to rise, but the minimum wage simply has not kept pace.

This financial hardship is especially felt by women who make up a majority of minimum wage workers in this country. And stagnant wages hinder a family's chance to work their way into the middle class.

For many, raising the minimum wage means the difference between poverty and dignity. It can mean the difference between a trip to the food bank and a trip to the grocery store. It means the difference between earning enough to just barely get by and earning enough to at least think about the future.

That is why I am supporting the Minimum Wage Fairness Act to raise the Federal minimum wage to $10.10 per hour by 2015.

According to recent estimates, more than 100,000 New Mexicans would receive a direct raise from this legislation, and another 43,000 would see their pay increase as overall wages improve, dramatically increasing economic opportunities for New Mexico families.

Raising the minimum wage is not just good for those workers; it is good for business and it is good for the economy at large. A higher minimum wage helps reduce turnover, increases productivity, and boosts consumer demand.

A higher minimum wage puts more money in the pockets of people who spend locally and helps create a ladder of opportunity into the middle class.

Americans are no strangers to hard work and embrace the belief that if you work hard and you play by the rules, you should be able to get ahead, you deserve a fair shot.

There are cities in New Mexico that are already taking the initiative and raising the minimum wage on their own. The city of Santa Fe's minimum wage is $10.51 per hour. As a city councilor myself, I fought to raise the minimum wage in Albuquerque. And today Albuquerque's minimum wage is still $1.25 more than the current Federal rate.

In Las Cruces, there is a growing grassroots effort to raise that city's minimum wage.

I know this fight. We need to raise the national minimum wage so that all workers have a fair shot to get ahead. Because, the truth is, the deck has been stacked against working families for some time now. Too many working families are forced to make decisions that hurt the progress and strength of our Nation as a whole—such as taking on an extra shift instead of pursuing their education, or having to choose between paying the heating bill or the phone bill.

Raising the minimum wage is key to making this economic recovery work for all of us. But raising the minimum wage alone is not enough to constitute a middle-class economic agenda.

We need to put preschool within the financial grasp of every working family, and we need to address the outrageous increases in college tuition and loan costs. We must invest in vocational training and help build the modern American manufacturing economy of the 21st century. We must close the gender wage gap to ensure that women are paid what they deserve—paid equally with men.

Fair, livable wages, together with educational opportunities for middle-class families—that is a formula for a real opportunity agenda.

It is time to ensure that every New Mexican, every American has a fair shot. It is time to raise the minimum wage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

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

The Finance Committee is considering something we call in the Senate tax extenders. One of those is the wind production tax credit. For the next 10 minutes or so, I wish to address that

law which has been on the books for more than 20 years. It expired in December, and, in my view, needs to stay expired.

One of the things we remember most about the late President Ronald Reagan, is what he said about government programs: The closest you will come to eternal life on this Earth is a government program.

Well, my nomination for the most glaring example of a government program that seems to have eternal life is the wind production tax credit—the Federal taxpayers' subsidy for what I would call ''big wind.''

Here is what the wind production tax credit does. Let's say you build one of those 20-story turbines and the wind turbines begin to go around, as they will about one-third of the time to produce electricity. So for every kilowatt hour of electricity that you produce, the taxpayers will pay you 2.3 cents. That is a pretty good deal because the wholesale price of electricity, depending on where you are at in the country, might range from about 3 cents per kilowatt hour to 7 cents per kilowatt hour. So let's say you are in Oregon or a part of the country where they have pretty cheap electricity and you sell wind for 3 cents a kilowatt hour. You will pay 1 cent of the money you get in Federal corporate tax. That leaves you with 2 cents, but then the taxpayer is going to come in and pay you 2.3 cents on top of that. Because it is a tax credit, it is worth even more.

Now it is even better than that. That subsidy is not just for 1 year, but it is for 10 years. So every time we have a 1-year extension of the wind production tax credit, we tell the owner of the wind turbine—and usually they take these ownerships and they put them in portfolios and they split them up and sell them to rich people around the country and around the world who can use the tax credits—it is for 10 years. So the wind production tax credit is 2.3 cents per kilowatt hour of taxpayer money, every year for 10 years if you are producing wind electricity.

This provision of the Tax Code was enacted in 1992. It was supposed to be a ''temporary'' subsidy. It was intended to do what we have done several times in our country, which is to jump-start a new energy technology. Well, as President Reagan observed, eternal life for a government program sinks in pretty quickly. This temporary tax provision, enacted in 1992—more than 20 years ago—has been extended eight times since its enactment. The wind industry has become a very well-developed industry.

I asked President Obama's Nobel Prize-winning Energy Secretary, Secretary Chu, in the first term of President Obama's administration how he would describe wind power. He said it was a ''mature'' technology.

The No. 1 problem with the wind production tax credit is its cost. Congress enacted a 1-year extension for 2013. That was at a cost of nearly $12 billion to the taxpayers—remember, not all in 2013; that was just for a 1-year extension. For 2014 there is another 1-year extension which is being considered by the Finance Committee, and that will be another $6 billion.

This is real money. I mean, just look at the amount of money we spend on energy research in multiple agencies. The number is about $10 billion let's say we, through our research, developed a way to capture carbon from coal plants and recycle that carbon and turn it into something commercially feasible and sell it. Then all of a sudden, these coal plants that people worry about because they produce carbon, would be as clean as nuclear power, as clean as wind power. As a result we would be building coal plants everywhere in America. That seems like a better use of taxpayer dollars. We would have cheap electricity—even cheaper electricity for a longer period of time.

We spend $10 billion on energy research in a year and the last 1-year extension of the wind production tax credit was $12 billion over 10 years. By comparison, take tax breaks for Big Oil. One of the last times President Obama wanted to end the tax subsidies for what he called Big Oil, he identified $4 billion worth of tax subsidies. Well, most of those tax breaks, he calls subsidies for Big Oil, are tax breaks that many manufacturing companies have.

The point I am trying to make is that we are talking about a lot of money.

The supporters of this tax credit will say: ''Let's phase it out.'' In fact, it is phased out. If Congress did not act, all of those people who currently today have their wind turbines would continue to get their subsidies for up to 10 more years. So that phases it out.

But let's say we phase it out according to a proposal that was made last year by the wind industry. Well, the American Energy Alliance said that might cost as much as $50 billion over 10 years—a huge amount of money. Now, there could be some other form of phase out—I would welcome the opportunity to see it—that would not cost so much. Maybe that would make sense, but beware the phase out.

The United States uses 20 to 25 percent of all of the electricity in the world. It is important to us. We use it for our computers, we use it for our businesses, we use it for our military, and we use it for our lights. If the lights go out in America, America stops. That is how important electricity is to us.

Where does that electricity come from? Four percent of it comes from wind power. Of course, that is only available when the wind blows—usually at night, usually when we need it the least. Four percent of our electricity is wind after 22 years and billions of dollars. The rest of it comes from other sources—7 percent from hydroelectric power; 19 percent from nuclear power, which is about 60 percent of all of our clean energy; nearly 40 percent from coal; and 27 percent from natural gas. So 4 percent from wind.

It is true, as wind power advocates say, that in the past Congress has approved other jump-starts for energy technology. But the difference is that we put a cap on them.

We are very happy about all of the unconventional gas we have in this country today. Suddenly, we have an enormous amount of natural gas. The research for that partially came from Sandia Laboratory, from Department of Energy demonstration projects. There was a tax credit for fracking, but it expired in 1992. The demonstration projects are over. This technology is out in the marketplace and making lives better all across the country. Take plug-in electric cars. I supported that, but there was a cap on the number of credits we had for plug-in electric cars—200,000 per manufacturer. The nuclear production tax credit works just like the wind production tax credit. You sell a kilowatt hour of electricity from a nuclear power plant, and we will give you a taxpayer credit. But that is capped at 6,000 megawatts. So there is a limit to it. There is no cap on the subsidy for electricity produced by wind. I do not know the exact number, but it is probably in the 50- or 60- or 70,000 megawatt range.

Problem No. 1 is cost.

Problem No. 2 is reliability risk.

The problem here is that Congress is picking winners and losers. When it gives wind power such a big subsidy that is sometimes more than the cost of the electricity, it undercuts our coal and nuclear plants. And what that does is put us at risk as a country. Any country that uses that much electricity needs these big plants to operate almost all the time—coal and nuclear—to keep the lights on, to support jobs, to keep the cars running, and to make America run. Our country cannot run on windmills that only work when the wind blows. We cannot run only on solar power that only works when the Sun shines. We have to have baseload power.

Because the wind subsidy is picking winners and losers, it undercuts baseload power. It has caused the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a very well-respected organization, to say that the combination of the federal subsidy for wind power and low gas prices could cause as many as 25 percent of our nuclear plants in America to close within the next 10 years. That would be a terrible blow to our country's economy, to our effort to improve family incomes and to find jobs for middle-class Americans.

How could that be? How does it do that? Well, let's take this example. Let's say you are in Chicago and it is the middle of the night, 3 a.m., and the demand for electricity goes down as people go to sleep. Well, the supplier of electricity to your home or your business in Chicago is buying electricity from the market at the lowest possible

cost. Well, as the demand goes down, the price goes down, and who is left out there selling electricity? It is the wind power people because they can give away their electricity and still make a profit because of the subsidy. This negative pricing is what is undermining baseload, coal and nuclear.

We are very proud of the fact that in our country we have, in effect, a domestic price for natural gas. It is very low. Chemical companies are moving back to America instead of leaving. Manufacturing plants are enjoying the lower costs, and so are homeowners as they heat and cool their homes. But remember that natural gas prices can go up and they can go down. In 2005 they were not $3 and $4 as they are today, they were $13. In New England, even today sometimes natural gas prices spike to $30 a unit. So it is important to have diversity and it is important to have baseload power.

The third problem is that these large wind turbines destroy the environment in the name of saving the environment. Some people might like to look at them. I really do not. Particularly in my part of the country, the only places they work are along the foothills or along the tops of the most beautiful mountains in the Eastern United States. So you string these 20-story structures with blinking lights that can be seen for 20 miles in the middle of the beautiful view you have in the Eastern United States. They take up a lot of space.

You could run these 20-story windmills from Georgia to Maine to produce electricity, scarring the entire eastern landscape. Or you could produce the same amount of electricity with eight nuclear power plants. And you would still need the nuclear power plants to produce electricity when the wind is not blowing, which is most of the time.

The final problem is energy security. I had a meeting with George Shultz, the former Secretary of State, the other day in San Francisco. He made an observation that I had not heard him make before. George Shultz said, ''We should pay a lot of attention to generating more energy where we use it because of national security risks.''

George Shultz is head of the MIT Energy Initiative. He was observing that the supply of energy ought to be near the user of energy. That is especially true with military bases. It could be true for the rest of us in this age of terrorism. That is another reason it makes less sense to subsidize these giant turbines say in the Great Plains, and then someone has to pay for 700 miles of transmission lines through backyards and nature preserves to get the wind power to Memphis—to bring that electricity to Tennessee and the Tennessee Valley.

Expecting the United States to operate on windmills is the energy equivalent of going to war in sailboats while nuclear power is available. It is even worse than that. It is the same as destroying our nuclear ships—our nuclear plants, the same way—and replacing them with sailboats.

The energy subsidy for wind turbines has served a purpose for the last 22 years. We have spent enough money on them. We have distorted the market as much as we can stand. Because of the cost and because we are undermining the baseload power of coal and nuclear, which puts us at risk as a country that uses 20 to 25 percent of the electricity in the world, my hope would be that the Finance Committee would save some money and let the marketplace flourish. Give us the opportunity to allow the wind production tax credit to stay right where it is, expired, as it did at the end of last year. Let those persons who already have the benefit of the credits enjoy them for the rest of the period of time.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ISAKSON. I rise to address two subjects briefly on the floor and would ask that my remarks be divided appropriately in the RECORD.

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

Mr. ISAKSON. There has been a lot said about the Affordable Care Act on the floor of this Chamber for 5 years. I was here when we passed the Affordable Care Act. I am in the Senate as it is being implemented.

There have been lots of things said about it, but this year marks one of the things we need to recognize as a major hit to small business. Bernie Marcus, a founder of Home Depot and the former chairman and CEO, opined yesterday in the Wall Street Journal about the cost of ObamaCare to American business, a hidden tax that has been unveiled on the American people, the American ratepayer, and the American small business person.

A tax assessment of $8 billion in 2014 is being levied by the Affordable Care Act against every insurance company that sells to the small- and medium-sized market, to every insurance company that sells a Medicare Advantage policy or a Medicare managed care policy. The 2014 assessment is $8 billion, and it graduates up to where in 2018 it is $14.3 billion. That assessment is an arbitrary amount of money that was used as a pay-for in the ObamaCare legislation.

It is assessed on the insurance companies based on their market share of the insurance market in small- or medium-sized carriers, Medicare Advantage, and Medicaid managed care plans. It represents about a $500-per-year rate increase on every one of those policyholders, because as we all know when an insurance company has the added cost to the administration of their policy, that cost is obviously passed on to the consumer; $500 a year is $5,000 in the next decade. It also represents over the next decade the loss, as estimated by the CBO and NFIB, of 146,000 jobs.

Let's think for a minute. The main topics we have had this year in the Senate of the United States is income inequality, the need to lower unemployment, and the need to create jobs. Yet the signature piece of legislation of this administration is going to cost us because of a new tax being levied against insurance companies that provide health insurance to the American people, and it is going to cost 146,000 jobs. It is another example of how we need to rethink the approach of the Affordable Care Act.

We have to recognize all the things it has done from the standpoint of taxes, cost, lost jobs, and lost wages. Reform that legislation, repeal that legislation, and get it right for the people of the United States of America.

I commend Bernie Marcus on bringing this to the people's attention. I commend him on all he has done for my State and for our country, and I hope he will keep on giving us his opinion for what is best for the United States of America.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a column written and published yesterday in the Wall Street Journal by Mr. Bernie Marcus, cofounder, former chairman, and CEO of Home Depot.

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

[From The Wall Street Journal, Apr. 1, 2014]

OBAMACARE'S HIDDEN HIT ON BUSINESSES

(By Bernie Marcus)

The law's insurance-company fee will raise premiums and kill at least 146,000 jobs.

President Obama's promise that Americans could keep their health insurance if they liked it was the most infamous of the Affordable Care Act's sketchy sales pitches. But many of the law's most damaging aspects are less known, buried in thousands of pages of regulations.

Consider the ''fee''—really a hidden sales tax—that all health-insurance companies have been forced to pay since the first of this year on premiums for policies sold to individuals and small and medium-size businesses. The health-insurance tax—known as HIT in business circles—is expected to generate revenues of about $8 billion this year and as much as $14.3 billion by 2018, according to the legislation.

The Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation predict that insurance companies will pass the cost on to customers, as any company subject to such a tax would. In other words, millions of Americans lucky enough to keep their current health insurance under ObamaCare will be paying much higher premiums because of this tax, with the added cost rippling through the economy and stifling job creation.

The National Federation of Independent Businesses projects the health-insurance tax will add an additional $475 per year for the average individually purchased family policy—nearly $5,000 over the course of a decade. Small businesses will take an even bigger hit, with the cost of an employer-provided family policy rising a projected $6,800 in the next decade.

Since most large companies self-insure, they aren't affected by the new tax. But smaller- and medium-size businesses don't have that luxury and will bear the brunt of the tax. Many will be forced to raise their employees' share of premium payments or, worse, lay off workers to pay the escalating costs of health care for their core employees.

The NFIB projects private-sector employment through 2022 will be reduced by at least 146,000 jobs because of the health-insurance tax, and perhaps as much as 262,000 jobs. That's like vaporizing some of the largest employers in the country. Just the low-end estimate—146,000 jobs—is still more than the total number of employees currently working for companies like Costco, Microsoft and Delta Airlines.

Sadly, the NFIB predicts that 59% of the reduced job growth will be in small- and medium-size businesses, America's biggest engines of job creation. Worse, 26% of the problem will be concentrated in very small businesses—the Main Street cafes, retailers and family businesses that are the backbone of the U.S. economy. America's 28 million small businesses make up 99.7% of all American employers. They also create 63% of new private-sector jobs.

The jobs never created because of the health-insurance tax will be a ''death of a thousand cuts'' on Main Street that adds up to a major wound for the economy. As a result, NFIB predicts total gross domestic product in 2022 will be $23 billion to $35 billion smaller than it would have been absent the HIT.

To get a handle on what this means, consider that McDonald's Corp. grossed $27.6 billion last year, selling to 68 million customers per day in 119 countries. So this one new tax on our health insurance is projected to drill a hole in our economy as big as McDonald's in just eight years, with the overwhelming majority of the damage falling on already struggling small businesses.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Affordable Care Act was designed to fix only half the problem of uninsured Americans, by bringing the number of uninsured from 53 million down to 27 million—equal to the current population of Texas. Yet this half-solution has brought with it full-sized problems—like lost health coverage for the previously insured, and job-killing policies like the health-insurance tax.

Poor enrollment figures and endless stories of Americans losing insurance indicate the law won't even be able to accomplish its incomplete goals. Building a sicker economy will not create healthy Americans. Congress and the president must reform this ''reform.''

IRAN

Mr. ISAKSON. America was insulted earlier last month by the Iranian people. The government of the nation of Iran has appointed a new Ambassador to the United Nations.

The new Ambassador's name is Hamid Aboutalebi. He will be an Ambassador to the U.N. who served on the ground in the Iranian forces who took the American Embassy hostages in 1979, captured 52 Americans, and held them for 444 days—a man who claims he was just an innocent bystander and didn't have much to do with that horrible tragedy. If you were alive at that time and watched the ''Nightline'' shows night after night to watch the beatings, the torture, the terror, and the capture of the American people, you understand full well that nobody could have been within sight of that Embassy and not claim to be a part of it.

My State has been touched. Almost every State of the Union has been touched. Those hostages who were held—right up until the time Ronald Reagan was sworn in as President—were finally released at the last minute when the U.S. Government waived their right to compensation against the nation of Iran.

The nation that held 52 of our diplomats hostage for 444 days signed an agreement never to have to pay any reparation to those people and is now appointing to the United Nations, the world forum, an ambassador who was on the site in Tehran when those people were taken captive. It is an insult to America.

First and foremost, the Government of Iran should apologize; second and foremost, the Government of Iran should compensate all of those hostages who had been held. Fifty-two hostages were held and 25 percent of them have passed away. One of them, as recently as late last year, took their own life as a consequence of the injuries they suffered.

One of the citizens from my State, Col. Chuck Scott of Jonesboro, GA, was on television just 2 nights ago about the tragedy in Iran. His teeth were knocked out by a 2 by 4 during his captivity. He is going back for another surgery in another week to try to remedy some of the pain he harbors from that tragedy that took place 34 years ago.

It is an insult to everything the United Nations stands for, to the integrity of the people of the United States of America, and the memory of those who passed and those who lived who were held hostage. We should demand this appointment be withdrawn by the Iranian Government. We should demand an apology on behalf of the Iranian Government to the people of United States of America, and we should demand that they voluntarily compensate those hostages.

They are not going to do that, and I know that, which is why we introduced legislation, which I principally sponsored 3 years ago, to compensate the 52 hostages who were held in captivity from 1979 until 1981. It is a shame beyond belief that 52 Americans who were held hostage are the only Americans in the same circumstance who have not been compensated for the damages perpetrated upon them.

I hope a vehicle comes through the floor of the Senate where we can attach this. Senator Kerry, while he was chairman of the committee and now Senator MENENDEZ, who is now the chairman, and Ranking Member CORKER have all embraced our concept of seeing to it that we fight to see that recompense is finally made to those hostages who were captured from 1979 to 1981.

We have a great and compassionate country, and we owe them and their families every effort to see that the nation of Iran compensates them and they are in some way paid back for the terrible tragedy that was perpetrated upon them.

But first and foremost, Iran needs to know that this U.S. Senator, and I think every U.S. Senator, realizes the affront to the American people and the insult to the United Nations that Iran is perpetrating by making this appointment as Ambassador of their country today.

I yield back the remainder of my time, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMTRAK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about one of the most recent American transportation success stories—Amtrak's Northeast corridor—and how Congress can help it grow.

First, however, I would like to thank two great leaders on the Senate Appropriations Committee. First, our chair, BARBARA MIKULSKI—she is from the Northeast corridor. I often stop by in Baltimore as I take the train from New York to Washington. She has been a staunch defender of Amtrak from the day she got here. And PATTY MURRAY who is chairman of the transportation subcommittee. She is not from the Northeast corridor but, of course, cares very much about Amtrak across the Nation and has been a defender of those of us who care about Amtrak and depend on Amtrak in the Northeast, as well as throughout the whole country. In tough budget times, these two folks have stood up for Amtrak from one end of the Nation to the other, and we very much appreciate that.

Now, as the committees begin their work on the fiscal year 2015 appropriations, my colleagues and I are here to urge something that will benefit millions of riders on the Northeast corridor, which runs from Boston to Washington, DC.

We are mindful of the fact we depend on national support for Amtrak. Even though the Northeast corridor is far and away the most used and the most profitable of the Amtrak lines, we are one Amtrak. We understand how important Amtrak is, even if it doesn't serve as many passengers in sparsely populated States, and of course in more populated areas on the west coast and the Midwest and the South.

Having said that, I want to point out that I strongly believe in the long-distance service provided by Amtrak. It connects rural communities and other economic hubs by rail. People want it and like this service. In upstate New York, in the Buffalo to Albany corridor, it is clearly not as used as in the Northeast corridor, but we know how much we depend on Amtrak there. In the other 49 States people depend on it as well.

Since 1971, Amtrak, in the Northeast and throughout the country, has been a Federal responsibility, and it should continue to be. So the proposal we are

advocating today is one of fairness to both ends of the national passenger rail system. What we are saying is simple. Accept Amtrak's new budget framework, which would allow the NEC to reinvest profits while continuing to provide long-distance service.

First, let me explain the backdrop. Amtrak's Northeast corridor has become a profit-generating operation that carries passengers in an economically critical region home to over 50 million people. Some of the facts on our region: It generates $1 out of $5 of GDP. One out of every three Fortune 100 companies has its headquarters located there. One out of every five jobs in the United States is located in the Northeast corridor. So you wouldn't be surprised that over the past decade ridership along the Northeast corridor has been growing.

Between the years of 2001 and 2011, Amtrak's share of the air-rail travel market has increased from 37 percent to 75 percent for trips between New York and Washington and 20 percent to 54 percent from New York to Boston. Look at those increases. You wouldn't believe it. It is counterintuitive almost, but three-quarters of the people who make the decision to travel between Washington, DC, and New York, and don't use a car or a bus but would rather use a plane or train, use the train. Even a majority now on the slightly longer route to Boston use the train.

It is a testament to the region and to Amtrak that every day 750,000 people travel over portions of the Northeast corridor main line. That is nearly half of all railroad commuters nationally. It is a total of 260,000 trips a year. Look at all the different commuter railroads that run over Amtrak's Northeast corridor structure. Here they are: Mass Bay, Shoreline East, Metro North in my city of New York, and in my metropolitan area of New York, Long Island Railroad, New Jersey Transit, SEPTA—Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation—Maryland Area Regional Commuter, and Virginia.

Two of the biggest commuter railroads in the country operate on Amtrak's structure, and those are in the metropolitan area that the Presiding Officer and I share. They are Metro North and the Long Island Railroad. Hundreds of thousands of people use these railroads every day.

So the Northeast corridor is one of the most important arteries in the beating heart of our economy, and I am happy to report that business is booming. NEC revenues currently exceed operating costs by more than $300 million a year. So one would think, finally, we have the means to update the aging infrastructure that Amtrak and our commuter rail system depend upon. Unfortunately, the growth of the Northeast corridor and the profits it has produced are not going back into the system. Instead, over the last 10 years, NEC revenues have been used to cover the costs of the State-supported and long-distance services across the rest of the national railroad.

We understand in the Northeast why that has happened, again because we depend on support throughout the country and we need to bring the whole country together. But it is happening at the same time the Federal contributions to Amtrak in the form of operating grants have declined. In fact, operating grants to Amtrak are lower now by almost half than they were under a Republican Congress and President George Bush. Here are the numbers. You can see them: $1 billion in 2003, and they stay about the same. But operating as a percentage of the total went from 50 percent to 24 percent.

That is not necessarily a bad thing. For the past few years, some of my Republican colleagues have urged Amtrak to become more efficient and rely on Federal operating grants. Amtrak has done just that. In 2013, Amtrak set an annual ridership record of 31.6 million and a ticket revenue record of $2.1 billion.

The reason my colleagues and I are speaking today is to make it very clear that weaning Amtrak off of Federal operating grants shouldn't come at the expense of the capital costs in the Northeast corridor. The Amtrak operating grant request for 2015 is $700 million—a fraction of the overall budget, and lower than the 2005 funding level under George Bush. The total request is for $1.62 billion, a modest request over last year's $1.4 billion. This would allow all long-distance service mandated by Congress to continue and, importantly, it would allow $300 million a year to come back into the Northeast corridor's infrastructure. That is real money—money that, if continued over time, can service loans to build new tunnels and bridges and fix up the tracks and stations which we desperately need. It is an old, old system.

Think of some of the immediate projects Amtrak may have to forego if they do not receive the full request: the replacement of structural columns underneath Philadelphia's beautiful 30th Street Station; overhauling the Acela, which is very profitable, and usually, we know, very full, to improve Amtrak's on-time performance; and extremely important—because if they collapse the whole Northeast corridor collapses and their transportation mechanism collapses causing real harm to the economy—reconstruction of the decaying infrastructure in the East River tunnels.

This last project is particularly important—the East River tunnels, that is—for several reasons. It shows the massive benefits of this plan for people who use railroads that they rely on. The trains carry hundreds of thousands of passengers back and forth every day and are in a major state of disrepair. The proposal will allow Amtrak to invest more—way more—in these vital East River tunnels, making them more reliable and improving travel for Long Island Railroad riders and NEC passengers every day. A collateral benefit for all commuting New Yorkers is that there are Penn Station improvements—the most heavily used transportation hub in the country. The plan would fund many of these key improvements and make them happen quicker.

The status quo is unacceptable. The current Federal funding requirements leave the NEC's infrastructure vulnerable to a bigger, costlier, and far more damaging failure than we have ever seen.

The long-term need to increase capacity and make needed repairs to our bridges and tunnels could not be clearer. Several important segments, such as Hudson River tunnels, are growing at a record level. By 2030—look at that—the need will be even greater. These are segments which will exceed capacity by 2030—lots of them.

In my State of New York we see the economic cost of devastating events such as Hurricane Sandy, which flooded Hudson River tunnels and shut down the Northeast corridor for days. According to new estimates, a 1-day disruption along the Northeast corridor could cost the economy $100 million.

So I would ask my colleagues—both Democrats and Republicans—from States along the Northeast corridor and from around the rest of the country to support an increase in Federal investment in our rail infrastructure. I know we can get bipartisan support because there has been bipartisan support in the past. Senators in this body on both sides of the aisle supported operating grant levels requested by Amtrak in the past. In the longer term, we know we need to authorize a dedicated intercity passenger rail fund that provides robust investment in this infrastructure.

In the meantime, our Nation can no longer afford to let a railroad that carries half of Amtrak's trains and 80 percent of the Nation's rail commuters fall apart at the seams. Allowing the NEC to keep the cash it generates will help benefit and support those same profit-making activities, helping to create a virtual cycle of reinvestment. I hope that sounds like something my colleagues across the aisle could support.

If we want an interstate commuter network in the next century, we must begin by fixing and improving the infrastructure from the beginning of the last century. That was the mission of our good friend, my dear friend, the late Frank Lautenberg. He was a tireless and passionate advocate for improving our Nation's infrastructure—especially our railways—because he knew it would better the State's economy and indeed our country's economy. We can honor his legacy by carrying on that mission.

I ask my colleagues to recognize this great leader as they have in the past. Give the Northeast corridor the funds and flexibility to reap the benefits of its recent growth while still providing service around the rest of the country.

With that, I would like to turn to my friend the junior Senator from Connecticut to ask him to talk about the importance of the Northeast corridor for his State and especially the relationship Amtrak has with commuter railroads.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. President, and I thank the Senator from New York for bringing us all together this evening to talk about the really vital economic importance of the Northeast corridor to States such as Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New York.

This is a pivotal moment for the Northeast corridor. We have a region that is growing with respect to the number of people who are using the rail but an infrastructure that is dramatically aging.

It is important to remember the connection between investment in rail and the emergence of this Nation's economic greatness. The rail line that means the most to us in Connecticut was chartered in 1844. It was the New York and New Haven Railroad, and it was initially built to connect New York to Boston, going through New Haven and going through Connecticut. Later on, it had a spur going through Long Island and then a spur connecting down to Providence. It was built at a time of massive rail expansion all across the country.

In the last 25 years of the 1800s, where a lot of this expansion happened after the initial investment in places such as New York and Connecticut and Boston, the expansion of rail led to a tenfold increase in economic output for this Nation. It allowed for enormous social and economic mobility because if you didn't like the circumstances where you were today, tomorrow you could be halfway across the country because of a train. It allowed for the gradual evaporation of a lot of the divisions that were created because of the Civil War. As people got to know other parts of the country and could move more freely back and forth, they began to understand what this Nation was really about. One historian, John Hankey, has noted that the railroads essentially transitioned our lexicology about the United States from referring to ''these United States'' to ''this United States.'' It is a small difference, but it suggests the way in which the rail lines allowed for this country to connect.

Nowhere has this expansion of rail mattered more than in the Northeast corridor. We have the highest concentration of population, the highest concentration of commerce, the highest concentration of ports of shipping, and the highest concentration of rail lines. Not only do we have Amtrak running up and down the spine of the Northeast corridor, we have 10 commuter railroads, including Metro North, a line Mr. BLUMENTHAL—the Presiding Officer—and I are very proud of.

We have 260 million passengers today who are using the Northeast corridor. That number is expected to grow in 2030 to 412 million. Just think about that. We are talking about a time period of only 16 years. We are going to go from 260 million passengers today to 412 million passengers in 2030. If you ride a train from Bridgeport to Stanford or from Stanford to Grand Central on any given Monday morning or any given Thursday afternoon, you are going to fail to understand how that line is going to be able to absorb an increase from 260 million passengers to 412 million passengers. We simply don't have the capacity today to be able to absorb that increase.

We have 1,000 bridges and tunnels along the Northeast corridor that are badly in need of repair. Some of them are 100 years old. The estimates are that over the next 20 years we have to spend $50 billion along the Northeast corridor simply to maintain a state of good repair. I wish this were a cheaper exercise, but it is not.

In Connecticut alone, we have to replace a bridge in Cos Cob that is going to cost $830 million. The Norwalk Bridge has to be rehabbed for $250 million. The Saugatuck River Bridge in Westport has to be rehabbed as well for $300 million. The Devon Bridge replacement project is going to be $750 million. We have to upgrade communication and signals all along the New Haven Line; that is $400 million. We have an old aging catenary—the electric lines above the supply power to the trains—that is going to be $600 million as well.

In Connecticut it is our lifeblood, meaning we are nothing if not for the economic power that is driven by those trains. About a decade ago an economic report came out on Connecticut that really shook the State to its core. It talked about the great economic potential Connecticut has as we sit right between the enormous job-creating hubs of New York City and Boston. But it warned us that if we don't get serious about unclogging the arteries out of Connecticut into Connecticut, that, in the words of the report, ''Connecticut risks becoming an economic cul-de-sac.'' That is a pretty scary premise, the idea that we could be so close to all of this economic activity, but simply because people cannot get to Connecticut or get out of Connecticut because of these aging rail lines, we are going to ultimately be left behind.

So what we are really here to talk about is just a principle of basic fairness. The Northeast corridor makes money. It is the only section of rail in the Nation that does make money simply because of volume and because of efficient management. The profit equals about $300 million a year. We are not asking for the Northeast corridor to get any more than we are owed; we simply want that $300 million, as Amtrak has proposed, to be reinvested in the line.

From the Cos Cob Bridge to the Sagatuck River Bridge, we are going to have to make these upgrades at some point. If we don't, ultimately they are going to fall down. We have seen not only in the Northeast corridor but across the country the consequences of allowing our infrastructure to atrophy to the point of crisis and collapse. So why don't we make those investments today? Why don't we make those investments at a moment when people need to go to work, when the repairs are as cost-efficient as they are going to get, and when the line itself in the Northeast is generating $300 million extra a year that right now is going to other parts of the country?

I agree with Senator SCHUMER. We support a national Amtrak. We strongly support a robust inner-city connection linking major cities, major urban areas with rail all across the country. Just in our small region, we have half of the trips of the entire country. So we think it is not too much to ask that to the extent we are profitable, we get to reinvest that money into an infrastructure that is older than any other piece of infrastructure in the entire country.

I would say this: It is not just about fairness for the States that make up the Northeast corridor. The economic power of the Northeast spreads itself out all across the country. The corporations that are located in Manhattan and Stanford and Newark employ people in Nebraska and in California, in South Dakota and Texas. So our pitch to our colleagues outside of the Northeast is not just that it seems to be the right and fair thing to do for all of this profit that is being made through the ticket fares passengers in the Northeast are paying to stay in the Northeast, but the benefit that comes from a well-constructed, efficiently run Northeast corridor accrues to the entire country.

I am really pleased Senator SCHUMER brought us down to the floor today to talk about how important reinvesting this $300 million is to the Northeast corridor. In my State, with Metro North generating literally hundreds of millions of dollars in economic benefit to our section of the country, if we don't recapture this income, if we aren't able to make these repairs that I listed, then, as that economic report suggests, we really do risk our State of Connecticut ultimately becoming an economic cul-de-sac.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHUMER). The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Thank you, Mr. President. I am honored to follow the Presiding Officer, my good friend Senator SCHUMER of New York, and my colleague and friend Senator MURPHY of Connecticut to talk about an issue that really affects quality of life, our pocketbooks, and our environment.

But first I wish to join my colleague from New York in paying tribute to

one of the great transportation advocates, indeed one of the great public servants of our time, Senator Frank Lautenberg, who preceded me as chairman of a critical subcommittee on the commerce committee which has authority and jurisdiction over surface transportation.

I am tremendously honored to have followed him in that role, and my mission and ambition is to be as effective and eloquent and ardent as he was in this cause. It is a cause that brings us together as a nation, as my colleague from New York has so eloquently said. We are better when we come together as a nation and the railroads provide arteries carrying the lifeblood of our economy. Not only is the train used for commuters going to work and riders going to visit relatives and enjoying tourism, traveling, vacations, and other benefits of this great Nation, but it also transports the freight that is critical to carry goods and services.

We know the infrastructure is aging all across the country. We are, in effect, transporting goods and services, products and people, commuters and riders in the 21st century using 20th century equipment, tracks, and other infrastructure. We are talking, indeed, about the economic lifeblood of our Nation, which has linked us coast to coast, north to south, and east to west in ways that are not only economically material and tangible but also emotionally and psychologically vital to our present and our future.

These economic benefits will not continue. They are not an accident of history. They are the result of purposeful invention and investing, and we are challenged as a nation as to whether we will continue to invest to ensure that our railroads carry our freight and our people to places they must go if we are to have economic growth and jobs in this Nation. No one knows this fact better than those who live on the Northeast corridor. It is among the busiest. In fact, the Metro-North line is the busiest in the Nation. It has bridges and tracks that are more than 100 years old, and tragically we have seen the consequences of lack of proper maintenance, management, and inspection of our infrastructure.

My colleague from New York has been a relentless and tireless advocate for improving rail service along the Northeast corridor and most particularly in the area of our region of New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey.

The derailment in Bridgeport was a recent tragedy that resulted in the loss of lives and caused injuries as well as power outages which disrupted travel for as much as 13 days. These disruptions should lead to a new era of leadership at Metro-North, and hopefully it will.

Good management is the key to making this railroad work better than it has and making it safer and more reliable. Good management is vital, but money, along with management, is absolutely necessary. In fact, good management requires investing, and that is why we are here today—not to talk about money for the sake of dollars and cents but the investment it means in the track, the bridges, the cars, and other equipment vital to make this railroad safer and more reliable.

We know some of this investment is small in amount. The Senator from New York and I have championed the idea of cameras facing inward and outward. Compared to the overall costs of investments, that one is relatively new. Likewise, alerters placed in cabs that operate the railroad cost relatively little, but other expenditures are much more substantial, and one of the problems is that money has been going into the system—money taken from the riders and users in the New Jersey, Connecticut, and New York area along the Northeast corridor has gone to the system as a whole.

As I mentioned at the beginning, far from begrudging the national system this kind of investment, we support it, but we need our fair share, which is necessary to make the investment that is critical to bridges such as Saugatuck, the Connecticut River, and the Norwalk River. These bridges contain movable components. They are important for marine traffic as well as rail. They are frequently opened and closed. They experience more stress than normal, and the resulting corrosion requires trains to use reduced speed. Repair and eventual replacement of many of these bridges will be crucial for keeping train traffic safe and reliable not only along the Northeast corridor but also freight and riders traveling from New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey to other parts of the east coast and indeed across the country.

It is a national investment, not just a Northeast investment. It is an investment we must make as a whole or our infrastructure will crumble and continue to erode.

I am proud to join my colleagues to urge that Amtrak's full funding request for fiscal year 2015 be granted. This amount will allow the Northeast corridor's operating revenue to be reinvested back where it is needed most—the Northeast corridor—and will simultaneously provide much needed Federal support for rail networks in the rest of the country.

A fair share is what the Northeast corridor needs and deserves. A fair share is what we are advocating. As my colleagues have explained, the support we offer and advocate for this Northeast corridor is a benefit to the whole country, and it is consistent with national support for railway travel which eliminates congestion on roads, raises the quality of our air, makes for safer travel, and maybe equally, if not more importantly, creates jobs.

This investment will help create jobs and drive economic growth in the jobs it creates directly and the jobs it enables along the route of travel.

I thank my colleagues for joining me in this effort, and I know, in particular, that there is a bridge in New Jersey—a movable swing bridge along the Hackensack River between Kearny and Secaucus, NJ. I believe it is called the Portal Bridge. That Portal Bridge is a key linchpin in the Northeast corridor. Having a functional Portal Bridge is essential to me as a resident of Connecticut. When I go from Washington to New York and then to Connecticut, we are one country. We are united by that railroad, and that Portal Bridge is a key linchpin in the Northeast corridor. It is as important to me as it is to my colleague from New Jersey who has been—similar to Senator Lautenberg—a tireless advocate for rail transportation, and he has done model work on improving rail transportation in this country.

I am happy to yield for the senior Senator from New Jersey, Mr. MENENDEZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished colleague from Connecticut for his engagement and for recognizing our former colleague, Senator Lautenberg, whose passion for public transportation was unmatched in this body. He understood the nexus of why it was important not just to our State of New Jersey and the Northeast but to the country.

My colleague from Connecticut is correct, that Portal Bridge—it is called the Portal Bridge because it is a bridge that is a portal to the entire Northeast corridor and carries passengers over a movable swing bridge across the Hackensack River between Kearny and Secaucus, NJ. It is a portal into and out of Manhattan. It is one of the busiest sections of the corridor with hundreds of passengers and commuter trains crossing it every day.

You would think that given its importance to the Northeast and the millions who live in that region, it would be a state-of-the-art, reliable, world-class bridge that we would be willing to invest in, making it the best possible bridge. Unfortunately, the reality is quite different.

The Portal Bridge was built in 1910. It is over 100 years old and deteriorating—causing significant delays for Amtrak riders in New Jersey and throughout the system. Because of the low clearance over the Hackensack River, the bridge opens to allow ships to pass, thereby creating delays for rail passengers and then more delays come when the bridge doesn't lock into place because it is too old and doesn't work properly.

We have delay after delay all because we are unwilling to invest in our infrastructure, and that is simply unacceptable. When the bridge doesn't close, trains throughout the Northeast corridor are delayed while Amtrak workers scramble to fix it. Further adding to the problems are speed restrictions that have been in place on the bridge since 1996. These restrictions have been

essential to allow trains to cross safely, hardly a comforting thought for riders traveling on the corridor.

The Northeast corridor is the Nation's busiest rail line and serves 700,000 people every day. The line supports eight commuter railroads every day, carrying over 200,000 New Jersey transit passengers. So failure to invest in a modern, state-of-the-art system does a disservice to all of us—certainly to the commuters. It is an economic hindrance in a region that supports 20 percent of the entire Nation's GDP.

There are other reasons to consider the importance of these investments and one is our economy and jobs. These intercity rail systems ultimately create an opportunity for people to get to employment and to reach out to find employment and find better employment.

It is also about companies that send their sales force up and down the Northeast corridor in a thorough and effective and efficient way. It is about those who might visit one of the great health institutions along the Northeast corridor for a health challenge they face. It is about tourism from anywhere—from the sights of New York or New Jersey or along the entire route, crossroads of the revolution, all the way to the Nation's Capital of Washington, DC. It is about visiting a loved one and having a way to do it that allows them to be able to afford to do so.

In the aftermath of September 11, we learned that a multiplicity of transportation modes was critical to security questions because on that fateful day when every trans-Hudson crossing closed down—the bridges closed down, the tunnels closed down, the ability to do intercity rail closed down—the one element that was open was a different form of transportation, and that was ferries. Imagine, in a different context, if you don't have intercity rail to move people away from a location in which there was a September 11-like event that, in fact, the consequences that would flow.

We learned after September 11 that transportation is more than about getting from one place to another, more than about sending a sales force, more than even about the quality of life and the environment by having more people on an efficient system, it is also another dimension of security in a post-September 11 world. We must do better.

As far as the Amtrak budget proposal, I am pleased that Amtrak's fiscal year 2015 budget request takes a step in the right direction to improve its record of good repair and reliability in the Northeast corridor. In spite of the challenges of aging infrastructure, Amtrak in the Northeast corridor is a profitable rail line, generating over $300 million each year. Yet, under the current structure, Amtrak has been unable to invest those profits back into essential projects such as the Portal Bridge, which is ultimately the portal by which all of Amtrak's rail lines to the Northeast have to go through. These profits have instead been used elsewhere on Amtrak's system, subsidized long-distance services that were traditionally a core Federal responsibility.

For too long Congress has failed to meet its responsibility on these routes, relying on the riders of the Northeast corridor to subsidize other parts of the rail network. Riders on the Northeast corridor deserve to have profits generated along the line reinvested—not used as a substitute for insufficient Federal investment. Amtrak's new proposal will allow it to keep revenue generated by the corridor in the corridor—a commonsense solution and a successful business model for the Northeast.

At the same time, Amtrak proposes full funding for lines outside of the Northeast corridor, making this a win-win proposal for America's rail system.

Finally, making these investments now will help us prevent large-scale failures that could cripple our region in the future. Unfortunately, we in New Jersey know all too well the consequences of a significant transportation failure. When Hurricane Sandy crashed ashore in October of 2012, our transportation systems were inundated with water and severely damaged. We saw firsthand what happens when the transit and rail networks we often take for granted are rendered unusable. Residents were stranded—cut off from their loved ones and their livelihoods. Sandy showed us just how much our region depends on its rail and transit networks.

As New Jersey and its networks work to rebuild, we must take every opportunity to strengthen our infrastructure and prevent future failures of our transportation system. Current Federal funding requirements leave the Northeast corridor vulnerable by preventing us from reinvesting in critical projects.

Amtrak's budget proposal is a straightforward solution, by keeping and allowing the Northeast to keep and reinvest its own profits. At the same time, the proposal would maintain funding for other rail lines to ensure a valuable, viable national network. The bottom line: This is a proposal whose time has clearly come.

So it is time that we as a Congress say enough is enough; 100-year-old infrastructure is simply unacceptable. It is time to make the investments that will support our economy and our quality of life and, I would add, our security. It is time to live up to our Federal commitments and fully fund our rail network.

I certainly wish to join my other colleagues in thanking our colleague from New York Senator SCHUMER for leading this important discussion about the future of Amtrak. I urge my colleagues to support this budget proposal, to fully fund Amtrak's operating and capital costs nationwide, and to take the long overdue step of allowing Northeast corridor profits to be reinvested into our critical infrastructure.

Now let me turn this over to my colleague Senator BOOKER who, until he came to the Senate, was the mayor of the State's largest city by which all of these different modes of transportation came together and through which the Northeast corridor has a major station. He saw, as it related to his own community, the realities of what the rail passenger system meant for consumers, what it meant for businesses, and what it meant for our security.

I yield the floor for the distinguished Senator from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, Senator MENENDEZ is absolutely correct. When I was mayor of New Jersey's largest city, we sat upon a critical transportation superstructure—a key node in the larger region. I wish to thank my senior Senator, whom I relied upon then for being the champion he is for infrastructure investment, for the critical nature of the rail lines that crisscross our region, and really being a promoter of jobs, of business growth, of security, and of the health of this critical system. It is very good to have my senior Senator make such important remarks. I wish to pick up from there. It is a little uncomfortable not having the Presiding Officer on the floor with me, but I will continue nonetheless.

I wish to thank all of my colleagues who have already spoken from neighboring States about this absolutely vital transportation corridor. If this were a country of its own, this corridor, from Washington to Boston—this area—we would be the fifth largest economy in the world. This region continues to grow, with more than 12 million residents projected by 2040.

In New Jersey, our tracks and tunnels are simply no longer able to meet the growing demand of our Amtrak and commuter rail lines. New Jersey commuters—passengers up and down the Northeast corridor—are profoundly frustrated by overcrowded trains and by delay after delay after delay. It inhibits their transportation. It inhibits their productivity. It inhibits their ability to be successful because of those delays. Our underfunded passenger rail network forces too many of our residents to then drive, where they end up stuck in traffic, contributing more greatly to smog and pollution, and really making it even more dangerous for them on our already overly congested highways.

Amtrak needs the ability to reinvest the growing profit from the Northeast corridor back into the critical Northeast corridor infrastructure. This much needed budget request would allow Amtrak to invest $300 million of their profits back into this region and would allow Amtrak to make overdue updates and repairs. This would create jobs at this incredibly important time in our economic present. It would create jobs and allow our busy commuter lines to travel more safely and more reliably.

We need this economic growth. We need to alleviate the problems with

this infrastructure. We need to make the daily lives of tens of thousands of people better.

One of the most important steps we can take to alleviate this congestion and delays in New Jersey and throughout this region is to make this investment. But I also say another critical aspect of making those investments is to make a strategic investment in the Gateway project. Amtrak's 2015 budget request seeks to continue investing in needed preliminary work on the Gateway project. The Gateway project is Amtrak's most important initiative—a project that is going to generate benefits throughout the Northeast region that will have a multiplier effect throughout our economy, enabling growth, enabling job creation, improving the quality of life, and helping one of the most prosperous regions on the globe continue to grow.

Currently, there are just two tunnels connecting New Jersey to New York via rail. These tunnels are currently operating at full capacity, with roughly 24 trains at peak hours carrying over 70,000 riders daily, with no space for additional riders during rush hour. In order to execute repairs and safety checks on these 100-year-old tunnels, Amtrak is required to shut down the entire tunnel and suspend half the trips in and out of the city. This causes so much of a burden. This is an unnecessary burden. This is a threat to the safety of thousands of New Jersey Transit and Amtrak passengers.

Ridership demand in and out of Manhattan is actually predicted to double in the coming decades—double. It is critical for the economic health of our region to accommodate this increase and ensure that urgently needed growth and the safety and security of so many Americans. The Gateway project itself would build two new rail tunnels from New Jersey to New York City and expand Penn Station in New York to handle all of this additional capacity. This project alone would create thousands and thousands of jobs. It would reduce commuter times and make traveling by rail more flexible and, very importantly to resident after resident who has reached out to me, it would make it more reliable. This critical investment will drive economic growth throughout that entire region.

Upon completion, the Gateway project would allow Amtrak to run 8 more trains during peak hours and allow New Jersey Transit to run 13 more trains. This is a significant capacity increase that would take thousands of cars off the roads every single day. It would increase revenue for Amtrak and New Jersey Transit. It would allow intercity and commuting passengers shorter and easier trips up and down the Northeast and in and out of Manhattan, and it would improve significantly the air quality of our region, alleviating the respiratory challenges so many people unnecessarily face because of commuter car pollution.

In short, all of these reasons point to something critical: It would make it easier for our region to be prosperous, for businesses to grow, and American opportunity to increase. It is essential that Congress join with Amtrak in advancing this important regional project and support Amtrak's overall mission to deliver reliable, efficient passenger rail service across the United States. For Amtrak to be successful in the long term, Congress needs to become a more reliable investment partner and fund multiyear Amtrak budgets, to have predictability in that funding, making it again multiyear. Our current approach of lurching from annual budget to annual budget does not allow for Amtrak to flourish and serve our citizens as it could and as it should. We need a level of predictability to make these kinds of investments. Support for the Amtrak fiscal year 2015 budget request would be a step in the right direction.

I urge my colleagues to appreciate this critical understanding that we are a people who thrive through connectivity, whether it is virtual connectivity on the Internet or even human connectivity; that we need to, in environments such as this, one to another, work together. Indeed, it is the words of Martin Luther King, written in a jail cell in Birmingham, AL, in 1963, in the spring of that year, almost 50 years ago—he wrote in profound manner, and I paraphrase it: We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a common garment of destiny. It was an elevation and understanding of the power of human connection, that we share one destiny, and that when we exalt our connections, prosperity grows, equality grows, opportunity grows. What King talked about in a spiritual way lives also in the physical: Country, from its transcontinental railroads, a country that united itself in early innovations and AM/FM dials; all the ways we as a nation have made more robust connectivity. It has spurned industry, it has spawned industry, and it has made jobs multiply and multiply—economic growth connecting American to American. Right now, in this critical time, we must continue.

I hope my colleagues will join me in making sure we support the Amtrak budget. I know from personal experience the challenges and the trials and the dangers from the status quo. It is time for us to advance. It is time for us to come to together, to invest in America, to expand opportunity, and make real, in a physical way, those deepening connections we have, one to another.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, one of the privileges of addressing the Senate each morning is the opportunity to call attention to what I believe and what I think the country believes are noble causes. I certainly hope so.

Today is World Autism Awareness Day. To the Americans who have autism and the millions of family and friends affected by this condition, one day is simply not enough to focus on this misunderstood illness, but it helps—and we certainly hope it does.

Autism is a general term for a group of complex disorders of brain developments affecting social interaction, communication, and behavior. According to a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control—in fact, the report came out this week—1 in 68 children is diagnosed with having some form of autism in our country. As more and more children are identified as being autistic, it is important we in Congress do all we can to provide them, their families, and their caretakers, the help that is so vitally necessary.

Under the Affordable Care Act, autism screenings and other preventive services are available at no cost to families. For those diagnosed with autism, the days of being denied health insurance due to their preexisting condition ended with the passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Today, because of the Affordable Care Act, adult children with autism may stay on their parents' policies through age 26, providing them with the stability and additional treatment they need.

With benefits such as these, it is no wonder that more than 7 million people have sought health coverage under the Affordable Care Act. This doesn't count the estimated 800,000 to 900,000 people on 14 State exchanges. But in addition, everyone who tried to sign up during the last many months and were unable to get through, for whatever reason, are also now going to be signing up, which will add hundreds of thousands of more people.

So the numbers are pretty clear. The estimate given by the White House many months ago, which my Republican colleagues made fun of, has now been exceeded. So maybe they will quiet down and stop talking about repealing this bill that affects millions and millions of people favorably.

While the health care law is helping autistic Americans who have been diagnosed and their families, researchers at the National Institutes of Health are

tackling the question of why this disease is here, what are the origins of this condition.

Research is critical in supporting development tools, interventions, and evidence-based services to help provide a quality of life for people in the autism spectrum.

Over the last year, researchers funded by NIH have made significant advances in understanding the onset of autism. They have learned that brain changes that contribute to autism occur even during pregnancy and continue through the first years of life. They have also concluded that some of the possible signs of autism may begin to appear within the first 6 months it can be identified. The work at the NIH in understanding the problem cannot be understated, but far more needs to follow to better comprehend autism.

Congress also has responsibilities. One is providing resources to the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, and we need to do that. My friend Senator DURBIN has introduced legislation that would focus on ways we can provide more help that is badly needed. With sequestration and the other cuts which have taken place it has been unfair to these two agencies.

The Achieving Better Life Experience Act—also known as the ABLE Act—would improve the quality of life for individuals with autism and other disabilities through tax-advantaged savings accounts. These special savings accounts would help disabled Americans and their loved ones plan for the future by setting aside money to cover future expenses, including education, housing, therapy, and rehabilitation.

I am a sponsor of the ABLE Act and proud to stand with all advocates in celebrating today World Autism Awareness Day.

UKRAINE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed Senate legislation to provide loan guarantees to Ukraine and to impose sanctions on certain Ukrainian and Russian officials.

This legislation comes at a time when Ukraine's future hangs in the balance between democracy and dictatorship. The brave Ukrainians who protested across the country and at Maidan square have shown an inspiring determination to defend their freedom. Many of them endured the brutal attacks of riot police, snipers, and below freezing temperatures. Some died in the mayhem. President Putin, who has long demonstrated his disregard for international law and human rights in his own country, has now extended that sphere of repression to Ukraine by violating its sovereignty and strong-arming its citizens.

This legislation exemplifies our support for a free and democratic Ukraine. The new government will face every imaginable economic, political, and security challenge, but the country's interim leaders have already indicated a willingness to implement austere reforms to put their country on the right track. It is important that during this time of uncertainty the people of Ukraine know that they have the full support of the United States and the international community.

In addition to the loan guarantees which will be available immediately to help facilitate the development of a more resilient economy, the legislation authorizes funds for democracy and security assistance in future years. It also imposes sanctions against various Ukrainian and Russian officials who have been identified as principles in the subversion of democracy in Ukraine and who have treated the public treasury as their own personal bank account. While efforts to recover stolen assets will not restore the entire amount that has disappeared, it will further expose President Yanukovych and other corrupt officials for the criminals that they are.

I do want to say that I am very disappointed that domestic politics prevented inclusion of provisions, included in the version of the bill that was reported by the Foreign Relations Committee, authorizing U.S. support for reforms and participation in the quota increase at the International Monetary Fund. These reforms have been widely recognized as important for global economic stability, for maintaining U.S. leadership at the IMF, and for our efforts to maximize international assistance for Ukraine. Unfortunately, the House Republican leadership decided that partisan politics at home is more important than U.S. leadership in an international organization that we were instrumental in creating.

Ukraine and Russia have a shared history, but it is clear that the people of Ukraine see their future with Europe. That is why it is imperative that we support them at this critical time, and that we send a strong message to President Putin that there are real consequences to the use of brute force to violate the territorial integrity of Russia's neighbors.

As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that funds our assistance for Ukraine, my subcommittee will not only provide the budget authority to pay the subsidy cost of the loan guarantees, we will also look for other ways in fiscal year 2015 to protect it and its neighbors from further Russian aggression.

VERMONT COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Vermont Commission on Women this year celebrates its 50th anniversary. Established in 1964 by Vermont Governor Philip Hoff, the commission was established in response to a challenge presented by President Kennedy, urging every State in the country to create such commissions ''to encourage women to use their abilities, and to reduce discrimination against women.'' I am proud that Vermont's is one of the oldest continuously operating commissions in the United States.

The commission's work is fueled by 16 volunteer commissioners, a team of advisors and a small but energetic staff. By advocating for new State laws and strengthening old ones, the commission has fought to reduce gender discrimination, achieve pay equity, support families and create job opportunities for women in my home State. Just last year, the commission was a strong force in strengthening provisions of Vermont's Equal Pay Act, so that women move closer to the reality of receiving equal pay for equal work. The law also extended protections so that employees could ask coworkers about their pay, and perhaps learn of disparities, without fear of retaliation.

I have no doubt the commission's ongoing efforts have helped Vermont women narrow the gender pay gap, to 84 cents for every dollar earned by a man. Vermont is leading the way in this area: the national level finds women earning 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. I am grateful to the commission for its ongoing support for the Paycheck Fairness Act, which the Senate will consider in the coming weeks.

The commission also serves as a needed source of information. Its handbook, The Legal Rights of Women in Vermont, serves as a valuable guide for women who may find themselves in need of advice on matters such as adoption, employment rights, housing and divorce. The commission also conducts research, coordinates conferences and workshops, and engages in partnerships, all in the interest of furthering gender equality.

Despite the great strides that have been made over five decades in Vermont and across the Nation, we know that many discriminatory issues affecting women still exist today, and that the need for the commission's work is still critical.

The State of Vermont is very fortunate to have such a strong group advocating for women's rights. I have been proud to work with the Vermont Commission on Women for over 15 years on Vermont's Women's Economic Opportunity Conference, an annual event in Vermont that brings women of all different backgrounds together to talk about the challenges facing women in the work place.

I am proud to acknowledge and honor the Vermont Commission on Women as it celebrates 50 years of leadership and achievement.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent from votes during today's session. Had I been present, I would have opposed the motion to table the Reid amendment to H.R. 3979 and I would have supported the motion

to table the Vitter motion to appeal the ruling of the Chair.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JIMMY NEWTON, JR.

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I come to the floor with a heavy heart to honor the memory of Chairman Jimmy Newton, Jr. of the Southern Ute Tribe. Chairman Newton was a tireless advocate for his fellow tribal members and passed away on Tuesday, April 1, 2014.

Chairman Newton began his career in public service in 2003 and was a strong and dedicated leader for a new generation. He was one of the youngest people ever to serve as tribal council member, vice chairman, and acting chairman before he was elected chairman of Southern Ute in 2012. Chairman Newton leaves behind a legacy of deep respect for Southern Ute culture and tradition.

I know I speak for our entire Colorado community when I extend my deepest sympathies to the Newton family and the Southern Ute tribe during this difficult time.•

TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL DEMAIO

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I recognize Samuel DeMaio, the dynamic director of the Newark Police Department. A driving force for reform, Sammy is one of those people who talks the talk, walks the walk, and does both to the benefit of the community at large.

Samuel Anthony DeMaio was born on December 25, 1966, in Newark, where he was raised with his younger sister Sherri by his father Carmine, a Newark police officer, and his mother Marysue. In 1986, on what he would later say was ''one of the happiest days in my life,'' Sammy followed in his father's footsteps and began his career with the Newark Police Department at the age of 19.

A hard worker from the start, Sammy proved his dedication and skill by consistently becoming the youngest officer to hold each position as he ascended the ranks of the Newark Police Department. His focus on transparency, officer training, and collaboration made our communities safer and more unified. It is that dedication and openness that helped set our community on its upward trajectory, and it is why his shoes will be so hard to fill.

Sammy was in and of the community. He is a cop's cop who is respected by everyone in the department, from rank and file to top brass. Sammy is held in high esteem in the greater community, from the city council that unanimously voted to appoint him, to once-skeptical community leaders won over by his commitment to transparency and accountability.

Sammy took great pride in collaborating with and incorporating the communities he policed. He began conducting the officers' roll call out on the street in an effort to change the way the officers and residents viewed each other. When I started Newark's Super Summer program, aimed at keeping kids out of trouble during the summer months, Sammy was right there with me. He founded the Annual Youth Public Safety Academy, a hands-on, joint project of the City of Newark's Police and Fire Departments in conjunction with the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, where participants learned how to report crimes, prevent fires, and resist criminal activity.

Sammy retired from the police department on February 21, 2014, after 28 years on the Newark police force. These years of service were spent exclusively in New Jersey's largest municipal police department, and were marked by exemplary dedication to the best interests of the community and his fellow officers. When considering on the day of his retirement, Sammy said, ''This is probably the saddest day I'm going to have in my life.''

It is an honor to formally recognize the contributions that Sammy DeMaio made to the citizens of Newark throughout his career in law enforcement, to thank him for his tremendous service, and to wish him happiness in a well-deserved retirement.•

KICK FOR CANCER TOURNAMENT

• Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the participants in the ''Kick for Cancer'' charity martial arts tournament which is held annually in Gilmanton, NH. Since its founding the tournament has raised more than $120,000 to benefit the Central New Hampshire Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice, helping this critical community resource serve 350 patients and their families each year. I am happy to report this year marks the 25th anniversary of the Kick for Cancer Tournament, which draws participants to our great State from all around the country.

The tournament was founded thanks to the hard work of Dr. Georganne Verigan, a long-time teacher and leader in the martial arts community. She founded the Kick for Cancer tournament to teach her students the importance of giving back to their communities, and also to demonstrate that giving can be fun and exciting. As evidenced by the popularity of the tournament, Dr. Verigan's lesson clearly resonates with young martial arts students.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire I would like to thank Dr. Verigan for her selfless work to improve the availability of home and hospice care, and her efforts to impart the value of community service onto a generation of young citizens. I look forward to hearing of the continued growth and success of the Kick for Cancer Tournament.•

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:58 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 1557. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize support for graduate medical education programs in children's hospitals.

S. 2183. An act United States international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions.

At 1:05 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. 2413. An act to prioritize and redirect NOAA resources to a focused program of investment on affordable and attainable advances in observational, computing, and modeling capabilities to deliver substantial improvement in weather forecasting and prediction of high impact weather events, such as those associated with hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, floods, storm surges, and wildfires, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4005. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 88. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby.

H. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 2:40 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1557. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize support for graduate medical education programs in children's hospitals.

H.R. 4152. An act to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 2183. An act United States international programming to Ukraine and neighboring regions.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2413. An act to prioritize and redirect NOAA resources to a focused program of investment on affordable and attainable advances in observational, computing, and modeling capabilities to deliver substantial improvement in weather forecasting and prediction of high impact weather events, such as those associated with hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, floods, storm surges, and wildfires, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4005. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 4278. An act to support the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2198. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California and other Western States due to drought, and for other purposes.

S. 2199. 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.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, April 2, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1557. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize support for graduate medical education programs in children's hospitals.

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–5140. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Global Strategic Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report Pursuant to Section 1304 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014: Strategy to Modernize Cooperative Threat Reduction and Prevent the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Related Materials in the Middle East and North Africa Region'' (OSS–2014–0461); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5141. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict), Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2014 Global Defense Posture Report'' (OSS–2014–0462); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5142. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's annual report concerning military assistance and military exports (OSS–2014–0460); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5143. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Swap Data Repositories—Access to SDR Data by Market Participants'' (RIN3038–AE14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5144. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Clomazone; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9907–62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5145. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''S-metolachlor; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9907–61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5146. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Propiconazole; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9907–05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5147. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Forchlorfenuron; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9907–47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–5148. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Extension of Pilot Program on Acquisition of Military-Purpose Nondevelopmental Items'' ((RIN0750–AI28) (DFARS Case 2014–D007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5149. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Performance-Based Payments'' ((RIN0750–AH54) (DFARS Case 2011–D045)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5150. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs), Performing the Duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2013 annual report relative to the STARBASE Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5151. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Global Strategic Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the utilization of a contribution to the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5152. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Michael Ferriter, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5153. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Defense Production Act Annual Fund Report for Fiscal Year 2013''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5154. A joint communication from the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to maintaining the EP–3E Airborne Reconnaissance Integrated Electronic System II and Special Projects Aircraft platform in a manner that meets the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements in performance and support of the Combatant Commanders; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–5155. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, (2) two reports relative to vacancies in the Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5156. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5157. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2013 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5158. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a rule entitled ''Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5159. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Flood Elevation Determinations'' (Docket No. FEMA–2014–0002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5160. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' (Docket No. FEMA–2013–0002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5161. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Flood Elevation Determinations'' (Docket No. FEMA–2014–0002) received in the Office of the President of the

Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5162. A communication from the Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Equal Access to Justice Act Implementation Rule'' ((RIN3170–AA27) (Docket No. CFPB–2012–0020)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 28, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5163. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Turkey; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5164. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a transaction involving Wells Fargo, N.A. and the Export-Import Bank's Working Capital Guarantee Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–5165. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Arizona State Implementation Plan, Maricopa County Area'' (FRL No. 9904–75–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5166. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Arizona State Implementation Plan'' (FRL No. 9904–83–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5167. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Arizona State Implementation Plan'' (FRL No. 9908–25–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5168. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Update of the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets for the Reading 1997 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard Maintenance Area'' (FRL No. 9908–50–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5169. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Michigan; PSD Rules for PM2.5'' (FRL No. 9908–72–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5170. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Kraft Pulp Mills NSPS Review'' (FRL No. 9907–37–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5171. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Quality: Revision to the Regulatory Definition of Volatile Organic Compounds—Exclusion of 2-amino-2-methyl-1-proponal (AMP)'' (FRL No. 9906–73–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5172. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Carbon Monoxide Second Limited Maintenance Plan for the Pittsburgh Area'' (FRL No. 9908–48–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5173. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Section 110(a)(2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9908–46–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5174. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Tennessee; Conflict of Interest'' (FRL No. 9909–01–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5175. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the Minor New Source Review (NSR) State Implementation Plan (SIP); Types of Standard Permits, State Pollution Control Project Standard Permit and Control Methods for the Permitting of Grandfathered and Electing Electric Generating Facilities'' (FRL No. 9908–27–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5176. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval of States' Request to Relax the Federal Reid Vapor Pressure Volatility Standard in Florida, and the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill and Greensboro/Winston-Salem/High Point Areas in North Carolina'' (FRL No. 9908–13–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5177. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of State Air Quality Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; Commonwealth of Virginia; Control of Emissions from Existing Sewage Sludge Incineration Units'' (FRL No. 9908–89–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5178. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Approval of the Redesignation Requests and the Associated Maintenance Plans of the Charleston Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual and the 2006 24-Hour Fine Particulate Matter Standards'' (FRL No. 9908–88–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–5179. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report on the Taxation of Social Security and Railroad Retirement Benefits in Calendar Years 2005 through 2009''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5180. 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 ''Issuance of Opinion and Advisory Letters for Pre-approved Defined Contribution Plans for the Second Six-Year Cycle, Deadline for Employer Adoption, and Opening of Determination Letter Program for Pre-approved Plan Adopters'' (Announcement 2014–16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5181. 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 ''Designation of Payor to Perform Acts Required of an Employer'' ((RIN1545–BJ31) (TD 9662)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5182. 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 ''Eligibility for Premium Tax Credit for Victims of Domestic Abuse'' (Notice 2014–23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5183. 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 ''Postponement of Deadline for Making an Election to Deduct for the Preceding Taxable Year Losses Attributable to Colorado Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides'' (Notice 2014–20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5184. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 911(d)(4)—2013 Update'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5185. 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 ''Shared Responsibility for Employers Regarding Health Coverage'' ((RIN1545–BL33) (TD 9655)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–5186. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13–143); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5187. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to

law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–001); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5188. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–010); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5189. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–004); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5190. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to overseas surplus property; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–5191. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Food Additives Permitted for Direct Addition to Food for Human Consumption; Vitamin D2 Bakers Yeast'' (Docket No. FDA–2009–F–0570) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 28, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5192. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food'' (Docket No. FDA–1999–F–2405) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 28, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5193. A communication from the Chair, Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report that includes recommendations for improving federally and privately funded Alzheimer's programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–5194. A communication from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5195. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Board's compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act during calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5196. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Global Strategic Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Proliferation Security Initiative budget plan and review for fiscal years 2012–2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5197. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, ''Metropolitan Police Department First Amendment Investigations Substantially Complied with District Law''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5198. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5199. A communication from the Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5200. A communication from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2013 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5201. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Global Strategic Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Proliferation Security Initiative budget plan and review for fiscal years 2012–2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–5202. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Justice's 2013 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Litigation and Compliance Report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–5203. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations'' (RIN0694–AG07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 384. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2200. A bill to provide debit card holders with consumer protections equivalent to those available to credit card holders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. COBURN):

S. 2201. A bill to limit the level of premium subsidy provided by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation to agricultural producers; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2202. A bill to provide for revenue sharing of qualified revenues from leases in the South Atlantic planning area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 409. A resolution congratulating the Penn State University wrestling team for winning the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association Wresting Championships; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 232

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 232, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 409, a bill to add Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and national observance.

S. 433

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 433, a bill to establish and operate a National Center for Campus Public Safety.

S. 445

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 445, a bill to improve security at State and local courthouses.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 948

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) 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. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1342

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1342, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit expensing of certain depreciable business assets for small businesses.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1623

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1623, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2118

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2118, a bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes.

S. 2132

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2132, a bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes.

S. 2140

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2140, a bill to improve the transition between experimental permits and commercial licenses for commercial reusable launch vehicles.

S. 2171

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2171, a bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes.

S. 2182

At the request of Mr. WALSH, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 2194

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2194, a bill to improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 2198

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2198, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California and other Western States due to drought, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 18

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 18, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to clarify the authority of Congress and the States to regulate corporations, limited liability companies or other corporate entities established by the laws of any State, the United States, or any foreign state.

S.J. RES. 19

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 364

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) 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 name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor 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. 384

At the request of Mr. KAINE, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 384, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis.

AMENDMENT NO. 2933

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2933 intended to be proposed to 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.

AMENDMENT NO. 2934

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2934 intended to be proposed to 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.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 409—CONGRATULATING THE PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WRESTLING TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2014 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION WRESTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 409

Whereas on March 22, 2014, the Penn State University Nittany Lions won the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Wrestling Championships in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma;

Whereas the Nittany Lions have won the last 4 NCAA Wrestling Championships and are 1 of only 3 wrestling teams in NCAA history to win 4 consecutive titles, joining Iowa State University and Oklahoma State University;

Whereas 7 members of the Nittany Lions were named All-Americans at the 2014 NCAA Wrestling Championships, with seniors David Taylor and Ed Ruth becoming the seventh and eighth 4-time All-Americans in the history of Penn State University;

Whereas junior Nico Megaludis became a 3-time All American, junior Matt Brown became a 2-time All-American, and senior James English, sophomore Morgan McIntosh, and freshman Zain Retherford became first-time All Americans;

Whereas crucial team points were earned by all 10 Nittany Lions competing in the 2014 NCAA Wrestling Championships, and the team finished with an overall record of 38 wins and 15 losses in championship matches;

Whereas Ed Ruth became the first Penn State University wrestler to win 3 NCAA individual championships, and David Taylor became the sixth Penn State University wrestler to win 2 NCAA individual championships; and

Whereas the Penn State University wrestling team concluded the 2013-2014 season with a record of 15 wins and only 1 loss, and won its fourth consecutive Big Ten Championships title: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Penn State University wrestling team, coaches, and staff for winning the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Wrestling Championships;

(2) commends the Penn State University wrestling team's wrestlers, coaches, and staff for their diligence, enthusiasm, and hard work; and

(3) recognizes the Penn State University students, faculty, alumni, and devoted fans who supported the Nittany Lions on their path to winning their fourth consecutive NCAA Wrestling Championships.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2958. Mr. COATS (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. CORKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3979, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2959. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3979, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2958. Mr. COATS (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. TOOMEY, and Mr. CORKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3979, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 8. REQUIREMENT THAT INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN A SYSTEMATIC AND SUSTAINED EFFORT TO OBTAIN SUITABLE WORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (h) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended to read as follows:

''(h) ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (b)(4), payment of emergency unemployment compensation shall not be made to any individual for any week of unemployment—

''(A) during which the individual fails to accept any offer of suitable work (as defined in paragraph (3)) or fails to apply for any suitable work to which the individual was referred by the State agency; or

''(B) during which the individual fails to actively engage in seeking work, unless such individual is not actively engaged in seeking work because such individual is, as determined in accordance with State law—

''(i) before any court of the United States or any State pursuant to a lawfully issued summons to appear for jury duty (as such term may be defined by the Secretary); or

''(ii) hospitalized for treatment of an emergency or a life-threatening condition (as such term may be defined by the Secretary),

if such exemptions in clauses (i) and (ii) apply to recipients of regular benefits, and the State chooses to apply such exemptions for recipients of emergency unemployment benefits.

''(2) PERIOD OF INELIGIBILITY.—If any individual is ineligible for emergency unemployment compensation for any week by reason of a failure described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1), the individual shall be ineligible to receive emergency unemployment compensation for any week which begins during a period which—

''(A) begins with the week following the week in which such failure occurs; and

''(B) does not end until such individual has been employed during at least 4 weeks which begin after such failure and the total of the remuneration earned by the individual for being so employed is not less than the product of 4 multiplied by the individual's average weekly benefit amount for the individual's benefit year.

''(3) SUITABLE WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'suitable work' means, with respect to any individual, any work which is within such individual's capabilities, except that, if the individual furnishes evidence satisfactory to the State agency that such individual's prospects for obtaining work in his customary occupation within a reasonably short period are good, the determination of whether any work is suitable work with respect to such individual shall be made in accordance with the applicable State law.

''(4) EXCEPTION.—Extended compensation shall not be denied under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) to any individual for any week by reason of a failure to accept an offer of, or apply for, suitable work—

''(A) if the gross average weekly remuneration payable to such individual for the position does not exceed the sum of—

''(i) the individual's average weekly benefit amount for his benefit year, plus

''(ii) the amount (if any) of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits (as defined in section 501(c)(17)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) payable to such individual for such week;

''(B) if the position was not offered to such individual in writing and was not listed with the State employment service;

''(C) if such failure would not result in a denial of compensation under the provisions of the applicable State law to the extent that such provisions are not inconsistent with the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (5); or

''(D) if the position pays wages less than the higher of—

''(i) the minimum wage provided by section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, without regard to any exemption; or

''(ii) any applicable State or local minimum wage.

''(5) ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SEEKING WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, an individual shall be treated as actively engaged in seeking work during any week if—

''(A) the individual has engaged in a systematic and sustained effort to obtain work during such week, and

''(B) the individual provides tangible evidence to the State agency that he has engaged in such an effort during such week.

''(6) REFERRAL.—The State agency shall provide for referring applicants for emergency unemployment benefits to any suitable work to which paragraph (4) would not apply.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2959. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3979, 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; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Good Jobs, Good Wages, and Good Hours Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—ENERGY

Subtitle A—Keystone XL and Natural Gas Exportation

Sec. 101. Keystone XL permit approval.
Sec. 102. Expedited approval of exportation of natural gas to Ukraine and North Atlantic Treaty Organization member countries and Japan.

Subtitle B—Saving Coal Jobs

Sec. 111. Short title.

PART I—PROHIBITION ON ENERGY TAX

Sec. 121. Prohibition on energy tax.

PART II—PERMITS

Sec. 131. National pollutant discharge elimination system.
Sec. 132. Permits for dredged or fill material.
Sec. 133. Impacts of Environmental Protection Agency regulatory activity on employment and economic activity.
Sec. 134. Identification of waters protected by the Clean Water Act.
Sec. 135. Limitations on authority to modify State water quality standards.
Sec. 136. State authority to identify waters within boundaries of the State.

Subtitle C—Point of Order Against Taxes on Carbon

Sec. 141. Point of order against legislation that would create a tax or fee on carbon emissions.

TITLE II—HEALTH

Sec. 201. Forty hours is full time.
Sec. 202. Repeal of the individual mandate.
Sec. 203. Repeal of medical device excise tax.
Sec. 204. Long-term unemployed individuals not taken into account for employer health care coverage mandate.
Sec. 205. Employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration may be exempted from employer mandate under Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
Sec. 206. Prohibition on certain taxes, fees, and penalties enacted under the Affordable Care Act.
Sec. 207. Repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

TITLE III—INCREASING EMPLOYMENT AND DECREASING GOVERNMENT REGULATION

Subtitle A—Small Business Tax Provisions

Sec. 301. Permanent extension of increased expensing limitations and treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.
Sec. 302. Permanent full exclusion applicable to qualified small business stock.
Sec. 303. Permanent increase in deduction for start-up expenditures.
Sec. 304. Permanent extension of reduction in S-corporation recognition period for built-in gains tax.
Sec. 305. Permanent allowance of deduction for health insurance costs in computing self-employment taxes.
Sec. 306. Clarification of inventory and accounting rules for small business.

Subtitle B—Regulatory Accountability Act

Sec. 311. Short title.
Sec. 312. Definitions.
Sec. 313. Rule making.
Sec. 314. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; presidential authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance.
Sec. 315. Hearings; presiding employees; powers and duties; burden of proof; evidence; record as basis of decision.
Sec. 316. Actions reviewable.
Sec. 317. Scope of review.
Sec. 318. Added definition.
Sec. 319. Effective date.

TITLE IV—SUPPORTING KNOWLEDGE AND INVESTING IN LIFELONG SKILLS

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. References.
Sec. 403. Application to fiscal years.

Subtitle A—Amendments to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

CHAPTER 1—WORKFORCE INVESTMENT DEFINITIONS

Sec. 406. Definitions.

CHAPTER 2—STATEWIDE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEMS

Sec. 411. Purpose.
Sec. 412. State workforce investment boards.
Sec. 413. State plan.
Sec. 414. Local workforce investment areas.
Sec. 415. Local workforce investment boards.
Sec. 416. Local plan.
Sec. 417. Establishment of one-stop delivery system.
Sec. 418. Identification of eligible providers of training services.
Sec. 419. General authorization.
Sec. 420. State allotments.
Sec. 421. Within State allocations.
Sec. 422. Use of funds for employment and training activities.
Sec. 423. Performance accountability system.
Sec. 424. Authorization of appropriations.

CHAPTER 3—JOB CORPS

Sec. 426. Job Corps purposes.
Sec. 427. Job Corps definitions.
Sec. 428. Individuals eligible for the Job Corps.
Sec. 429. Recruitment, screening, selection, and assignment of enrollees.
Sec. 430. Job Corps centers.
Sec. 431. Program activities.
Sec. 432. Counseling and job placement.
Sec. 433. Support.
Sec. 434. Operations.
Sec. 435. Community participation.
Sec. 436. Workforce councils.
Sec. 437. Technical assistance.
Sec. 438. Special provisions.
Sec. 439. Performance accountability management.

CHAPTER 4—NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Sec. 441. Technical assistance.
Sec. 442. Evaluations.

CHAPTER 5—ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 446. Requirements and restrictions.
Sec. 447. Prompt allocation of funds.
Sec. 448. Fiscal controls; sanctions.
Sec. 449. Reports to Congress.
Sec. 450. Administrative provisions.
Sec. 451. State legislative authority.
Sec. 452. General program requirements.
Sec. 453. Federal agency staff and restrictions on political and lobbying activities.

CHAPTER 6—STATE UNIFIED PLAN

Sec. 456. State unified plan.

Subtitle B—Adult Education and Family Literacy Education

Sec. 461. Amendment.

Subtitle C—Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act

Sec. 466. Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act.

Subtitle D—Repeals and Conforming Amendments

Sec. 471. Repeals.
Sec. 472. Amendments to other laws.
Sec. 473. Conforming amendment to table of contents.

Subtitle E—Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Sec. 476. Findings.
Sec. 477. Rehabilitation Services Administration.
Sec. 478. Definitions.
Sec. 479. Carryover.
Sec. 480. Traditionally underserved populations.
Sec. 481. State plan.
Sec. 482. Scope of services.
Sec. 483. Standards and indicators.
Sec. 484. Expenditure of certain amounts.
Sec. 485. Collaboration with industry.
Sec. 486. Reservation for expanded transition services.
Sec. 487. Client assistance program.
Sec. 488. Research.
Sec. 489. Title III amendments.
Sec. 490. Repeal of title VI.
Sec. 491. Title VII general provisions.
Sec. 492. Authorizations of appropriations.
Sec. 493. Conforming amendments.

Subtitle F—Studies by the Comptroller General

Sec. 496. Study by the Comptroller General on exhausting Federal Pell Grants before accessing WIA funds.
Sec. 497. Study by the Comptroller General on administrative cost savings.

TITLE I—ENERGY

Subtitle A—Keystone XL and Natural Gas Exportation

SEC. 101. KEYSTONE XL PERMIT APPROVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (delegating to Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations), TransCanada Keystone Pipeline, L.P. is authorized to construct, connect, operate, and maintain pipeline facilities for the import of crude oil and other hydrocarbons at the United States-Canada Border at Phillips County, Montana, in accordance with the application filed with the Department of State on May 4, 2012.

(b) PRESIDENTIAL PERMIT NOT REQUIRED.—Notwithstanding Executive Order No. 13337 (3 U.S.C. 301 note), Executive Order No. 11423 (3 U.S.C. 301 note), section 301 of title 3, United States Code, and any other Executive order or provision of law, no presidential permit shall be required for the facilities described in subsection (a).

(c) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.—The final environmental impact statement issued by the Secretary of State on August 26, 2011, the Final Evaluation Report issued by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality on January 3, 2013, and the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement issued on March 1, 2013, regarding the crude oil pipeline and appurtenant facilities associated with the facilities described in subsection (a), shall be considered to satisfy—

(1) all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(2) any other provision of law that requires Federal agency consultation or review with respect to the facilities described in subsection (a) and the related facilities in the United States.

(d) PERMITS.—Any Federal permit or authorization issued before the date of enactment of this Act for the facilities described in subsection (a), and the related facilities in the United States shall remain in effect.

(e) FEDERAL JUDICIAL REVIEW.—The facilities described in subsection (a), and the related facilities in the United States, that are approved by this section, and any permit, right-of-way, or other action taken to construct or complete the project pursuant to Federal law, shall only be subject to judicial review on direct appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

SEC. 102. EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF EXPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS TO UKRAINE AND NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION MEMBER COUNTRIES AND JAPAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (delegating to Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations), Congress finds that exports of natural gas produced in the United States to Ukraine, member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and Japan is—

(1) necessary for the protection of the essential security interests of the United States; and

(2) in the public interest pursuant to section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b).

(b) EXPEDITED APPROVAL.—Section 3(c) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b(c)) is amended by inserting ‘‘, to Ukraine, to a member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or to Japan’’ after ‘‘trade in natural gas’’.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply to applications for the authorization to export natural gas under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717b) that are pending on, or filed on or after, the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Saving Coal Jobs

SEC. 111. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the ‘‘Saving Coal Jobs Act of 2014’’.

PART I—PROHIBITION ON ENERGY TAX

SEC. 121. PROHIBITION ON ENERGY TAX.

(a) FINDINGS; PURPOSES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(A) on June 25, 2013, President Obama issued a Presidential memorandum directing the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to issue regulations relating to power sector carbon pollution standards for existing coal fired power plants;

(B) the issuance of that memorandum circumvents Congress and the will of the people of the United States;

(C) any action to control emissions of greenhouse gases from existing coal fired power plants in the United States by mandating a national energy tax would devastate major sectors of the economy, cost thousands of jobs, and increase energy costs for low-income households, small businesses, and seniors on fixed income;

(D) joblessness increases the likelihood of hospital visits, illnesses, and premature deaths;

(E) according to testimony on June 15, 2011, before the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate by Dr. Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University, ''The unemployment rate is well established as a risk factor for elevated illness and mortality rates in epidemiological studies performed since the early 1980s. In addition to influences on mental disorder, suicide and alcohol abuse and alcoholism, unemployment is also an important risk factor in cardiovascular disease and overall decreases in life expectancy.'';

(F) according to the National Center for Health Statistics, ''children in poor families were four times as likely to be in fair or poor health as children that were not poor'';

(G) any major decision that would cost the economy of the United States millions of dollars and lead to serious negative health effects for the people of the United States should be debated and explicitly authorized by Congress, not approved by a Presidential memorandum or regulations; and

(H) any policy adopted by Congress should make United States energy as clean as practicable, as quickly as practicable, without increasing the cost of energy for struggling families, seniors, low-income households, and small businesses.

(2) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

(A) to ensure that—

(i) a national energy tax is not imposed on the economy of the United States; and

(ii) struggling families, seniors, low-income households, and small businesses do not experience skyrocketing electricity bills and joblessness;

(B) to protect the people of the United States, particularly families, seniors, and children, from the serious negative health effects of joblessness;

(C) to allow sufficient time for Congress to develop and authorize an appropriate mechanism to address the energy needs of the United States and the potential challenges posed by severe weather; and

(D) to restore the legislative process and congressional authority over the energy policy of the United States.

(b) PRESIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the head of a Federal agency shall not promulgate any regulation relating to power sector carbon pollution standards or any substantially similar regulation on or after June 25, 2013, unless that regulation is explicitly authorized by an Act of Congress.

PART II—PERMITS

SEC. 131. NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM.

(a) APPLICABILITY OF GUIDANCE.—Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(s) APPLICABILITY OF GUIDANCE.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) GUIDANCE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'guidance' means draft, interim, or final guidance issued by the Administrator.

''(ii) INCLUSIONS.—The term 'guidance' includes—

''(I) the comprehensive guidance issued by the Administrator and dated April 1, 2010;

''(II) the proposed guidance entitled 'Draft Guidance on Identifying Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act' and dated April 28, 2011;

''(III) the final guidance proposed by the Administrator and dated July 21, 2011; and

''(IV) any other document or paper issued by the Administrator through any process other than the notice and comment rulemaking process.

''(B) NEW PERMIT.—The term 'new permit' means a permit covering discharges from a structure—

''(i) that is issued under this section by a permitting authority; and

''(ii) for which an application is—

''(I) pending as of the date of enactment of this subsection; or

''(II) filed on or after the date of enactment of this subsection.

''(C) PERMITTING AUTHORITY.—The term 'permitting authority' means—

''(i) the Administrator; or

''(ii) a State, acting pursuant to a State program that is equivalent to the program under this section and approved by the Administrator.

''(2) PERMITS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in making a determination whether to approve a new permit or a renewed permit, the permitting authority—

''(i) shall base the determination only on compliance with regulations issued by the Administrator or the permitting authority; and

''(ii) shall not base the determination on the extent of adherence of the applicant for the new permit or renewed permit to guidance.

''(B) NEW PERMITS.—If the permitting authority does not approve or deny an application for a new permit by the date that is 270 days after the date of receipt of the application for the new permit, the applicant may operate as if the application were approved in accordance with Federal law for the period of time for which a permit from the same industry would be approved.

''(C) SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETENESS.—In determining whether an application for a new permit or a renewed permit received under this paragraph is substantially complete, the permitting authority shall use standards for determining substantial completeness of similar permits for similar facilities submitted in fiscal year 2007.''.

(b) STATE PERMIT PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) STATE PERMIT PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—At any time after the promulgation of the guidelines required by section 304(a)(2), the Governor of each State desiring to administer a permit program for discharges into navigable waters within the jurisdiction of the State may submit to the Administrator—

''(A) a full and complete description of the program the State proposes to establish and administer under State law or under an interstate compact; and

''(B) a statement from the attorney general (or the attorney for those State water pollution control agencies that have independent legal counsel), or from the chief legal officer in the case of an interstate agency, that the laws of the State, or the interstate compact, as applicable, provide adequate authority to carry out the described program.

''(2) APPROVAL.—The Administrator shall approve each program for which a description is submitted under paragraph (1) unless the Administrator determines that adequate authority does not exist—

''(A) to issue permits that—

''(i) apply, and ensure compliance with, any applicable requirements of sections 301, 302, 306, 307, and 403;

''(ii) are for fixed terms not exceeding 5 years;

''(iii) can be terminated or modified for cause, including—

''(I) a violation of any condition of the permit;

''(II) obtaining a permit by misrepresentation or failure to disclose fully all relevant facts; and

''(III) a change in any condition that requires either a temporary or permanent reduction or elimination of the permitted discharge; and

''(iv) control the disposal of pollutants into wells;

''(B)(i) to issue permits that apply, and ensure compliance with, all applicable requirements of section 308; or

''(ii) to inspect, monitor, enter, and require reports to at least the same extent as required in section 308;

''(C) to ensure that the public, and any other State the waters of which may be affected, receives notice of each application for a permit and an opportunity for a public hearing before a ruling on each application;

''(D) to ensure that the Administrator receives notice and a copy of each application for a permit;

''(E) to ensure that any State (other than the permitting State), whose waters may be affected by the issuance of a permit may submit written recommendations to the permitting State and the Administrator with respect to any permit application and, if any part of the written recommendations are not accepted by the permitting State, that the permitting State will notify the affected State and the Administrator in writing of the failure of the State to accept the recommendations, including the reasons for not accepting the recommendations;

''(F) to ensure that no permit will be issued if, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Army (acting through the Chief of Engineers), after consultation with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, anchorage and navigation of any of the navigable waters would be substantially impaired by the issuance of the permit;

''(G) to abate violations of the permit or the permit program, including civil and criminal penalties and other means of enforcement;

''(H) to ensure that any permit for a discharge from a publicly owned treatment works includes conditions to require the identification in terms of character and volume of pollutants of any significant source introducing pollutants subject to pretreatment standards under section 307(b) into the treatment works and a program to ensure compliance with those pretreatment standards by each source, in addition to adequate notice, which shall include information on the quality and quantity of effluent to be introduced into the treatment works and any anticipated impact of the change in the quantity or quality of effluent to be discharged from the publicly owned treatment works, to the permitting agency of—

''(i) new introductions into the treatment works of pollutants from any source that would be a new source (as defined in section 306(a)) if the source were discharging pollutants;

''(ii) new introductions of pollutants into the treatment works from a source that would be subject to section 301 if the source were discharging those pollutants; or

''(iii) a substantial change in volume or character of pollutants being introduced into the treatment works by a source introducing

pollutants into the treatment works at the time of issuance of the permit; and

''(I) to ensure that any industrial user of any publicly owned treatment works will comply with sections 204(b), 307, and 308.

''(3) ADMINISTRATION.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), the Administrator may not disapprove or withdraw approval of a program under this subsection on the basis of the following:

''(A) The failure of the program to incorporate or comply with guidance (as defined in subsection (s)(1)).

''(B) The implementation of a water quality standard that has been adopted by the State and approved by the Administrator under section 303(c).''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 309 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1319) is amended—

(i) in subsection (c)—

(I) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''402(b)(8)'' and inserting ''402(b)(2)(H)''; and

(II) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking ''402(b)(8)'' and inserting ''402(b)(2)(H)''; and

(ii) in subsection (d), in the first sentence, by striking ''402(b)(8)'' and inserting ''402(b)(2)(H)''.

(B) Section 402(m) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342(m)) is amended in the first sentence by striking ''subsection (b)(8) of this section'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(2)(H)''.

(c) SUSPENSION OF FEDERAL PROGRAM.—Section 402(c) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

''(4) LIMITATION ON DISAPPROVAL.—Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) through (3), the Administrator may not disapprove or withdraw approval of a State program under subsection (b) on the basis of the failure of the following:

''(A) The failure of the program to incorporate or comply with guidance (as defined in subsection (s)(1)).

''(B) The implementation of a water quality standard that has been adopted by the State and approved by the Administrator under section 303(c).''.

(d) NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATOR.—Section 402(d)(2) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342(d)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(2)'' and all that follows through the end of the first sentence and inserting the following:

''(2) OBJECTION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (C), no permit shall issue if—

''(i) not later than 90 days after the date on which the Administrator receives notification under subsection (b)(2)(E), the Administrator objects in writing to the issuance of the permit; or

''(ii) not later than 90 days after the date on which the proposed permit of the State is transmitted to the Administrator, the Administrator objects in writing to the issuance of the permit as being outside the guidelines and requirements of this Act.'';

(2) in the second sentence, by striking ''Whenever the Administrator'' and inserting the following:

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—If the Administrator''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) EXCEPTION.—The Administrator shall not object to or deny the issuance of a permit by a State under subsection (b) or (s) based on the following:

''(i) Guidance, as that term is defined in subsection (s)(1).

''(ii) The interpretation of the Administrator of a water quality standard that has been adopted by the State and approved by the Administrator under section 303(c).''.

SEC. 132. PERMITS FOR DREDGED OR FILL MATERIAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and all that follows through ''SEC. 404. (a) The Secretary may issue'' and inserting the following:

''SEC. 404. PERMITS FOR DREDGED OR FILL MATERIAL.

''(a) PERMITS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue''; and

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

''(2) DEADLINE FOR APPROVAL.—

''(A) PERMIT APPLICATIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), if an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, as appropriate, is required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Secretary shall—

''(I) begin the process not later than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary receives a permit application; and

''(II) approve or deny an application for a permit under this subsection not later than the latter of—

''(aa) if an agency carries out an environmental assessment that leads to a finding of no significant impact, the date on which the finding of no significant impact is issued; or

''(bb) if an agency carries out an environmental assessment that leads to a record of decision, 15 days after the date on which the record of decision on an environmental impact statement is issued.

''(ii) PROCESSES.—Notwithstanding clause (i), regardless of whether the Secretary has commenced an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement by the date described in clause (i)(I), the following deadlines shall apply:

''(I) An environmental assessment carried out under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall be completed not later than 1 year after the deadline for commencing the permit process under clause (i)(I).

''(II) An environmental impact statement carried out under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall be completed not later than 2 years after the deadline for commencing the permit process under clause (i)(I).

''(B) FAILURE TO ACT.—If the Secretary fails to act by the deadline specified in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (A)—

''(i) the application, and the permit requested in the application, shall be considered to be approved;

''(ii) the Secretary shall issue a permit to the applicant; and

''(iii) the permit shall not be subject to judicial review.''.

(b) STATE PERMITTING PROGRAMS.—Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) AUTHORITY OF ADMINISTRATOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) through (4), until the Secretary has issued a permit under this section, the Administrator is authorized to prohibit the specification (including the withdrawal of specification) of any defined area as a disposal site, and deny or restrict the use of any defined area for specification (including the withdrawal of specification) as a disposal site, if the Administrator determines, after notice and opportunity for public hearings, that the discharge of the materials into the area will have an unacceptable adverse effect on municipal water supplies, shellfish beds or fishery areas (including spawning and breeding areas), wildlife, or recreational areas.

''(2) CONSULTATION.—Before making a determination under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consult with the Secretary.

''(3) FINDINGS.—The Administrator shall set forth in writing and make public the findings of the Administrator and the reasons of the Administrator for making any determination under this subsection.

''(4) AUTHORITY OF STATE PERMITTING PROGRAMS.—This subsection shall not apply to any permit if the State in which the discharge originates or will originate does not concur with the determination of the Administrator that the discharge will result in an unacceptable adverse effect as described in paragraph (1).''.

(c) STATE PROGRAMS.—Section 404(g)(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344(g)(1)) is amended in the first sentence by striking ''for the discharge'' and inserting ''for all or part of the discharges''.

SEC. 133. IMPACTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGULATORY ACTIVITY ON EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) COVERED ACTION.—The term ''covered action'' means any of the following actions taken by the Administrator under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.):

(A) Issuing a regulation, policy statement, guidance, response to a petition, or other requirement.

(B) Implementing a new or substantially altered program.

(3) MORE THAN A DE MINIMIS NEGATIVE IMPACT.—The term ''more than a de minimis negative impact'' means the following:

(A) With respect to employment levels, a loss of more than 100 jobs, except that any offsetting job gains that result from the hypothetical creation of new jobs through new technologies or government employment may not be used in the job loss calculation.

(B) With respect to economic activity, a decrease in economic activity of more than $1,000,000 over any calendar year, except that any offsetting economic activity that results from the hypothetical creation of new economic activity through new technologies or government employment may not be used in the economic activity calculation.

(b) ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS OF ACTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.—

(1) ANALYSIS.—Before taking a covered action, the Administrator shall analyze the impact, disaggregated by State, of the covered action on employment levels and economic activity, including estimated job losses and decreased economic activity.

(2) ECONOMIC MODELS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Administrator shall use the best available economic models.

(B) ANNUAL GAO REPORT.—Not later than December 31st of each year, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the economic models used by the Administrator to carry out this subsection.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—With respect to any covered action, the Administrator shall—

(A) post the analysis under paragraph (1) as a link on the main page of the public Internet Web site of the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(B) request that the Governor of any State experiencing more than a de minimis negative impact post the analysis in the Capitol of the State.

(c) PUBLIC HEARINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator concludes under subsection (b)(1) that a covered action will have more than a de minimis negative impact on employment levels or economic activity in a State, the Administrator shall hold a public hearing in each such State at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the covered action.

(2) TIME, LOCATION, AND SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A public hearing required under paragraph (1) shall be held at a convenient time and location for impacted residents.

(B) PRIORITY.—In selecting a location for such a public hearing, the Administrator shall give priority to locations in the State that will experience the greatest number of job losses.

(d) NOTIFICATION.—If the Administrator concludes under subsection (b)(1) that a covered action will have more than a de minimis negative impact on employment levels or economic activity in any State, the Administrator shall give notice of such impact to the congressional delegation, Governor, and legislature of the State at least 45 days before the effective date of the covered action.

SEC. 134. IDENTIFICATION OF WATERS PROTECTED BY THE CLEAN WATER ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may not—

(1) finalize, adopt, implement, administer, or enforce the proposed guidance described in the notice of availability and request for comments entitled ''EPA and Army Corps of Engineers Guidance Regarding Identification of Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act'' (EPA–HQ–OW–2011–0409) (76 Fed. Reg. 24479 (May 2, 2011)); and

(2) use the guidance described in paragraph (1), any successor document, or any substantially similar guidance made publicly available on or after December 3, 2008, as the basis for any decision regarding the scope of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) or any rulemaking.

(b) RULES.—The use of the guidance described in subsection (a)(1), or any successor document or substantially similar guidance made publicly available on or after December 3, 2008, as the basis for any rule shall be grounds for vacating the rule.

SEC. 135. LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORITY TO MODIFY STATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS.

(a) STATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS.—Section 303(c)(4) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1313(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(2) by striking ''(4) The'' and inserting the following:

''(4) PROMULGATION OF REVISED OR NEW STANDARDS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The'';

(3) by striking ''The Administrator shall promulgate'' and inserting the following:

''(B) DEADLINE.—The Administrator shall promulgate;'' and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) STATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, the Administrator may not promulgate a revised or new standard for a pollutant in any case in which the State has submitted to the Administrator and the Administrator has approved a water quality standard for that pollutant, unless the State concurs with the determination of the Administrator that the revised or new standard is necessary to meet the requirements of this Act.''.

(b) FEDERAL LICENSES AND PERMITS.—Section 401(a) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1341(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) STATE OR INTERSTATE AGENCY DETERMINATION.—With respect to any discharge, if a State or interstate agency having jurisdiction over the navigable waters at the point at which the discharge originates or will originate determines under paragraph (1) that the discharge will comply with the applicable provisions of sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307, the Administrator may not take any action to supersede the determination.''.

SEC. 136. STATE AUTHORITY TO IDENTIFY WATERS WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF THE STATE.

Section 303(d) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1313(d)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) STATE AUTHORITY TO IDENTIFY WATERS WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF THE STATE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each State shall submit to the Administrator from time to time, with the first such submission not later than 180 days after the date of publication of the first identification of pollutants under section 304(a)(2)(D), the waters identified and the loads established under subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D) of paragraph (1).

''(B) APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL BY ADMINISTRATOR.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of submission, the Administrator shall approve the State identification and load or announce the disagreement of the Administrator with the State identification and load.

''(ii) APPROVAL.—If the Administrator approves the identification and load submitted by the State under this subsection, the State shall incorporate the identification and load into the current plan of the State under subsection (e).

''(iii) DISAPPROVAL.—If the Administrator announces the disagreement of the Administrator with the identification and load submitted by the State under this subsection. the Administrator shall submit, not later than 30 days after the date that the Administrator announces the disagreement of the Administrator with the submission of the State, to the State the written recommendation of the Administrator of those additional waters that the Administrator identifies and such loads for such waters as the Administrator believes are necessary to implement the water quality standards applicable to the waters.

''(C) ACTION BY STATE.—Not later than 30 days after receipt of the recommendation of the Administrator, the State shall—

''(i) disregard the recommendation of the Administrator in full and incorporate its own identification and load into the current plan of the State under subsection (e);

''(ii) accept the recommendation of the Administrator in full and incorporate its identification and load as amended by the recommendation of the Administrator into the current plan of the State under subsection (e); or

''(iii) accept the recommendation of the Administrator in part, identifying certain additional waters and certain additional loads proposed by the Administrator to be added to the State's identification and load and incorporate the State's identification and load as amended into the current plan of the State under subsection (e).

''(D) NONCOMPLIANCE BY ADMINISTRATOR.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Administrator fails to approve the State identification and load or announce the disagreement of the Administrator with the State identification and load within the time specified in this subsection—

''(I) the identification and load of the State shall be considered approved; and

''(II) the State shall incorporate the identification and load that the State submitted into the current plan of the State under subsection (e).

''(ii) RECOMMENDATIONS NOT SUBMITTED.—If the Administrator announces the disagreement of the Administrator with the identification and load of the State but fails to submit the written recommendation of the Administrator to the State within 30 days as required by subparagraph (B)(iii)—

''(I) the identification and load of the State shall be considered approved; and

''(II) the State shall incorporate the identification and load that the State submitted into the current plan of the State under subsection (e).

''(E) APPLICATION.—This section shall apply to any decision made by the Administrator under this subsection issued on or after March 1, 2013.''.

Subtitle C—Point of Order Against Taxes on Carbon

SEC. 141. POINT OF ORDER AGAINST LEGISLATION THAT WOULD CREATE A TAX OR FEE ON CARBON EMISSIONS.

(a) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, motion, amendment, or conference report that includes a Federal tax or fee imposed on carbon emissions from any product or entity that is a direct or indirect source of the emissions.

(b) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(1) WAIVER.—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEAL.—An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under subsection (a).

TITLE II—HEALTH

SEC. 201. FORTY HOURS IS FULL TIME.

(a) DEFINITION OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE.—Section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(E), by striking ''by 120'' and inserting ''by 174''; and

(2) in paragraph (4)(A), by striking ''30 hours'' and inserting ''40 hours''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 202. REPEAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE.

Section 1501 and subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) of section 10106 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (and the amendments made by such sections and subsections) are repealed and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied and administered as if such provisions and amendments had never been enacted.

SEC. 203. REPEAL OF MEDICAL DEVICE EXCISE TAX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking subchapter E.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Subsection (a) of section 4221 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the last sentence.

(2) Paragraph (2) of section 6416(b) of such Code is amended by striking the last sentence.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of subchapter for chapter 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the item related to subchapter E.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to sales after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 204. LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR EMPLOYER HEALTH CARE COVERAGE MANDATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) EXCEPTION FOR LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'full-time employee' shall not include any individual who is a long-term unemployed individual with respect to such employer.

''(ii) LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'long-term unemployed individual' means, with respect to any employer, an individual who—

''(I) begins employment with such employer after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, and

''(II) has been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer, as determined by the Secretary of Labor, immediately before the date such employment begins.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 205. EMPLOYEES WITH HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MAY BE EXEMPTED FROM EMPLOYER MANDATE UNDER PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) EXEMPTION FOR HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION.—Solely for purposes of determining whether an employer is an applicable large employer under this paragraph for any month, an employer may elect not to take into account for a month as an employee any individual who, for such month, has medical coverage under—

''(i) chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, including coverage under the TRICARE program, or

''(ii) under a health care program under chapter 17 or 18 of title 38, United States Code, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 206. PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN TAXES, FEES, AND PENALTIES ENACTED UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

No tax, fee, or penalty imposed or enacted under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act shall be implemented, administered, or enforced unless there has been a certification by the Joint Committee on Taxation that such provision would not have a direct or indirect economic impact on individuals with an annual income of less than $200,000 or families with an annual income of less than $250,000.

SEC. 207. REPEAL OF THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective as of the enactment of Public Law 111–148, such Act (including any provision amended under sections 201 through 205 of this Act) is repealed, and the provisions of law amended or repealed by such Act (including any provision amended under such sections) are restored or revived as if such Act had not been enacted.

(b) HEALTH CARE-RELATED PROVISIONS IN THE HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2010.—Effective as of the enactment of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152), title I and subtitle B of title II of such Act (including any provision amended under sections 201 through 205 of this Act) are repealed, and the provisions of law amended or repealed by such title or subtitle, respectively (including any provision amended under such sections), are restored or revived as if such title and subtitle had not been enacted.

TITLE III—INCREASING EMPLOYMENT AND DECREASING GOVERNMENT REGULATION

Subtitle A—Small Business Tax Provisions

SEC. 301. PERMANENT EXTENSION OF INCREASED EXPENSING LIMITATIONS AND TREATMENT OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY AS SECTION 179 PROPERTY.

(a) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—Section 179(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''shall not exceed'' and all that follows and inserting ''shall not exceed $500,000.''.

(b) REDUCTION IN LIMITATION.—Section 179(b)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (C),

(2) by striking '', and'' at the end of subparagraph (B) and inserting a period,

(3) by striking the comma at the end of subparagraph (A) and inserting '', and'', and

(4) by inserting ''beginning before 2014'' after ''The limitation under paragraph (1) for any taxable year''.

(c) COMPUTER SOFTWARE.—Section 179(d)(1)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and before 2014''.

(d) ELECTION.—Section 179(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and before 2014''.

(e) SPECIAL RULES FOR TREATMENT OF QUALIFIED REAL PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 179(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''beginning in 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013'' and inserting ''beginning after 2009''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 179(f) of such Code is amended by striking paragraph (4).

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 302. PERMANENT FULL EXCLUSION APPLICABLE TO QUALIFIED SMALL BUSINESS STOCK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 1202(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''and before January 1, 2014'', and

(2) by striking ''CERTAIN PERIODS IN 2010, 2011, 2012, AND 2013'' in the heading and inserting ''CERTAIN PERIODS AFTER 2009''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading for section 1202 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''PARTIAL''.

(2) The item relating to section 1202 in the table of sections for part I of subchapter P of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by striking ''Partial exclusion'' and inserting ''Exclusion''.

(3) Section 1223(13) of such Code is amended by striking ''1202(a)(2),''.

(c) ADJUSTMENT OF GROSS ASSET THRESHOLD FOR INFLATION.—Subsection (d) of section 1202 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION.—In the case of any taxable year beginning after December 31, 2014, the $50,000,000 amount in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

''(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, by substituting 'calendar year 2013' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof. If any amount as increased under the preceding sentence is not a multiple of $1,000, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of $1,000.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to stock acquired after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 303. PERMANENT INCREASE IN DEDUCTION FOR START-UP EXPENDITURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Clause (ii) of section 195(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''$5,000'' and inserting ''$10,000'', and

(2) by striking ''$50,000'' and inserting ''$60,000''.

(b) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION.—Paragraph (3) of section 195(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

''(3) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION.—In the case of any taxable year beginning after December 31, 2014, the $10,000 and $60,000 amounts in paragraph (1)(A)(ii) shall each be increased by an amount equal to—

''(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

''(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, by substituting 'calendar year 2013' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof. If any amount as increased under the preceding sentence is not a multiple of $1,000, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of $1,000.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 304. PERMANENT EXTENSION OF REDUCTION IN S-CORPORATION RECOGNITION PERIOD FOR BUILT-IN GAINS TAX.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (7) of section 1374(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''10-year'' in subparagraph (A) and inserting ''5-year'',

(2) by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C) and redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively, and

(3) by striking ''593(e)—'' and all that follows in subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, and inserting ''593(e), subparagraph (A) shall be applied without regard to the phrase '5-year'.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 305. PERMANENT ALLOWANCE OF DEDUCTION FOR HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS IN COMPUTING SELF-EMPLOYMENT TAXES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (4) of section 162(l) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''beginning before January 1, 2010'' and all that follows and inserting ''beginning—

''(A) before January 1, 2010, or

''(B) after December 31, 2010, and before January 1, 2013.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012.

SEC. 306. CLARIFICATION OF INVENTORY AND ACCOUNTING RULES FOR SMALL BUSINESS.

(a) CASH ACCOUNTING PERMITTED.—Section 446 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) CERTAIN SMALL BUSINESS TAXPAYERS PERMITTED TO USE CASH ACCOUNTING METHOD WITHOUT LIMITATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to an eligible taxpayer who uses the cash receipts and

disbursements method for any taxable year, such method shall be deemed to clearly reflect income and the taxpayer shall not be required to use an accrual method.

''(2) ELIGIBLE TAXPAYER.—For purposes of this subsection, a taxpayer is an eligible taxpayer with respect to any taxable year if—

''(A) for all prior taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013, the taxpayer (or any predecessor) met the gross receipts test of section 448(c) (determined by substituting '$10,000,000' for '$5,000,000' each place it appears), and

''(B) the taxpayer is not subject to section 447 or 448.''.

(b) INVENTORY RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 471 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d) and by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) SMALL BUSINESS TAXPAYERS NOT REQUIRED TO USE INVENTORIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A qualified taxpayer shall not be required to use inventories under this section for a taxable year.

''(2) TREATMENT OF TAXPAYERS NOT USING INVENTORIES.—If a qualified taxpayer does not use inventories with respect to any property for any taxable year beginning after December 31, 2013, such property shall be treated as a material or supply which is not incidental.

''(3) QUALIFIED TAXPAYER.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'qualified taxpayer' means—

''(A) any eligible taxpayer (as defined in section 446(g)(2)), and

''(B) any taxpayer described in section 448(b)(3) (determined by substituting '$10,000,000' for '$5,000,000' each place it appears in subsections (b) and (c) of section 448).''.

(2) INCREASED ELIGIBILITY FOR SIMPLIFIED DOLLAR-VALUE LIFO METHOD.—Section 474(c) of such Code is amended by striking ''$5,000,000'' and inserting ''$10,000,000''.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (c) of section 263A of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(7) EXCLUSION FROM INVENTORY RULES.—Nothing in this section shall require the use of inventories for any taxable year by a qualified taxpayer (within the meaning of section 471(c)) who is not required to use inventories under section 471 for such taxable year.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE AND SPECIAL RULES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

(2) CHANGE IN METHOD OF ACCOUNTING.—In the case of any taxpayer changing the taxpayer's method of accounting for any taxable year under the amendments made by this section—

(A) such change shall be treated as initiated by the taxpayer; and

(B) such change shall be treated as made with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

Subtitle B—Regulatory Accountability Act

SEC. 311. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Regulatory Accountability Act of 2014''.

SEC. 312. DEFINITIONS.

Section 551 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (13), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(15) 'guidance' means an agency statement of general applicability and future effect, other than a regulatory action, that sets forth a policy on a statutory, regulatory or technical issue or an interpretation of a statutory or regulatory issue;

''(16) 'high-impact rule' means any rule that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to impose an annual cost on the economy of $1,000,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

''(17) 'Information Quality Act' means section 515 of Public Law 106–554, the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, and guidelines issued by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs or other agencies under that Act;

''(18) 'major guidance' means guidance that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs finds is likely to lead to—

''(A) an annual cost on the economy of $100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

''(B) a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, local or tribal government agencies, or geographic regions; or

''(C) significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets;

''(19) 'major rule' means any rule that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to impose—

''(A) an annual cost on the economy of $100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

''(B) a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, local, or tribal government agencies, or geographic regions; or

''(C) significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets; and

''(20) 'Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs' means the office established under section 3503 of chapter 35 of title 44 and any successor to that office.''.

SEC. 313. RULE MAKING.

Section 553 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''(a) This section applies'' and inserting ''(a) APPLICABILITY.—This section applies''; and

(2) by striking subsections (b) through (e) and inserting the following:

''(b) RULE MAKING CONSIDERATIONS.—In a rule making, an agency shall make all preliminary and final determinations based on evidence and consider, in addition to other applicable considerations, the following:

''(1) The legal authority under which a rule may be proposed, including whether a rule making is required by statute, and if so, whether by a specific date, or whether the agency has discretion to commence a rule making.

''(2) Other statutory considerations applicable to whether the agency can or should propose a rule or undertake other agency action.

''(3) The specific nature and significance of the problem the agency may address with a rule (including the degree and nature of risks the problem poses and the priority of addressing those risks compared to other matters or activities within the jurisdiction of the agency), whether the problem warrants new agency action, and the countervailing risks that may be posed by alternatives for new agency action.

''(4) Whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency may address with a rule and whether those rules could be amended or rescinded to address the problem in whole or part.

''(5) Any reasonable alternatives for a new rule or other response identified by the agency or interested persons, including not only responses that mandate particular conduct or manners of compliance, but also—

''(A) the alternative of no Federal response;

''(B) amending or rescinding existing rules;

''(C) potential regional, State, local, or tribal regulatory action or other responses that could be taken instead of agency action; and

''(D) potential responses that—

''(i) specify performance objectives rather than conduct or manners of compliance;

''(ii) establish economic incentives to encourage desired behavior;

''(iii) provide information upon which choices can be made by the public; or

''(iv) incorporate other innovative alternatives rather than agency actions that specify conduct or manners of compliance.

''(6) Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

''(A) the potential costs and benefits associated with potential alternative rules and other responses considered under paragraph (5), including direct, indirect, and cumulative costs and benefits and estimated impacts on jobs, economic growth, innovation, and economic competitiveness;

''(B) the means to increase the cost-effectiveness of any Federal response; and

''(C) incentives for innovation, consistency, predictability, lower costs of enforcement and compliance (to government entities, regulated entities, and the public), and flexibility.

''(c) ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING FOR MAJOR RULES AND HIGH-IMPACT RULES.—

''(1) In the case of a rule making for a major rule or high-impact rule, not later than 90 days before a notice of proposed rule making is published in the Federal Register, an agency shall publish advance notice of proposed rule making in the Federal Register.

''(2) In publishing advance notice under paragraph (1), the agency shall—

''(A) include a written statement identifying, at a minimum—

''(i) the nature and significance of the problem the agency may address with a rule, including data and other evidence and information on which the agency expects to rely for the proposed rule;

''(ii) the legal authority under which a rule may be proposed, including whether a rule making is required by statute, and if so, whether by a specific date, or whether the agency has discretion to commence a rule making; and

''(iii) preliminary information available to the agency concerning the other considerations specified in subsection (b);

''(B) solicit written data, views or arguments from interested persons concerning the information and issues addressed in the advance notice; and

''(C) provide for a period of not fewer than 60 days for interested persons to submit such written data, views, or arguments to the agency.

''(d) NOTICES OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING; DETERMINATIONS OF OTHER AGENCY COURSE.—Following completion of procedures under subsection (c), if applicable, and consultation with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, the agency shall publish either a notice of proposed rule making or a determination of

other agency course, in accordance with the following:

''(1) A notice of proposed rule making shall include—

''(A) a statement of the time, place, and nature of public rule making proceedings;

''(B) reference to the legal authority under which the rule is proposed;

''(C) the terms of the proposed rule;

''(D) a description of information known to the agency on the subject and issues of the proposed rule, including—

''(i) a summary of information known to the agency concerning the considerations specified in subsection (b);

''(ii) a summary of additional information the agency provided to and obtained from interested persons under subsection (c); and

''(iii) information specifically identifying all data, studies, models, and other evidence or information considered or used by the agency in connection with the determination by the agency to propose the rule;

''(E)(i) a reasoned preliminary determination of need for the rule based on the information described under subparagraph (D); and

''(ii) an additional statement of whether a rule is required by statute;

''(F) a reasoned preliminary determination that the benefits of the proposed rule meet the relevant statutory objectives and justify the costs of the proposed rule, including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6), based on the information described under subparagraph (D);

''(G) a discussion of—

''(i) the alternatives to the proposed rule, and other alternative responses, considered by the agency under subsection (b);

''(ii) the costs and benefits of those alternatives, including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6);

''(iii) whether those alternatives meet relevant statutory objectives; and

''(iv) why the agency did not propose any of those alternatives; and

''(H)(i) a statement of whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the proposed rule; and

''(ii) if so, whether or not the agency proposes to amend or rescind any such rules, and why.

All information considered by the agency, and actions to obtain information by the agency, in connection with its determination to propose the rule, including all information described by the agency under subparagraph (D) and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the proposed rule and made accessible to the public for the public's use when the notice of proposed rule making is published.

''(2)(A) A notice of determination of other agency course shall include a description of the alternative response the agency determined to adopt.

''(B) If in its determination of other agency course the agency makes a determination to amend or rescind an existing rule, the agency need not undertake additional proceedings under subsection (c) before the agency publishes a notice of proposed rule making to amend or rescind the existing rule.

All information considered by the agency, and actions to obtain information by the agency, in connection with its determination of other agency course, including the information specified under paragraph (1)(D) and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the determination and made accessible to the public for the public's use when the notice of determination is published.

''(3) After notice of proposed rule making required by this section, the agency shall provide interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making through submission of written data, views, or arguments with or without opportunity for oral presentation, except that—

''(A) if a hearing is required under paragraph (4)(B) or subsection (e), reasonable opportunity for oral presentation shall be provided under that requirement; or

''(B) when other than under subsection (e) rules are required by statute or at the discretion of the agency to be made on the record after opportunity for an agency hearing, sections 556 and 557 shall apply, and paragraph (4), requirements of subsection (e) to receive comment outside of the procedures of sections 556 and 557, and the petition procedures of subsection (e)(6) shall not apply.

The agency shall provide not fewer than 90 days for interested persons to submit written data, views, or arguments (or 120 days in the case of a proposed major rule or high-impact rule).

''(4)(A) Within 30 days after publication of notice of proposed rule making, a member of the public may petition for a hearing in accordance with section 556 to determine whether any evidence or other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule fails to comply with of the Information Quality Act.

''(B)(i) The agency may, upon review of the petition, determine without further process to exclude from the rule making the evidence or other information that is the subject of the petition and, if appropriate, withdraw the proposed rule. The agency shall promptly publish any such determination.

''(ii) If the agency does not resolve the petition under the procedures of clause (i), it shall grant any such petition that presents a prima facie case that evidence or other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule fails to comply with the Information Quality Act, hold the requested hearing not later than 30 days after receipt of the petition, provide for a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination at the hearing, and decide the issues presented by the petition not later than 60 days after receipt of the petition. The agency may deny any petition that it determines does not present such a prima facie case.

''(C) There shall be no judicial review of the agency's disposition of issues considered and decided or determined under subparagraph (B)(ii) until judicial review of the agency's final action. There shall be no judicial review of an agency's determination to withdraw a proposed rule under subparagraph (B)(i).

''(D) Failure to petition for a hearing under this paragraph shall not preclude judicial review of any claim based on the Information Quality Act under chapter 7 of this title.

''(e) HEARINGS FOR HIGH-IMPACT RULES.—Following notice of a proposed rule making, receipt of comments on the proposed rule, and any hearing held under subsection (d)(4), and before adoption of any high-impact rule, the agency shall hold a hearing in accordance with sections 556 and 557, unless such hearing is waived by all participants in the rule making other than the agency. The agency shall provide a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination at such hearing. The hearing shall be limited to the following issues of fact, except that participants at the hearing other than the agency may waive determination of any such issue:

''(1) Whether the agency's asserted factual predicate for the rule is supported by the evidence.

''(2) Whether there is an alternative to the proposed rule that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives at a lower cost (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) than the proposed rule.

''(3) If there is more than one alternative to the proposed rule that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives at a lower cost than the proposed rule, which alternative would achieve the relevant statutory objectives at the lowest cost.

''(4) If the agency proposes to adopt a rule that is more costly than the least costly alternative that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)), whether the additional benefits of the more costly rule exceed the additional costs of the more costly rule.

''(5) Whether the evidence and other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule meets the requirements of the Information Quality Act.

''(6) Upon petition by an interested person who has participated in the rule making, other issues relevant to the rule making, unless the agency determines that consideration of the issues at the hearing would not advance consideration of the rule or would, in light of the nature of the need for agency action, unreasonably delay completion of the rule making. An agency shall grant or deny a petition under this paragraph within 30 days after the receipt of the petition.

No later than 45 days before any hearing held under this subsection or sections 556 and 557, the agency shall publish in the Federal Register a notice specifying the proposed rule to be considered at such hearing, the issues to be considered at the hearing, and the time and place for such hearing, except that such notice may be issued not later than 15 days before a hearing held under subsection (d)(4)(B).

''(f) FINAL RULES.—(1) The agency shall adopt a rule only following consultation with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to facilitate compliance with applicable rule making requirements.

''(2) The agency shall adopt a rule only on the basis of the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, and other evidence and information concerning the need for and consequences of the rule.

''(3)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the agency shall adopt the least costly rule considered during the rule making (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) that meets relevant statutory objectives.

''(B) The agency may adopt a rule that is more costly than the least costly alternative that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives only if—

''(i) the additional benefits of the more costly rule justify its additional costs; and

''(ii) the agency explains its reason for doing so based on interests of public health, safety or welfare (including protection of the environment) that are clearly within the scope of the statutory provision authorizing the rule.

''(4)(A) When the agency adopts a final rule, the agency shall publish a notice of final rule making. The notice shall include—

''(i) a concise, general statement of the rule's basis and purpose;

''(ii) the agency's reasoned final determination of need for a rule to address the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule, including a statement of whether a rule is required by statute;

''(iii) the agency's reasoned final determination that the benefits of the rule meet

the relevant statutory objectives and justify the rule's costs (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6));

''(iv) the agency's reasoned final determination not to adopt any of the alternatives to the proposed rule considered by the agency during the rule making, including—

''(I) the agency's reasoned final determination that no alternative considered achieved the relevant statutory objectives with lower costs (including costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) than the rule; or

''(II) the agency's reasoned final determination that its adoption of a more costly rule complies with paragraph (3)(B);

''(v) the agency's reasoned final determination—

''(I) that existing rules have not created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule; or

''(II) that existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule, and, if so—

''(aa) why amendment or rescission of such existing rules is not alone sufficient to respond to the problem; and

''(bb) whether and how the agency intends to amend or rescind the existing rule separate from adoption of the rule;

''(vi) the agency's reasoned final determination that the evidence and other information upon which the agency bases the rule complies with of the Information Quality Act; and

''(vii) for any major rule or high-impact rule, the agency's plan for review of the rule no less frequently than every 10 years to determine whether, based upon evidence, there remains a need for the rule, whether the rule is in fact achieving statutory objectives, whether the rule's benefits continue to justify its costs, and whether the rule can be modified or rescinded to reduce costs while continuing to achieve statutory objectives.

''(B) Review of a rule under a plan required by paragraph (4)(G) shall take into account the factors and criteria set forth in subsections (b) through (e) and this subsection.

''(C) All information considered by the agency in connection with its adoption of the rule, and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the rule and made accessible to the public for the public's use not later than the date on which the rule is adopted.

''(g) EXCEPTIONS FROM NOTICE AND HEARING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) Except when notice or hearing is required by statute, subsections (c) through (e) of this section do not apply to interpretive rules, general statements of policy, or rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice.

''(2)(A) When the agency for good cause, based upon evidence, finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief statement of reasons therefor in the rules issued) that compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this section before the issuance of an interim rule is impracticable or contrary to the public interest, including interests of national security, such subsections or requirements to render final determinations shall not apply to the agency's adoption of an interim rule.

''(B) If, following compliance with subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the agency adopts an interim rule, it shall commence proceedings that comply fully with subsections (c) through (f) of this section immediately upon publication of the interim rule. No less than 270 days from publication of the interim rule (or 18 months in the case of a major rule or high-impact rule), the agency shall complete rule making under subsections (c) through (f) of this subsection and take final action to adopt a final rule or rescind the interim rule. If the agency fails to take timely final action, the interim rule shall cease to have the effect of law.

''(C) Other than in cases involving interests of national security, upon the agency's publication of an interim rule without compliance with subsections (c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this section, an interested party may seek immediate judicial review under chapter 7 of this title of the agency's determination to adopt such interim rule. The record on such review shall include all documents and information considered by the agency and any additional information presented by a party that the court determines necessary to consider to assure justice.

''(h) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HEARINGS.—When a hearing is required under subsection (e) or is otherwise required by statute or at the agency's discretion before adoption of a rule, the agency shall comply with the requirements of sections 556 and 557 in addition to the requirements of subsection (f) in adopting the rule and in providing notice of the rule's adoption.

''(i) DATE OF PUBLICATION OF RULE.—The required publication or service of a substantive final or interim rule shall be made not less than 30 days before the effective date of the rule, except—

''(1) a substantive rule which grants or recognizes an exemption or relieves a restriction;

''(2) interpretive rules and statements of policy; or

''(3) as otherwise provided by the agency for good cause found and published with the rule.

''(j) RIGHT TO PETITION.—Each agency shall give an interested person the right to petition for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a rule.

''(k) RULE MAKING GUIDELINES.—(1)(A) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall have authority to establish guidelines for the assessment, including quantitative and qualitative assessment, of the costs and benefits of potential, proposed, and final rules and other economic issues or issues related to risk that are relevant to rule making under this section and other sections of this title. The rigor of cost-benefit analysis required by such guidelines shall be commensurate, in the Administrator's determination, with the economic impact of the rule.

''(B) To ensure that agencies use the best available techniques to quantify and evaluate anticipated present and future benefits, costs, other economic issues, and risks as accurately as possible, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall regularly update guidelines established under subparagraph (A).

''(2) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall also have authority to issue guidelines to promote coordination, simplification and harmonization of agency rules during the rule making process and otherwise. Such guidelines shall assure that each agency avoids regulations that are inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, its other regulations and those of other Federal agencies and drafts its regulations to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.

''(3)(A) To ensure consistency in Federal rule making, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall—

''(i) issue guidelines and otherwise take action to ensure that rule makings conducted in whole or in part under procedures specified in provisions of law other than those under this subchapter conform to the fullest extent allowed by law with the procedures set forth in this section; and

''(ii) issue guidelines for the conduct of hearings under subsections (d)(4) and (e), including to assure a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination.

''(B) Each agency shall adopt regulations for the conduct of hearings consistent with the guidelines issued under this subparagraph.

''(4) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall issue guidelines under the Information Quality Act to apply in rule making proceedings under this section and sections 556 and 557. In all cases, the guidelines, and the Administrator's specific determinations regarding agency compliance with the guidelines, shall be entitled to judicial deference.

''(l) RECORD.—The agency shall include in the record for a rule making all documents and information considered by the agency during the proceeding, including, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, documents and information communicated by that Office during consultation with the agency.

''(m) EXEMPTION FOR MONETARY POLICY.—Nothing in subsection (b)(6), subparagraph (F) through (G) of subsection (d)(1), subsection (e), subsection (f)(3), or clauses (iii) and (iv) of subsection (f)(4)(A) shall apply to rule makings that concern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee.''.

SEC. 314. AGENCY GUIDANCE; PROCEDURES TO ISSUE MAJOR GUIDANCE; PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY TO ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR ISSUANCE OF GUIDANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 553 the following:

''§ 553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance

''(a) Before issuing any major guidance, an agency shall—

''(1) make and document a reasoned determination that—

''(A) assures that such guidance is understandable and complies with relevant statutory objectives and regulatory provisions;

''(B) identifies the costs and benefits (including all costs to be considered during the rule making under section 553(b) of this title) of conduct conforming to such guidance and assures that such benefits justify such costs; and

''(C) describes alternatives to such guidance and their costs and benefits (including all costs to be considered during rule making under section 553(b) of this title) and explains why the agency rejected those alternatives; and

''(2) confer with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on the issuance of such guidance to assure that the guidance is reasonable, understandable, consistent with relevant statutory and regulatory provisions and requirements or practices of other agencies, does not produce costs that are unjustified by the guidance's benefits, and is otherwise appropriate.

''(b) AGENCY GUIDANCE.—

''(1) is not legally binding and may not be relied upon by an agency as legal grounds for agency action;

''(2) shall state in a plain, prominent and permanent manner that it is not legally binding; and

''(3) shall, at the time it is issued or upon request, be made available by the issuing agency to interested persons and the public.

''(c) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall have authority to issue guidelines for use by the agencies in the issuance of major guidance and other guidance. Such guidelines shall assure that each agency avoids issuing guidance documents that are inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, its other regulations and those of other Federal agencies and drafts its guidance documents to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 553 the following:

''553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; presidential authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance.''.

SEC. 315. HEARINGS; PRESIDING EMPLOYEES; POWERS AND DUTIES; BURDEN OF PROOF; EVIDENCE; RECORD AS BASIS OF DECISION.

Section 556 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

''(e)(1) The transcript of testimony and exhibits, together with all papers and requests filed in the proceeding, constitutes the exclusive record for decision in accordance with section 557 and, on payment of lawfully prescribed costs, shall be made available to the parties. When an agency decision rests on official notice of a material fact not appearing in the evidence in the record, a party is entitled, on timely request, to an opportunity to show the contrary.

''(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, in a proceeding held under this section under section 553(d)(4) or 553(e), the record for decision shall include any information that is part of the record of proceedings under section 553.

''(f) When an agency conducts rule making under this section and section 557 directly after concluding proceedings upon an advance notice of proposed rule making under section 553(c), the matters to be considered and determinations to be made shall include, among other relevant matters and determinations, the matters and determinations described in subsections (b) and (f) of section 553.

''(g)(1) Upon receipt of a petition for a hearing under this section, the agency shall grant the petition in the case of any major rule, unless the agency reasonably determines that a hearing would not advance consideration of the rule or would, in light of the need for agency action, unreasonably delay completion of the rule making. The agency shall publish its decision to grant or deny the petition when it renders the decision, including an explanation of the grounds for decision. The information contained in the petition shall in all cases be included in the administrative record.

''(2) This subsection shall not apply to rule makings that concern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee.''.

SEC. 316. ACTIONS REVIEWABLE.

Section 704 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''Agency action made'' and inserting ''(a) Agency action made''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(b)(1) Except as provided under paragraph (2) and notwithstanding subsection (a), upon the agency's publication of an interim rule without compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 553 or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of section 553, an interested party may seek immediate judicial review under this chapter of the agency's determination to adopt such rule on an interim basis. Review shall be limited to whether the agency abused its discretion to adopt the interim rule without compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 553 or without rendering final determinations under subsection (f) of section 553.

''(2) This subsection shall not apply in cases involving interests of national security.

''(c) For rules other than major rules and high-impact rules, compliance with subsection (b)(6), subparagraphs (F) through (G) of subsection (d)(1), subsection (f)(3), and clauses (iii) and (iv) of subsection (f)(4)(A) of section 553 shall not be subject to judicial review. In all cases, the determination that a rule is not a major rule within the meaning of section 551(19)(A) or a high-impact rule shall be subject to judicial review under section 706(a)(2)(A).

''(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit judicial review of an agency's consideration of costs or benefits as a mandatory or discretionary factor under the statute authorizing the rule or any other applicable statute.''.

SEC. 317. SCOPE OF REVIEW.

Section 706 of title 5, United States Code is amended—

(1) by striking ''To the extent necessary'' and inserting ''(a) To the extent necessary'';

(2) in paragraph (2)(A) of subsection (a) (as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section), by inserting after ''in accordance with law'' the following: ''(including the Information Quality Act as defined under section 551(17))''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(b) The court shall not defer to the agency's—

''(1) interpretation of an agency rule if the agency did not comply with the procedures of section 553 or sections 556 and 557 to issue the interpretation;

''(2) determination of the costs and benefits or other economic or risk assessment of the regulatory action, if the agency failed to conform to guidelines on such determinations and assessments established by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs under section 553(k); or

''(3) determinations under interlocutory review under sections 553(g)(2)(C) and 704(2).

''(c) The court shall review agency denials of petitions under section 553(e)(6) or any other petition for a hearing under sections 556 and 557 for abuse of agency discretion.''.

SEC. 318. ADDED DEFINITION.

Section 701(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''and'';

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

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) 'substantial evidence' means such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion in light of the record considered as a whole, taking into account whatever in the record fairly detracts from the weight of the evidence relied upon by the agency to support its decision.''.

SEC. 319. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this title to—

(1) sections 553, 556, and 704 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) section 701(b) of title 5, United States Code;

(3) paragraphs (4) and (5) of section 706(b) of title 5, United States Code; and

(4) section 706(c) of title 5, United States Code,

shall not apply to any rule makings pending or completed on the date of enactment of this Act.

TITLE IV—SUPPORTING KNOWLEDGE AND INVESTING IN LIFELONG SKILLS

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills Act'' or the ''SKILLS Act''.

SEC. 402. REFERENCES.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this title an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the amendment or repeal shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.).

SEC. 403. APPLICATION TO FISCAL YEARS.

Except as otherwise provided, this title and the amendments made by this title shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2015 and succeeding fiscal years.

Subtitle A—Amendments to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

CHAPTER 1—WORKFORCE INVESTMENT DEFINITIONS

SEC. 406. DEFINITIONS.

Section 101 (29 U.S.C. 2801) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES.—The term 'adult education and family literacy education activities' has the meaning given the term in section 203.'';

(2) by striking paragraphs (13) and (24);

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (12) as paragraphs (3) through (14), and paragraphs (14) through (23) as paragraphs (15) through (24), respectively;

(4) by striking paragraphs (52) and (53);

(5) by inserting after ''In this title:'' the following new paragraphs:

''(1) ACCRUED EXPENDITURES.—The term 'accrued expenditures' means—

''(A) charges incurred by recipients of funds under this title for a given period requiring the provision of funds for goods or other tangible property received;

''(B) charges incurred for services performed by employees, contractors, subgrantees, subcontractors, and other payees; and

''(C) other amounts becoming owed, under programs assisted under this title, for which no current services or performance is required, such as amounts for annuities, insurance claims, and other benefit payments.

''(2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The term 'administrative costs' means expenditures incurred by State boards and local boards, direct recipients (including State grant recipients under subtitle B and recipients of awards under subtitles C and D), local grant recipients, local fiscal agents or local grant subrecipients, and one-stop operators in the performance of administrative functions and in carrying out activities under this title that are not related to the direct provision of workforce investment activities (including services to participants and employers). Such costs include both personnel and nonpersonnel expenditures and both direct and indirect expenditures.'';

(6) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated), by striking ''Except in sections 127 and 132, the'' and inserting ''The'';

(7) by amending paragraph (5) (as so redesignated) to read as follows:

''(5) AREA CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCHOOL.—The term 'area career and technical education school' has the meaning given the term in section 3(3) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302(3)).'';

(8) in paragraph (6) (as so redesignated), by inserting ''(or such other level as the Governor may establish)'' after ''8th grade level'';

(9) in paragraph (10)(C) (as so redesignated), by striking ''not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training'' and inserting ''a significant portion of the cost of training, as determined by the local board involved (or, in the case of an employer in multiple local areas in the State, as determined by the Governor), taking into account the size of the employer and such other factors as the local board or Governor, respectively, determines to be appropriate'';

(10) in paragraph (11) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II), by striking ''section 134(c)'' and inserting ''section 121(e)'';

(B) in subparagraph (B)(iii)—

(i) by striking ''134(d)(4)'' and inserting ''134(c)(4)''; and

(ii) by striking ''intensive services described in section 134(d)(3)'' and inserting ''work ready services described in section 134(c)(2)'';

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon;

(D) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

''(E)(i) is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty for a period of more than 30 days (as defined in section 101(d)(2) of title 10, United States Code) who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or

''(ii) is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty (as defined in section 101(d)(1) of title 10, United States Code) who meets the criteria described in paragraph (12)(B).'';

(11) in paragraph (12)(A) (as redesignated)—

(A) by striking ''and'' after the semicolon and inserting ''or'';

(B) by striking ''(A)'' and inserting ''(A)(i)''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii) is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty for a period of more than 30 days (as defined in section 101(d)(2) of title 10, United States Code) whose family income is significantly reduced because of a deployment (as defined in section 991(b) of title 10, United States Code, or pursuant to paragraph (4) of such section), a call or order to active duty pursuant to a provision of law referred to in section 101(a)(13)(B) of title 10, United States Code, a permanent change of station, or the service-connected (as defined in section 101(16) of title 38, United States Code) death or disability of the member; and'';

(12) in paragraph (13) (as so redesignated), by inserting ''or regional'' after ''local'' each place it appears;

(13) in paragraph (14) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''section 122(e)(3)'' and inserting ''section 122'';

(B) by striking subparagraph (B), and inserting the following:

''(B) work ready services, means a provider who is identified or awarded a contract as described in section 117(d)(5)(C); or'';

(C) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(D) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (C);

(14) in paragraph (15) (as so redesignated), by striking ''adult or dislocated worker'' and inserting ''individual'';

(15) in paragraph (20), by striking ''The'' and inserting ''Subject to section 116(a)(1)(E), the'';

(16) in paragraph (25)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''higher of—'' and all that follows through clause (ii) and inserting ''poverty line for an equivalent period;'';

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) through (F) as subparagraphs (E) through (G), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);'';

(17) in paragraph (32), by striking ''the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia,'';

(18) by amending paragraph (33) to read as follows:

''(33) OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH.—The term 'out-of-school youth' means—

''(A) an at-risk youth who is a school dropout; or

''(B) an at-risk youth who has received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent but is basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed.'';

(19) in paragraph (38), by striking ''134(a)(1)(A)'' and inserting ''134(a)(1)(B)'';

(20) in paragraph (41), by striking '', and the term means such Secretary for purposes of section 503'';

(21) in paragraph (43), by striking ''clause (iii) or (v) of section 136(b)(3)(A)'' and inserting ''section 136(b)(3)(A)(iii)'';

(22) by amending paragraph (49) to read as follows:

''(49) VETERAN.—The term 'veteran' has the same meaning given the term in section 2108(1) of title 5, United States Code.'';

(23) by amending paragraph (50) to read as follows:

''(50) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.—The term 'career and technical education' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302).'';

(24) in paragraph (51), by striking '', and a youth activity''; and

(25) by adding at the end the following:

''(52) AT-RISK YOUTH.—Except as provided in subtitle C, the term 'at-risk youth' means an individual who—

''(A) is not less than age 16 and not more than age 24;

''(B) is a low-income individual; and

''(C) is an individual who is one or more of the following:

''(i) A secondary school dropout.

''(ii) A youth in foster care (including youth aging out of foster care).

''(iii) A youth offender.

''(iv) A youth who is an individual with a disability.

''(v) A migrant youth.

''(53) INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PARTNERSHIP.—The term 'industry or sector partnership' means a partnership of—

''(A) a State board or local board; and

''(B) one or more industry or sector organizations, and other entities, that have the capability to help the State board or local board determine the immediate and long-term skilled workforce needs of in-demand industries or sectors and other occupations important to the State or local economy, respectively.

''(54) INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL.—The term 'industry-recognized credential' means a credential that is sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector involved, across multiple States, as recognized, preferred, or required for recruitment, screening, or hiring and is awarded for completion of a program listed or identified under subsection (d) or (i) of section 122, for the local area involved.

''(55) PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE CONTRACT STRATEGY.—The term 'pay-for-performance contract strategy' means a strategy in which a pay-for-performance contract to provide a program of employment and training activities incorporates provisions regarding—

''(A) the core indicators of performance described in subclauses (I) through (IV) and (VI) of section 136(b)(2)(A)(i);

''(B) a fixed amount that will be paid to an eligible provider of such employment and training activities for each program participant who, within a defined timetable, achieves the agreed-to levels of performance based upon the core indicators of performance described in subparagraph (A), and may include a bonus payment to such provider, which may be used to expand the capacity of such provider;

''(C) the ability for an eligible provider to recoup the costs of providing the activities for a program participant who has not achieved those levels, but for whom the provider is able to demonstrate that such participant gained specific competencies required for education and career advancement that are, where feasible, tied to industry-recognized credentials and related standards, or State licensing requirements; and

''(D) the ability for an eligible provider that does not meet the requirements under section 122(a)(2) to participate in such pay-for-performance contract and to not be required to report on the performance and cost information required under section 122(d).

''(56) RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL.—The term 'recognized postsecondary credential' means a credential awarded by a provider of training services or postsecondary educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework or tests or other performance evaluations. The term means an industry-recognized credential, a certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship program, or an associate or baccalaureate degree from an institution described in section 122(a)(2)(A)(i).

''(57) REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The term 'registered apprenticeship program' means a program described in section 122(a)(2)(B).''.

CHAPTER 2—STATEWIDE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEMS

SEC. 411. PURPOSE.

Section 106 (29 U.S.C. 2811) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''It is also the purpose of this subtitle to provide workforce investment activities in a manner that enhances employer engagement, promotes customer choices in the selection of training services, and ensures accountability in the use of taxpayer funds.''.

SEC. 412. STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS.

Section 111 (29 U.S.C. 2821) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (B);

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B); and

(iii) in subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated)—

(I) by amending clause (i)(I), by striking ''section 117(b)(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''section 117(b)(2)(A)'';

(II) by amending clause (i)(II) to read as follows:

''(II) represent businesses, including large and small businesses, each of which has immediate and long-term employment opportunities in an in-demand industry or other occupation important to the State economy; and'';

(III) by striking clause (iii) and inserting the following:

''(iii) a State agency official responsible for economic development; and'';

(IV) by striking clauses (iv) through (vi);

(V) by amending clause (vii) to read as follows:

''(vii) such other representatives and State agency officials as the Governor may designate, including—

''(I) members of the State legislature;

''(II) representatives of individuals and organizations that have experience with respect to youth activities;

''(III) representatives of individuals and organizations that have experience and expertise in the delivery of workforce investment activities, including chief executive officers of community colleges and community-based organizations within the State;

''(IV) representatives of the lead State agency officials with responsibility for the programs and activities that are described in section 121(b) and carried out by one-stop partners; or

''(V) representatives of veterans service organizations.''; and

(VI) by redesignating clause (vii) (as so amended) as clause (iv); and

(B) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) MAJORITY.—A ⅔ majority of the members of the board shall be representatives described in paragraph (1)(B)(i).'';

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''(b)(1)(C)(i)'' and inserting ''(b)(1)(B)(i)'';

(3) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) FUNCTIONS.—The State board shall assist the Governor of the State as follows:

''(1) STATE PLAN.—Consistent with section 112, the State board shall develop a State plan.

''(2) STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.—The State board shall review and develop statewide policies and programs in the State in a manner that supports a comprehensive statewide workforce development system that will result in meeting the workforce needs of the State and its local areas. Such review shall include determining whether the State should consolidate additional amounts for additional activities or programs into the Workforce Investment Fund in accordance with section 501(e).

''(3) WORKFORCE AND LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM.—The State board shall develop a statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49l–2(e)), which may include using information collected under Federal law other than this Act by the State economic development entity or a related entity in developing such system.

''(4) EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT.—The State board shall develop strategies, across local areas, that meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the State by enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities, and service providers.

''(5) DESIGNATION OF LOCAL AREAS.—The State board shall designate local areas as required under section 116.

''(6) ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.—The State board shall identify and disseminate information on best practices for effective operation of one-stop centers, including use of innovative business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies.

''(7) PROGRAM OVERSIGHT.—The State board shall conduct the following program oversight:

''(A) Reviewing and approving local plans under section 118.

''(B) Ensuring the appropriate use and management of the funds provided for State employment and training activities authorized under section 134.

''(C) Preparing an annual report to the Secretary described in section 136(d).

''(8) DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The State board shall develop and ensure continuous improvement of comprehensive State performance measures, including State adjusted levels of performance, as described under section 136(b).'';

(4) by striking subsection (e) and redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (e);

(5) in subsection (e) (as so redesignated), by inserting ''or participate in any action taken'' after ''vote'';

(6) by inserting after subsection (e) (as so redesignated), the following:

''(f) STAFF.—The State board may employ staff to assist in carrying out the functions described in subsection (d).''; and

(7) in subsection (g), by inserting ''electronic means and'' after ''on a regular basis through''.

SEC. 413. STATE PLAN.

Section 112 (29 U.S.C. 2822)—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''127 or''; and

(B) by striking ''5-year strategy'' and inserting ''3-year strategy'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by amending paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) information describing—

''(A) the economic conditions in the State;

''(B) the immediate and long-term skilled workforce needs of in-demand industries, small businesses, and other occupations important to the State economy;

''(C) the knowledge and skills of the workforce in the State; and

''(D) workforce development activities (including education and training) in the State;'';

(B) by amending paragraph (7) to read as follows:

''(7) a description of the State criteria for determining the eligibility of training services providers in accordance with section 122, including how the State will take into account the performance of providers and whether the training services relate to in-demand industries and other occupations important to the State economy;'';

(C) by amending paragraph (8) to read as follows:

''(8)(A) a description of the procedures that will be taken by the State to assure coordination of, and avoid duplication among, the programs and activities identified under section 501(b)(2); and

''(B) a description of and an assurance regarding common data collection and reporting processes used for the programs and activities described in subparagraph (A), which are carried out by one-stop partners, including—

''(i) an assurance that such processes use quarterly wage records for performance measures described in section 136(b)(2)(A) that are applicable to such programs or activities; or

''(ii) if such wage records are not being used for the performance measures, an identification of the barriers to using such wage records and a description of how the State will address such barriers within 1 year of the approval of the plan;'';

(D) in paragraph (9), by striking '', including comment by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations,'';

(E) in paragraph (11), by striking ''under sections 127 and 132'' and inserting ''under section 132'';

(F) by striking paragraph (12);

(G) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through (18) as paragraphs (12) through (17), respectively;

(H) in paragraph (12) (as so redesignated), by striking ''111(f)'' and inserting ''111(e)'';

(I) in paragraph (13) (as so redesignated), by striking ''134(c)'' and inserting ''121(e)'';

(J) in paragraph (14) (as so redesignated), by striking ''116(a)(5)'' and inserting ''116(a)(3)'';

(K) in paragraph (16) (as so redesignated)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (ii)—

(aa) by striking ''to dislocated workers''; and

(bb) by inserting ''and additional assistance'' after ''rapid response activities'';

(II) in clause (iii), by striking ''134(d)(4)'' and inserting ''134(c)(4)'';

(III) by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (iii);

(IV) by amending clause (iv) to read as follows:

''(iv) how the State will serve the employment and training needs of dislocated workers (including displaced homemakers), low-income individuals (including recipients of public assistance such as supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits pursuant to the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.)), long-term unemployed individuals (including individuals who have exhausted entitlement to Federal and State unemployment compensation), English learners, homeless individuals, individuals training for nontraditional employment, youth (including out-of-school youth and at-risk youth), older workers, ex-offenders, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, refugees and entrants, veterans (including disabled and homeless veterans), and Native Americans; and''; and

(V) by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) how the State will—

''(I) consistent with section 188 and Executive Order No. 13217 (42 U.S.C. 12131 note), serve the employment and training needs of individuals with disabilities; and

''(II) consistent with sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794, 794d), include the provision of outreach, intake, assessments, and service delivery, the development of performance measures, the training of staff, and other aspects of accessibility for individuals with disabilities to programs and services under this subtitle;''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''to the extent practicable'' and inserting ''in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107–288) and the amendments made by such Act''; and

(L) by striking paragraph (17) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following:

''(17) a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the State—

''(A) to more fully engage employers, including small businesses and employers in in-demand industries and occupations important to the State economy;

''(B) to meet the needs of employers in the State; and

''(C) to better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development activities;

''(18) a description of how the State board will convene (or help to convene) industry or sector partnerships that lead to collaborative planning, resource alignment, and training efforts across a targeted cluster of multiple firms for a range of workers employed or potentially employed by the industry or sector—

''(A) to encourage industry growth and competitiveness and to improve worker training, retention, and advancement in the industry or sector;

''(B) to address the immediate and long-term skilled workforce needs of in-demand industries, small businesses, and other occupations important to the State economy; and

''(C) to address critical skill gaps within and across industries and sectors;

''(19) a description of how the State will utilize technology, to facilitate access to services in remote areas, which may be used throughout the State;

''(20) a description of the State strategy and assistance to be provided by the State for encouraging regional cooperation within the State and across State borders, as appropriate;

''(21) a description of the actions that will be taken by the State to foster communication, coordination, and partnerships with nonprofit organizations (including public libraries, community, faith-based, and philanthropic organizations) that provide employment-related, training, and complementary services, to enhance the quality and comprehensiveness of services available to participants under this title;

''(22) a description of the process and methodology for determining—

''(A) one-stop partner program contributions for the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers under section 121(h)(1); and

''(B) the formula for allocating such infrastructure funds to local areas under section 121(h)(3);

''(23) a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the State to assist at-risk youth and out-of-school youth in acquiring the education and skills, credentials (including recognized postsecondary credentials, such as industry-recognized credentials), and employment experience to succeed in the labor market, including—

''(A) training and internships in in-demand industries or occupations important to the State and local economy;

''(B) dropout recovery activities that are designed to lead to the attainment of a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or other State-recognized equivalent (including recognized alternative standards for individuals with disabilities); and

''(C) activities combining remediation of academic skills, work readiness training, and work experience, and including linkages to postsecondary education and training and career-ladder employment; and

''(24) a description of—

''(A) how the State will furnish employment, training, including training in advanced manufacturing, supportive, and placement services to veterans, including disabled and homeless veterans;

''(B) the strategies and services that will be used in the State to assist in and expedite reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force; and

''(C) the veterans population to be served in the State.'';

(3) in subsection (c), by striking ''period, that—'' and all that follows through paragraph (2) and inserting ''period, that the plan is inconsistent with the provisions of this title.''; and

(4) in subsection (d), by striking ''5-year'' and inserting ''3-year''.

SEC. 414. LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS.

Section 116 (29 U.S.C. 2831) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) PROCESS.—In order to receive an allotment under section 132, a State, through the State board, shall establish a process to designate local workforce investment areas within the State. Such process shall—

''(i) support the statewide workforce development system developed under section 111(d)(2), enabling the system to meet the workforce needs of the State and its local areas;

''(ii) include consultation, prior to the designation, with chief elected officials;

''(iii) include consideration of comments received on the designation through the public comment process as described in section 112(b)(9); and

''(iv) require the submission of an application for approval under subparagraph (B).

''(B) APPLICATION.—To obtain designation of a local area under this paragraph, a local or regional board (or consortia of local or regional boards) seeking to take responsibility for the area under this Act shall submit an application to a State board at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the State board may require, including—

''(i) a description of the local area, including the population that will be served by the local area, and the education and training needs of its employers and workers;

''(ii) a description of how the local area is consistent or aligned with—

''(I) service delivery areas (as determined by the State);

''(II) labor market areas; and

''(III) economic development regions;

''(iii) a description of the eligible providers of education and training, including postsecondary educational institutions such as community colleges, located in the local area and available to meet the needs of the local workforce;

''(iv) a description of the distance that individuals will need to travel to receive services provided in such local area; and

''(v) any other criteria that the State board may require.

''(C) PRIORITY.—In designating local areas under this paragraph, a State board shall give priority consideration to an area proposed by an applicant demonstrating that a designation as a local area under this paragraph will result in the reduction of overlapping service delivery areas, local market areas, or economic development regions.

''(D) ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL PLAN.—A State may designate an area proposed by an applicant as a local area under this paragraph for a period not to exceed 3 years.

''(E) REFERENCES.—For purposes of this Act, a reference to a local area—

''(i) used with respect to a geographic area, refers to an area designated under this paragraph; and

''(ii) used with respect to an entity, refers to the applicant.'';

(B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall, if requested by the Governor of a State, provide the State with technical assistance in making the determinations required under paragraph (1). The Secretary shall not issue regulations governing determinations to be made under paragraph (1).'';

(C) by striking paragraph (3);

(D) by striking paragraph (4);

(E) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (3); and

(F) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated), by striking ''(2) or (3)'' both places it appears and inserting ''(1)'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) SINGLE STATES.—Consistent with subsection (a), the State board of a State may designate the State as a single State local area for the purposes of this title.''; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following: ''The State may require the local boards for the designated region to prepare a single regional plan that incorporates the elements of the local plan under section 118 and that is submitted and approved in lieu of separate local plans under such section.''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''employment statistics'' and inserting ''workforce and labor market information''.

SEC. 415. LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS.

Section 117 (29 U.S.C. 2832) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''include—'' and all that follows through ''representatives'' and inserting ''include representatives'';

(II) by striking clauses (ii) through (vi);

(III) by redesignating subclauses (I) through (III) as clauses (i) through (iii), respectively (and by moving the margins of such clauses 2 ems to the left);

(IV) by striking clause (ii) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following:

''(ii) represent businesses, including large and small businesses, each of which has immediate and long-term employment opportunities in an in-demand industry or other occupation important to the local economy; and''; and

(V) by striking the semicolon at the end of clause (iii) (as so redesignated) and inserting ''; and''; and

(ii) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

''(B) may include such other individuals or representatives of entities as the chief elected official in the local area may determine to be appropriate, including—

''(i) the superintendent or other employee of the local educational agency who has primary responsibility for secondary education, the presidents or chief executive officers of postsecondary educational institutions (including a community college, where such an entity exists), or administrators of local entities providing adult education and family literacy education activities;

''(ii) representatives of community-based organizations (including organizations representing individuals with disabilities and veterans, for a local area in which such organizations are present); or

''(iii) representatives of veterans service organizations.'';

(B) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking ''A majority'' and inserting ''A ⅔ majority''; and

(ii) by striking ''(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(2)(A)''; and

(C) in paragraph (5), by striking ''(2)(A)(i)'' and inserting ''(2)(A)'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking subparagraph (C); and

(B) in paragraph (3)(A)(ii), by striking ''paragraphs (1) through (7)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (1) through (8)'';

(3) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL BOARD.—The functions of the local board shall include the following:

''(1) LOCAL PLAN.—Consistent with section 118, each local board, in partnership with the chief elected official for the local area involved, shall develop and submit a local plan to the Governor.

''(2) WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND REGIONAL LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The local board shall—

''(i) conduct, and regularly update, an analysis of—

''(I) the economic conditions in the local area;

''(II) the immediate and long-term skilled workforce needs of in-demand industries and other occupations important to the local economy;

''(III) the knowledge and skills of the workforce in the local area; and

''(IV) workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area; and

''(ii) assist the Governor in developing the statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15(e) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49l–2(e)).

''(B) EXISTING ANALYSIS.—In carrying out requirements of subparagraph (A)(i), a local board shall use an existing analysis, if any, by the local economic development entity or related entity.

''(3) EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT.—The local board shall meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the local area by enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities, and service providers.

''(4) BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION.—

''(A) BUDGET.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The local board shall develop a budget for the activities of the local board in the local area, consistent with the requirements of this subsection.

''(ii) TRAINING RESERVATION.—In developing a budget under clause (i), the local board shall reserve a percentage of funds to carry out the activities specified in section 134(c)(4). The local board shall use the analysis conducted under paragraph (2)(A)(i) to determine the appropriate percentage of funds to reserve under this clause.

''(B) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(i) GRANT RECIPIENT.—The chief elected official in a local area shall serve as the local grant recipient for, and shall be liable for any misuse of, the grant funds allocated to the local area under section 133, unless the chief elected official reaches an agreement with the Governor for the Governor to act as the local grant recipient and bear such liability.

''(ii) DESIGNATION.—In order to assist in administration of the grant funds, the chief elected official or the Governor, where the Governor serves as the local grant recipient for a local area, may designate an entity to serve as a local grant subrecipient for such funds or as a local fiscal agent. Such designation shall not relieve the chief elected official or the Governor of the liability for any misuse of grant funds as described in clause (i).

''(iii) DISBURSAL.—The local grant recipient or an entity designated under clause (ii) shall disburse the grant funds for workforce investment activities at the direction of the local board, pursuant to the requirements of this title. The local grant recipient or entity designated under clause (ii) shall disburse the funds immediately on receiving such direction from the local board.

''(C) STAFF.—The local board may employ staff to assist in carrying out the functions described in this subsection.

''(D) GRANTS AND DONATIONS.—The local board may solicit and accept grants and donations from sources other than Federal funds made available under this Act.

''(5) SELECTION OF OPERATORS AND PROVIDERS.—

''(A) SELECTION OF ONE-STOP OPERATORS.—Consistent with section 121(d), the local board, with the agreement of the chief elected official—

''(i) shall designate or certify one-stop operators as described in section 121(d)(2)(A); and

''(ii) may terminate for cause the eligibility of such operators.

''(B) IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE TRAINING SERVICE PROVIDERS.—Consistent with this subtitle, the local board shall identify eligible providers of training services described in section 134(c)(4) in the local area, annually review the outcomes of such eligible providers using the criteria under section 122(b)(2), and designate such eligible providers in the local area who have demonstrated the highest level of success with respect to such criteria as priority eligible providers for the program year following the review.

''(C) IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS OF WORK READY SERVICES.—If the one-stop operator does not provide the services described in section 134(c)(2) in the local area, the local board shall identify eligible providers of such services in the local area by awarding contracts.

''(6) PROGRAM OVERSIGHT.—The local board, in partnership with the chief elected official, shall be responsible for—

''(A) ensuring the appropriate use and management of the funds provided for local employment and training activities authorized under section 134(b); and

''(B) conducting oversight of the one-stop delivery system, in the local area, authorized under section 121.

''(7) NEGOTIATION OF LOCAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The local board, the chief elected official, and the Governor shall negotiate and reach agreement on local performance measures as described in section 136(c).

''(8) TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS.—The local board shall develop strategies for technology improvements to facilitate access to services authorized under this subtitle and carried out in the local area, including access in remote areas.'';

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) by inserting ''electronic means and'' after ''regular basis through''; and

(B) by striking ''and the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth activities,'';

(5) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''section 134(d)(4)'' and inserting ''section 134(c)(4)''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) WORK READY SERVICES; DESIGNATION OR CERTIFICATION AS ONE-STOP OPERATORS.—A local board may provide work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) through a one-stop delivery system described in section 121 or be designated or certified as a one-stop operator only with the agreement of the chief elected official and the Governor.'';

(6) in subsection (g)(1), by inserting ''or participate in any action taken'' after ''vote''; and

(7) by striking subsections (h) and (i).

SEC. 416. LOCAL PLAN.

Section 118 (29 U.S.C. 2833) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''5-year'' and inserting ''3-year'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) CONTENTS.—The local plan shall include—

''(1) a description of the analysis of the local area's economic and workforce conditions conducted under subclauses (I) through (IV) of section 117(d)(2)(A)(i), and an assurance that the local board will use such analysis to carry out the activities under this subtitle;

''(2) a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including—

''(A) a description of how the local board will ensure—

''(i) the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system; and

''(ii) that such providers meet the employment needs of local businesses and participants; and

''(B) a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services described in section 117(d)(8) and provided through the one-stop delivery system consistent with section 117(d)(8);

''(3) a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area—

''(A) to more fully engage employers, including small businesses and employers in in-demand industries and occupations important to the local economy;

''(B) to meet the needs of employers in the local area;

''(C) to better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development activities; and

''(D) to better coordinate workforce development programs with employment, training, and literacy services carried out by nonprofit organizations, including public libraries, as appropriate;

''(4) a description of how the local board will convene (or help to convene) industry or sector partnerships that lead to collaborative planning, resource alignment, and training efforts across multiple firms for a range of workers employed or potentially employed by a targeted industry or sector—

''(A) to encourage industry growth and competitiveness and to improve worker training, retention, and advancement in the targeted industry or sector;

''(B) to address the immediate and long-term skilled workforce needs of in-demand industries, small businesses, and other occupations important to the local economy; and

''(C) to address critical skill gaps within and across industries and sectors;

''(5) a description of how the funds reserved under section 117(d)(4)(A)(ii) will be used to carry out activities described in section 134(c)(4);

''(6) a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide workforce investment activities, as appropriate;

''(7) a description of how the local area will—

''(A) coordinate activities with the local area's disability community, and with transition services (as defined under section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401)) provided under that Act by local educational agencies serving such local area, to make available comprehensive, high-quality services to individuals with disabilities;

''(B) consistent with section 188 and Executive Order No. 13217 (42 U.S.C. 12131 note), serve the employment and training needs of individuals with disabilities, with a focus on employment that fosters independence and integration into the workplace; and

''(C) consistent with sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794, 794d), include the provision of outreach, intake, assessments, and service delivery, the development of performance measures, the training of staff, and other aspects of accessibility for individuals with disabilities to programs and services under this subtitle;

''(8) a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 136(c), to be—

''(A) used to measure the performance of the local area; and

''(B) used by the local board for measuring performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area;

''(9) a description of the process used by the local board, consistent with subsection (c), to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the plan;

''(10) a description of how the local area will serve the employment and training needs of dislocated workers (including displaced homemakers), low-income individuals (including recipients of public assistance such as supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits pursuant to the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.)), long-term unemployed individuals (including individuals who have exhausted entitlement

to Federal and State unemployment compensation), English learners, homeless individuals, individuals training for nontraditional employment, youth (including out-of-school youth and at-risk youth), older workers, ex-offenders, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, refugees and entrants, veterans (including disabled veterans and homeless veterans), and Native Americans;

''(11) an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in section 117(d)(4)(B)(iii), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under such section;

''(12) a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to assist at-risk youth and out-of-school youth in acquiring the education and skills, credentials (including recognized postsecondary credentials, such as industry-recognized credentials), and employment experience to succeed in the labor market, including—

''(A) training and internships in in-demand industries or occupations important to the local economy;

''(B) dropout recovery activities that are designed to lead to the attainment of a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or other State-recognized equivalent (including recognized alternative standards for individuals with disabilities); and

''(C) activities combining remediation of academic skills, work readiness training, and work experience, and including linkages to postsecondary education and training and career-ladder employment;

''(13) a description of—

''(A) how the local area will furnish employment, training, including training in advanced manufacturing, supportive, and placement services to veterans, including disabled and homeless veterans;

''(B) the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to assist in and expedite reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force; and

''(C) the veteran population to be served in the local area;

''(14) a description of—

''(A) the duties assigned to the veteran employment specialist consistent with the requirements of section 134(f);

''(B) the manner in which the veteran employment specialist is integrated into the one-stop career system described in section 121;

''(C) the date on which the veteran employment specialist was assigned; and

''(D) whether the veteran employment specialist has satisfactorily completed related training by the National Veterans' Employment and Training Services Institute; and

''(15) such other information as the Governor may require.''; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''such means'' and inserting ''electronic means and such means''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking '', including representatives of business and representatives of labor organizations,''.

SEC. 417. ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.

Section 121 (29 U.S.C. 2841) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

''(A) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ONE-STOP PARTNERS.—Each entity that carries out a program or activities described in subparagraph (B) shall—

''(i) provide access through a one-stop delivery system to the program or activities carried out by the entity, including making the work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) that are applicable to the program or activities of the entity available at one-stop centers (in addition to any other appropriate locations);

''(ii) use a portion of the funds available to the program or activities of the entity to maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers in accordance with subsection (h);

''(iii) enter into a local memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop delivery system, that meets the requirements of subsection (c); and

''(iv) participate in the operation of the one-stop delivery system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding, the requirements of this title, and the requirements of the Federal laws authorizing the program or activities carried out by the entity.'';

(B) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) by striking clauses (ii), (v), and (vi);

(ii) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (ii) and (iii), respectively;

(iii) by redesignating clauses (vii) through (xii) as clauses (iv) through (ix), respectively;

(iv) in clause (ii), as so redesignated, by striking ''adult education and literacy activities'' and inserting ''adult education and family literacy education activities''

(v) in clause (viii), as so redesignated, by striking ''and'' at the end;

(vi) in clause (ix), as so redesignated, by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(vii) by adding at the end the following:

''(x) subject to subparagraph (C), programs authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).'';

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1)(B) the following:

''(C) DETERMINATION BY THE GOVERNOR.—Each entity carrying out a program described in subparagraph (B)(x) shall be considered to be a one-stop partner under this title and carry out the required partner activities described in subparagraph (A) unless the Governor of the State in which the local area is located provides the Secretary and Secretary of Health and Human Services written notice of a determination by the Governor that such an entity shall not be considered to be such a partner and shall not carry out such required partner activities.'';

and

(D) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking ''section 134(d)(2)'' and inserting ''section 134(c)(2)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking clauses (i), (ii), and (v);

(II) in clause (iv), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(III) by redesignating clauses (iii) and (iv) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) employment and training programs administered by the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration;

''(iv) employment and training programs carried out by the Administrator of the Small Business Administration;

''(v) employment, training, and literacy services carried out by public libraries; and

''(vi) other appropriate Federal, State, or local programs, including programs in the private sector.'';

(2) in subsection (c)(2), by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) provisions describing—

''(i) the services to be provided through the one-stop delivery system consistent with the requirements of this section, including the manner in which the services will be coordinated through such system;

''(ii) how the costs of such services and the operating costs of such system will be funded, through cash and in-kind contributions, to provide a stable and equitable funding stream for ongoing one-stop system operations, including the funding of the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers in accordance with subsection (h);

''(iii) methods of referral of individuals between the one-stop operator and the one-stop partners for appropriate services and activities, including referrals for training for nontraditional employment; and

''(iv) the duration of the memorandum of understanding and the procedures for amending the memorandum during the term of the memorandum, and assurances that such memorandum shall be reviewed not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services under the memorandum; and'';

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the heading for paragraph (1), by striking ''DESIGNATION AND CERTIFICATION'' and inserting ''LOCAL DESIGNATION AND CERTIFICATION'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking ''section 134(c)'' and inserting ''subsection (e)'';

(ii) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) shall be designated or certified as a one-stop operator through a competitive process; and''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (B), by striking clause (ii) and redesignating clauses (iii) through (vi) as clauses (ii) through (v), respectively; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking ''vocational'' and inserting ''career and technical'';

(4) by amending subsection (e) to read as follows:

''(e) ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be established in a State that receives an allotment under section 132(b) a one-stop delivery system, which shall—

''(A) provide the work ready services described in section 134(c)(2);

''(B) provide access to training services as described in paragraph (4) of section 134(c), including serving as the point of access to career enhancement accounts for training services to participants in accordance with paragraph (4)(F) of such section;

''(C) provide access to the activities carried out under section 134(d), if any;

''(D) provide access to programs and activities carried out by one-stop partners that are described in subsection (b); and

''(E) provide access to the data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 15(a)(1) of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491–2(a)(1)).

''(2) ONE-STOP DELIVERY.—At a minimum, the one-stop delivery system—

''(A) shall make each of the programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) accessible at not less than one physical center in each local area of the State; and

''(B) may also make programs, services, and activities described in paragraph (1) available—

''(i) through a network of affiliated sites that can provide one or more of the programs, services, and activities to individuals; and

''(ii) through a network of eligible one-stop partners—

''(I) in which each partner provides one or more of the programs, services, and activities to such individuals and is accessible at an affiliated site that consists of a physical location or an electronically- or technologically-linked access point; and

''(II) that assures individuals that information on the availability of the work ready services will be available regardless of where

the individuals initially enter the statewide workforce investment system, including information made available through an access point described in subclause (I).

''(3) SPECIALIZED CENTERS.—The centers and sites described in paragraph (2) may have a specialization in addressing special needs.''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) CERTIFICATION OF ONE-STOP CENTERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The State board shall establish objective procedures and criteria for certifying, at least once every 3 years, one-stop centers for the purpose of awarding the one-stop infrastructure funding described in subsection (h).

''(B) CRITERIA.—The criteria for certification of a one-stop center under this subsection shall include—

''(i) meeting the expected levels of performance for each of the corresponding core indicators of performance as outlined in the State plan under section 112;

''(ii) meeting minimum standards relating to the scope and degree of service integration achieved by the center, involving the programs provided by the one-stop partners; and

''(iii) meeting minimum standards relating to how the center ensures that eligible providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.

''(C) EFFECT OF CERTIFICATION.—One-stop centers certified under this subsection shall be eligible to receive the infrastructure funding authorized under subsection (h).

''(2) LOCAL BOARDS.—Consistent with the criteria developed by the State, the local board may develop, for certification referred to in paragraph (1)(A), additional criteria or higher standards on the criteria referred to in paragraph (1)(B) to respond to local labor market and demographic conditions and trends.

''(h) ONE-STOP INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.—

''(1) PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS.—

''(A) PROVISION OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as determined under subparagraph (B), a portion of the Federal funds provided to the State and areas within the State under the Federal laws authorizing the one-stop partner programs described in subsection (b)(1)(B) and participating additional partner programs described in subsection (b)(2)(B), for a fiscal year shall be provided to the Governor by such partners to carry out this subsection.

''(B) DETERMINATION OF GOVERNOR.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (C), the Governor, in consultation with the State board, shall determine the portion of funds to be provided under subparagraph (A) by each one-stop partner and in making such determination shall consider the proportionate use of the one-stop centers in the State by each such partner, the costs of administration for purposes not related to one-stop centers for each such partner, and other relevant factors described in paragraph (3).

''(ii) SPECIAL RULE.—In those States where the State constitution places policy-making authority that is independent of the authority of the Governor in an entity or official with respect to the funds provided for adult education and family literacy education activities authorized under title II and for postsecondary career and technical education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), the determination described in clause (i) with respect to the corresponding 2 programs shall be made by the Governor with the appropriate entity or official with such independent policy-making authority.

''(iii) APPEAL BY ONE-STOP PARTNERS.—The Governor shall establish a procedure for the one-stop partner administering a program described in subsection (b) and subparagraph (A) to appeal a determination regarding the portion of funds to be provided under this paragraph on the basis that such determination is inconsistent with the requirements described in the State plan for the program or with the requirements of this paragraph. Such procedure shall ensure prompt resolution of the appeal.

''(C) LIMITATIONS.—

''(i) PROVISION FROM ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS.—The funds provided under this paragraph by a one-stop partner shall be provided only from funds available for the costs of administration under the program administered by such partner, and shall be subject to the limitations with respect to the portion of funds under such program that may be used for administration.

''(ii) FEDERAL DIRECT SPENDING PROGRAMS.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—A program that provides Federal direct spending under section 250(c)(8) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900(c)(8)) shall not, for purposes of this paragraph, be required to provide more than the maximum amount determined under subclause (II).

''(II) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The maximum amount for the program is the amount that bears the same relationship to the costs referred to in paragraph (2) for the State as the use of the one-stop centers by such program bears to the use of such centers by all one-stop partner programs in the State.

''(2) ALLOCATION BY GOVERNOR.—From the funds provided under paragraph (1), the Governor shall allocate funds to local areas in accordance with the formula established under paragraph (3) for the purposes of assisting in paying the costs of infrastructure of one-stop centers certified under subsection (g).

''(3) ALLOCATION FORMULA.—The State board shall develop a formula to be used by the Governor to allocate the funds provided under paragraph (1) to local areas. The formula shall include such factors as the State board determines are appropriate, which may include factors such as the number of centers in a local area that have been certified, the population served by such centers, and the performance of such centers.

''(4) COSTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'costs of infrastructure' means the nonpersonnel costs that are necessary for the general operation of a one-stop center, including the rental costs of the facilities involved, and the costs of utilities and maintenance, and equipment (including assistive technology for individuals with disabilities).

''(i) OTHER FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the funds provided under subsection (h), a portion of funds made available under Federal law authorizing the one-stop partner programs described in subsection (b)(1)(B) and participating additional partner programs described in subsection (b)(2)(B), or the noncash resources available under such 2 types of programs, shall be used to pay the costs relating to the operation of the one-stop delivery system that are not paid for from the funds provided under subsection (h), to the extent not inconsistent with the Federal law involved. Such portion shall be used to pay for costs including—

''(A) costs of infrastructure (as defined in subsection (h)) that are in excess of the funds provided under subsection (h);

''(B) common costs that are in addition to the costs of infrastructure (as so defined); and

''(C) the costs of the provision of work ready services applicable to each program.

''(2) DETERMINATION AND STANDARDS.—The method for determining the appropriate portion of funds and noncash resources to be provided by each program under paragraph (1) shall be determined as part of the memorandum of understanding under subsection (c). The State board shall provide standards to facilitate the determination of appropriate allocation of the funds and noncash resources to local areas.''.

SEC. 418. IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS OF TRAINING SERVICES.

Section 122 (29 U.S.C. 2842) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 122. IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS OF TRAINING SERVICES.

''(a) ELIGIBILITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Governor, after consultation with the State board, shall establish criteria and procedures regarding the eligibility of providers of training services described in section 134(c)(4) to receive funds provided under section 133(b) for the provision of such training services and be included on the list of eligible providers of training services described in subsection (d).

''(2) PROVIDERS.—Subject to the provisions of this section, to be eligible to receive the funds and be included on the list, the provider shall be—

''(A) a postsecondary educational institution that—

''(i) is eligible to receive Federal funds under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.); and

''(ii) provides a program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential;

''(B) an entity that carries out programs under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the 'National Apprenticeship Act'; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.); or

''(C) another public or private provider of a program of training services.

''(3) INCLUSION IN LIST OF ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.—A provider described in subparagraph (A) or (C) of paragraph (2) shall comply with the criteria and procedures established under this subsection to be eligible to receive the funds and be included on the list. A provider described in paragraph (2)(B) shall be eligible to receive the funds and be included on the list with respect to programs described in paragraph (2)(B) for so long as the provider remains certified by the Secretary of Labor to carry out the programs.

''(b) CRITERIA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The criteria established by the Governor pursuant to subsection (a) shall take into account—

''(A) the performance of providers of training services with respect to the performance measures described in section 136, measures for other matters for which information is required under paragraph (2), and other appropriate measures of performance outcomes for those participants receiving training services under this subtitle;

''(B) whether the training programs of such providers relate to in-demand industries or occupations important to the local economy;

''(C) the need to ensure access to training services throughout the State, including in rural areas;

''(D) the ability of the providers to offer programs that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential, and the quality of such programs;

''(E) the performance of the providers as reflected in the information such providers are required to report to State agencies with respect to other Federal and State programs (other than the program carried out under this subtitle), including one-stop partner programs; and

''(F) such other factors as the Governor determines are appropriate.

''(2) INFORMATION.—The criteria established by the Governor shall require that a provider of training services submit appropriate, accurate, and timely information to the State for purposes of carrying out subsection (d), with respect to participants receiving training services under this subtitle in the applicable program, including—

''(A) information on recognized postsecondary credentials received by such participants;

''(B) information on costs of attendance for such participants;

''(C) information on the program completion rate for such participants; and

''(D) information on the performance of the provider with respect to the performance measures described in section 136 for such participants.

''(3) RENEWAL.—The criteria established by the Governor shall also provide for a review on the criteria every 3 years and renewal of eligibility under this section for providers of training services.

''(4) LOCAL CRITERIA.—A local board in the State may establish criteria in addition to the criteria established by the Governor, or may require higher levels of performance than required on the criteria established by the Governor, for purposes of determining the eligibility of providers of training services under this section in the local area involved.

''(5) LIMITATION.—In carrying out the requirements of this subsection, no entity may disclose personally identifiable information regarding a student, including a Social Security number, student identification number, or other identifier, without the prior written consent of the parent or student in compliance with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

''(c) PROCEDURES.—The procedures established under subsection (a) shall—

''(1) identify—

''(A) the application process for a provider of training services to become eligible under this section; and

''(B) the respective roles of the State and local areas in receiving and reviewing applications and in making determinations of eligibility based on the criteria established under this section; and

''(2) establish a process, for a provider of training services to appeal a denial or termination of eligibility under this section, that includes an opportunity for a hearing and prescribes appropriate time limits to ensure prompt resolution of the appeal.

''(d) INFORMATION TO ASSIST PARTICIPANTS IN CHOOSING PROVIDERS.—In order to facilitate and assist participants under chapter 5 in choosing providers of training services, the Governor shall ensure that an appropriate list of providers determined eligible under this section in the State, including information provided under subsection (b)(2) with respect to such providers, is provided to the local boards in the State and is made available to such participants and to members of the public through the one-stop delivery system in the State.

''(e) ENFORCEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The procedures established under this section shall provide the following:

''(A) INTENTIONALLY SUPPLYING INACCURATE INFORMATION.—Upon a determination, by an individual or entity specified in the procedures, that a provider of training services, or individual providing information on behalf of the provider, intentionally supplied inaccurate information under this section, the eligibility of such provider under this section shall be terminated for a period of time that is not less than 2 years.

''(B) SUBSTANTIAL VIOLATIONS.—Upon a determination, by an individual or entity specified in the procedures, that a provider of training services substantially violated any requirement under this title, the eligibility of such provider under this section shall be terminated for a period of time that is not less than 10 years.

''(C) REPAYMENT.—A provider of training services whose eligibility is terminated under subparagraph (A) or (B) shall be liable for the repayment of funds received under chapter 5 during a period of noncompliance described in such subparagraph. For purposes of subparagraph (A), that period shall be considered to be the period beginning on the date on which the inaccurate information described in subparagraph (A) was supplied, and ending on the date of the termination described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Paragraph (1) shall be construed to provide remedies and penalties that supplement, but do not supplant, other civil and criminal remedies and penalties.

''(f) AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER STATES.—A State may enter into an agreement with another State, on a reciprocal basis, to permit eligible providers of training services to accept career enhancement accounts provided in the other State.

''(g) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In developing the criteria (including requirements for related information) and procedures required under this section, the Governor shall solicit and take into consideration the recommendations of local boards and providers of training services within the State.

''(h) OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT COMMENTS.—During the development of the criteria and procedures, and the list of eligible providers required under this section, the Governor shall provide an opportunity for interested members of the public to submit comments regarding such criteria, procedures, and list.

''(i) ON-THE-JOB TRAINING OR CUSTOMIZED TRAINING EXCEPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Providers of on-the-job training or customized training shall not be subject to the requirements of subsections (a) through (d).

''(2) COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—A one-stop operator in a local area shall collect such performance information from on-the-job training and customized training providers as the Governor may require, determine whether the providers meet such performance criteria as the Governor may require, and disseminate information identifying providers that meet the criteria as eligible providers, and the performance information, through the one-stop delivery system. Providers determined to meet the criteria shall be considered to be identified as eligible under this section, to be providers of the training services involved.''.

SEC. 419. GENERAL AUTHORIZATION.

Chapter 5 of subtitle B of title I is amended—

(1) by striking the heading for chapter 5 and inserting the following: ''**EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES**''; and

(2) in section 131 (29 U.S.C. 2861)—

(A) by striking ''paragraphs (1)(B) and (2)(B) of''; and

(B) by striking ''adults, and dislocated workers,'' and inserting ''individuals''.

SEC. 420. STATE ALLOTMENTS.

Section 132 (29 U.S.C. 2862) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) reserve ½ of 1 percent of the total amount appropriated under section 137 for a fiscal year, of which—

''(A) 50 percent shall be used to provide technical assistance under section 170; and

''(B) 50 percent shall be used for evaluations under section 172;

''(2) reserve 1 percent of the total amount appropriated under section 137 for a fiscal year to make grants to, and enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with Indian tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native entities, Indian-controlled organizations serving Indians, or Native Hawaiian organizations to carry out employment and training activities;

''(3) reserve not more than 25 percent of the total amount appropriated under section 137 for a fiscal year to carry out the Jobs Corps program under subtitle C;

''(4) reserve not more than 3.5 percent of the total amount appropriated under section 137 for a fiscal year to—

''(A) make grants to State boards or local boards to provide employment and training assistance to workers affected by major economic dislocations, such as plant closures, mass layoffs, or closures and realignments of military installations; and

''(B) provide assistance to Governors of States with an area that has suffered an emergency or a major disaster (as such terms are defined in paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively, of section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)) to provide disaster relief employment in the area; and

''(5) from the remaining amount appropriated under section 137 for a fiscal year (after reserving funds under paragraphs (1) through (4)), make allotments in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.''; and

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) WORKFORCE INVESTMENT FUND.—

''(1) RESERVATION FOR OUTLYING AREAS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—From the amount made available under subsection (a)(5) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve not more than ¼ of 1 percent to provide assistance to the outlying areas.

''(B) RESTRICTION.—The Republic of Palau shall cease to be eligible to receive funding under this paragraph upon entering into an agreement for extension of United States educational assistance under the Compact of Free Association (approved by the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–188) after the date of enactment of the SKILLS Act.

''(2) STATES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—After determining the amount to be reserved under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall allot the remainder of the amount referred to in subsection (a)(5) for a fiscal year to the States pursuant to subparagraph (B) for employment and training activities and statewide workforce investment activities.

''(B) FORMULA.—Subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), of the remainder—

''(i) 25 percent shall be allotted on the basis of the relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each State, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in all States;

''(ii) 25 percent shall be allotted on the basis of the relative number of individuals in the civilian labor force in each State, compared to the total number of such individuals in all States;

''(iii) 25 percent shall be allotted on the basis of the relative number of individuals in each State who have been unemployed for 15 weeks or more, compared to the total number of individuals in all States who have been unemployed for 15 weeks or more; and

''(iv) 25 percent shall be allotted on the basis of the relative number of disadvantaged youth in each State, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in all States.

''(C) MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PERCENTAGES.—

''(i) MINIMUM PERCENTAGE.—The Secretary shall ensure that no State shall receive an allotment under this paragraph for—

''(I) each of fiscal years 2015 through 2017, that is less than 100 percent of the allotment percentage of the State for fiscal year 2013; and

''(II) fiscal year 2018 and each succeeding fiscal year, that is less than 90 percent of the allotment percentage of the State for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year involved.

''(ii) MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE.—Subject to clause (i), the Secretary shall ensure that no State shall receive an allotment under this paragraph for—

''(I) each of fiscal years 2015 through 2017, that is more than 130 percent of the allotment percentage of the State for fiscal year 2013; and

''(II) fiscal year 2018 and each succeeding fiscal year, that is more than 130 percent of the allotment percentage of the State for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year involved.

''(D) SMALL STATE MINIMUM ALLOTMENT.—Subject to subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall ensure that no State shall receive an allotment under this paragraph for a fiscal year that is less than ⅕ of 1 percent of the remainder described in subparagraph (A) for the fiscal year.

''(E) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of the formula specified in this paragraph:

''(i) ALLOTMENT PERCENTAGE.—The term 'allotment percentage'—

''(I) used with respect to fiscal year 2013, means the percentage of the amounts allotted to States under title I of this Act, title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.), the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act (29 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), sections 4103A and 4104 of title 38, United States Code, and sections 1 through 14 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), as such provisions were in effect for fiscal year 2013, that is received under such provisions by the State involved for fiscal year 2013; and

''(II) used with respect to fiscal year 2017 or a succeeding fiscal year, means the percentage of the amounts allotted to States under this paragraph for the fiscal year, that is received under this paragraph by the State involved for the fiscal year.

''(ii) AREA OF SUBSTANTIAL UNEMPLOYMENT.—The term 'area of substantial unemployment' means any area that is of sufficient size and scope to sustain a program of workforce investment activities carried out under this subtitle and that has an average rate of unemployment of at least 7 percent for the most recent 12 months, as determined by the Secretary. For purposes of this clause, determinations of areas of substantial unemployment shall be made once each fiscal year.

''(iii) DISADVANTAGED YOUTH.—The term 'disadvantaged youth' means an individual who is not less than age 16 and not more than age 24 who receives an income, or is a member of a family that receives a total family income, that in relation to family size, does not exceed the higher of—

''(I) the poverty line; or

''(II) 70 percent of the lower living standard income level.

''(iv) INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'individual' means an individual who is age 16 or older.''.

SEC. 421. WITHIN STATE ALLOCATIONS.

Section 133 (29 U.S.C. 2863) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) RESERVATIONS FOR STATEWIDE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—The Governor of a State shall reserve not more than 15 percent of the total amount allotted to the State under section 132(b)(2) for a fiscal year to carry out the statewide activities described in section 134(a).

''(2) STATEWIDE RAPID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—Of the amount reserved under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, the Governor of the State shall reserve not more than 25 percent for statewide rapid response activities and additional assistance described in section 134(a)(4).

''(3) STATEWIDE GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.—Of the amount reserved under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, the Governor of the State shall reserve 15 percent to carry out statewide activities described in section 134(a)(5).

''(4) STATE ADMINISTRATIVE COST LIMIT.—Not more than 5 percent of the funds reserved under paragraph (1) may be used by the Governor of the State for administrative costs of carrying out the statewide activities described in section 134(a).'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) WITHIN STATE ALLOCATION.—

''(1) METHODS.—The Governor, acting in accordance with the State plan, and after consulting with chief elected officials in the local areas in the State, shall—

''(A) allocate the funds that are allotted to the State under section 132(b)(2) and not reserved under subsection (a), in accordance with paragraph (2)(A); and

''(B) award the funds that are reserved by the State under subsection (a)(3) through competitive grants to eligible entities, in accordance with section 134(a)(1)(C).

''(2) FORMULA ALLOCATIONS FOR THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT FUND.—

''(A) ALLOCATION.—In allocating the funds described in paragraph (1)(A) to local areas, a State shall allocate—

''(i) 25 percent on the basis described in section 132(b)(2)(B)(i);

''(ii) 25 percent on the basis described in section 132(b)(2)(B)(ii);

''(iii) 25 percent on the basis described in section 132(b)(2)(B)(iii); and

''(iv) 25 percent on the basis described in section 132(b)(2)(B)(iv),

except that a reference in a section specified in any of clauses (i) through (iv) to 'each State' shall be considered to refer to each local area, and to 'all States' shall be considered to refer to all local areas.

''(B) MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PERCENTAGES.—

''(i) MINIMUM PERCENTAGE.—The State shall ensure that no local area shall receive an allocation under this paragraph for—

''(I) each of fiscal years 2015 through 2017, that is less than 100 percent of the allocation percentage of the local area for fiscal year 2013; and

''(II) fiscal year 2018 and each succeeding fiscal year, that is less than 90 percent of the allocation percentage of the local area for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year involved.

''(ii) MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE.—Subject to clause (i), the State shall ensure that no local area shall receive an allocation for a fiscal year under this paragraph for—

''(I) each of fiscal years 2015 through 2017, that is more than 130 percent of the allocation percentage of the local area for fiscal year 2013; and

''(II) fiscal year 2018 and each succeeding fiscal year, that is more than 130 percentage of the allocation percentage of the local area for the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year involved.

''(C) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of the formula specified in this paragraph, the term 'allocation percentage'—

''(i) used with respect to fiscal year 2013, means the percentage of the amounts allocated to local areas under title I of this Act, title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.), the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act (29 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.), sections 4103A and 4104 of title 38, United States Code, and sections 1 through 14 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), as such provisions were in effect for fiscal year 2013, that is received under such provisions by the local area involved for fiscal year 2013; and

''(ii) used with respect to fiscal year 2017 or a succeeding fiscal year, means the percentage of the amounts allocated to local areas under this paragraph for the fiscal year, that is received under this paragraph by the local area involved for the fiscal year.'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Governor may, in accordance with this subsection, reallocate to eligible local areas within the State amounts that are allocated under subsection (b) for employment and training activities and that are available for reallocation.'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''paragraph (2)(A) or (3) of subsection (b) for such activities'' and inserting ''subsection (b) for such activities'';

(C) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) REALLOCATIONS.—In making reallocations to eligible local areas of amounts available pursuant to paragraph (2) for a program year, the Governor shall allocate to each eligible local area within the State an amount based on the relative amount allocated to such local area under subsection (b)(2) for such activities for such prior program year, as compared to the total amount allocated to all eligible local areas in the State under subsection (b)(2) for such activities for such prior program year.''; and

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking ''paragraph (2)(A) or (3) of''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE COST LIMIT.—Of the amount allocated to a local area under this section for a fiscal year, not more than 10 percent of the amount may be used by the local board involved for the administrative costs of carrying out local workforce investment activities in the local area under this chapter.''.

SEC. 422. USE OF FUNDS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.

Section 134 (29 U.S.C. 2864) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) DISTRIBUTION OF STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES.—Funds reserved by a Governor for a State as described in section 133(a)(1) and not reserved under paragraph (2) or (3) of section 133(a)—

''(i) shall be used to carry out the statewide employment and training activities described in paragraph (2); and

''(ii) may be used to carry out any of the statewide employment and training activities described in paragraph (3).

''(B) STATEWIDE RAPID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—Funds reserved by a Governor for a State as described in section 133(a)(2) shall be used to provide the statewide rapid response activities and additional assistance described in paragraph (4).

''(C) STATEWIDE GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.—Funds reserved by a Governor for a State as described in section 133(a)(3) shall be used to award statewide grants for individuals with barriers to employment on a competitive basis,

and carry out other activities, as described in paragraph (5).

''(2) REQUIRED STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—A State shall use funds referred to in paragraph (1)(A) to carry out statewide employment and training activities, which shall include—

''(A) disseminating the State list of eligible providers of training services described in section 122(d), information identifying eligible providers of on-the-job training and customized training described in section 122(i), and performance information and program cost information described in section 122(b)(2);

''(B) supporting the provision of work ready services described in subsection (c)(2) in the one-stop delivery system;

''(C) implementing strategies and services that will be used in the State to assist at-risk youth and out-of-school youth in acquiring the education and skills, recognized post-secondary credentials, and employment experience to succeed in the labor market;

''(D) conducting evaluations under section 136(e) of activities authorized under this chapter in coordination with evaluations carried out by the Secretary under section 172;

''(E) providing technical assistance to local areas that fail to meet local performance measures;

''(F) operating a fiscal and management accountability system under section 136(f); and

''(G) carrying out monitoring and oversight of activities carried out under this chapter.

''(3) ALLOWABLE STATEWIDE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—A State may use funds referred to in paragraph (1)(A) to carry out statewide employment and training activities which may include—

''(A) implementing innovative programs and strategies designed to meet the needs of all employers in the State, including small employers, which may include incumbent worker training programs, sectoral and industry cluster strategies and partnership initiatives, career ladder programs, micro-enterprise and entrepreneurial training and support programs, utilization of effective business intermediaries, activities to improve linkages between the one-stop delivery system in the State and all employers (including small employers) in the State, and other business services and strategies that better engage employers in workforce investment activities and make the workforce investment system more relevant to the needs of State and local businesses, consistent with the objectives of this title;

''(B) providing incentive grants to local areas—

''(i) for regional cooperation among local boards (including local boards in a designated region as described in section 116(c));

''(ii) for local coordination of activities carried out under this Act; and

''(iii) for exemplary performance by local areas on the local performance measures;

''(C) developing strategies for effectively integrating programs and services among one-stop partners;

''(D) carrying out activities to facilitate remote access to services provided through a one-stop delivery system, including facilitating access through the use of technology;

''(E) incorporating pay-for-performance contract strategies as an element in funding activities under this section and providing technical support to local areas and eligible providers in order to carry out such a strategy, which may involve providing assistance with data collection and data entry requirements;

''(F) carrying out the State option under subsection (f)(8); and

''(G) carrying out other activities authorized under this section that the State determines to be necessary to assist local areas in carrying out activities described in subsection (c) or (d) through the statewide workforce investment system.

''(4) STATEWIDE RAPID RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—A State shall use funds reserved as described in section 133(a)(2)—

''(A) to carry out statewide rapid response activities, which shall include provision of rapid response activities, carried out in local areas by the State or by an entity designated by the State, working in conjunction with the local boards and the chief elected officials in the local areas; and

''(B) to provide additional assistance to local areas that experience disasters, mass layoffs, or plant closings, or other events that precipitate substantial increases in the number of unemployed individuals, carried out in local areas by the State or by an entity designated by the State, working in conjunction with the local boards and the chief elected officials in the local areas.

''(5) STATEWIDE GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds reserved as described in section 133(a)(3), the Governor of a State—

''(i) may reserve up to 5 percent to provide technical assistance for, and conduct evaluations as described in section 136(e) of, the programs carried out under this paragraph; and

''(ii) using the remainder, shall award grants on a competitive basis to eligible entities (that meet specific performance outcomes and criteria established by the Governor) described in subparagraph (B) to carry out employment and training programs authorized under this paragraph for individuals with barriers to employment.

''(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'eligible entity' means an entity that—

''(i) is a—

''(I) local board or a consortium of local boards;

''(II) nonprofit entity, for-profit entity, or a consortium of nonprofit or for-profit entities; or

''(III) consortium of the entities described in subclauses (I) and (II);

''(ii) has a demonstrated record of placing individuals into unsubsidized employment and serving hard-to-serve individuals; and

''(iii) agrees to be reimbursed primarily on the basis of meeting specified performance outcomes and criteria established by the Governor.

''(C) GRANT PERIOD.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this paragraph shall be awarded for a period of 1 year.

''(ii) GRANT RENEWAL.—A Governor of a State may renew, for up to 4 additional 1-year periods, a grant awarded under this paragraph.

''(D) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS.—To be eligible to participate in activities under this paragraph, an individual shall be a low-income individual age 16 or older.

''(E) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this paragraph shall use the grant funds for programs of activities that are designed to assist eligible participants in obtaining employment and acquiring the education and skills necessary to succeed in the labor market. To be eligible to receive a grant under this paragraph for an employment and training program, an eligible entity shall submit an application to a State at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the State may require, including—

''(i) a description of how the strategies and activities of the program will be aligned with the State plan submitted under section 112 and the local plan submitted under section 118, with respect to the area of the State that will be the focus of the program under this paragraph;

''(ii) a description of the educational and skills training programs and activities the eligible entity will provide to eligible participants under this paragraph;

''(iii) how the eligible entity will collaborate with State and local workforce investment systems established under this title in the provision of such programs and activities;

''(iv) a description of the programs of demonstrated effectiveness on which the provision of such educational and skills training programs and activities are based, and a description of how such programs and activities will improve education and skills training for eligible participants;

''(v) a description of the populations to be served and the skill needs of those populations, and the manner in which eligible participants will be recruited and selected as participants;

''(vi) a description of the private, public, local, and State resources that will be leveraged, with the grant funds provided, for the program under this paragraph, and how the entity will ensure the sustainability of such program after grant funds are no longer available;

''(vii) a description of the extent of the involvement of employers in such program;

''(viii) a description of the levels of performance the eligible entity expects to achieve with respect to the indicators of performance for all individuals specified in section 136(b)(2);

''(ix) a detailed budget and a description of the system of fiscal controls, and auditing and accountability procedures, that will be used to ensure fiscal soundness for the program provided under this paragraph; and

''(x) any other criteria the Governor may require.'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—Funds allocated to a local area under section 133(b)—

''(1) shall be used to carry out employment and training activities described in subsection (c); and

''(2) may be used to carry out employment and training activities described in subsection (d).'';

(3) by striking subsection (c);

(4) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e), as subsections (c) and (d), respectively;

(5) in subsection (c) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Funds allocated to a local area under section 133(b) shall be used—

''(A) to establish a one-stop delivery system as described in section 121(e);

''(B) to provide the work ready services described in paragraph (2) through the one-stop delivery system in accordance with such paragraph; and

''(C) to provide training services described in paragraph (4) in accordance with such paragraph.'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking ''CORE SERVICES'' and inserting ''WORK READY SERVICES'';

(ii) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''(1)(A)'' and inserting ''(1)'';

(II) by striking ''core services'' and inserting ''work ready services''; and

(III) by striking ''who are adults or dislocated workers'';

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (K) as subparagraph (V);

(iv) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (J) as subparagraphs (C) through (K), respectively;

(v) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) assistance in obtaining eligibility determinations under the other one-stop partner programs through activities, where appropriate and consistent with the authorizing statute of the one-stop partner program involved, such as assisting in—

''(i) the submission of applications;

''(ii) the provision of information on the results of such applications; and

''(iii) the provision of intake services and information;'';

(vi) by amending subparagraph (E), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

''(E) labor exchange services, including—

''(i) job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling;

''(ii) appropriate recruitment services for employers, including small employers, in the local area, which may include services described in this subsection, including provision of information and referral to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the one-stop delivery system; and

''(iii) reemployment services provided to unemployment claimants, including claimants identified as in need of such services under the worker profiling system established under section 303(j) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 503(j));'';

(vii) in subparagraph (F), as so redesignated, by striking ''employment statistics'' and inserting ''workforce and labor market'';

(viii) in subparagraph (G), as so redesignated, by striking ''and eligible providers of youth activities described in section 123,'';

(ix) in subparagraph (H), as so redesignated, by inserting ''under section 136'' after ''local performance measures'';

(x) in subparagraph (J), as so redesignated, by inserting ''and information regarding the administration of the work test for the unemployment compensation system'' after ''compensation'';

(xi) by amending subparagraph (K), as so redesignated, to read as follows:

''(K) assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for education and training programs that are not funded under this Act and are available in the local area;'';

and

(xii) by inserting the following new subparagraphs after subparagraph (K), as so redesignated:

''(L) the provision of information from official publications of the Internal Revenue Service regarding Federal tax credits, available to participants in employment and training activities, and relating to education, job training, and employment;

''(M) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of workers, which may include—

''(i) diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and

''(ii) in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;

''(N) development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant;

''(O) group counseling;

''(P) individual counseling and career planning;

''(Q) case management;

''(R) short-term pre-career services, including development of learning skills, communications skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;

''(S) internships and work experience;

''(T) literacy activities relating to basic work readiness, information and communication technology literacy activities, and financial literacy activities, if the activities involved are not available to participants in the local area under programs administered under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (20 U.S.C. 9201 et seq.);

''(U) out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and'';

(C) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) DELIVERY OF SERVICES.—The work ready services described in paragraph (2) shall be provided through the one-stop delivery system and may be provided through contracts with public, private for-profit, and private nonprofit service providers, approved by the local board.''; and

(D) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Funds described in paragraph (1)(C) shall be used to provide training services to individuals who—

''(i) after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and case management, have been determined by a one-stop operator or one-stop partner, as appropriate, to—

''(I) be in need of training services to obtain or retain employment; and

''(II) have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services;

''(ii) select programs of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area involved or in another area in which the individual receiving such services are willing to commute or relocate; and

''(iii) who meet the requirements of subparagraph (B).'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking ''Except'' and inserting ''Notwithstanding section 479B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087uu) and except'';

(iii) by amending subparagraph (D) to read as follows:

''(D) TRAINING SERVICES.—Training services authorized under this paragraph may include—

''(i) occupational skills training;

''(ii) on-the-job training;

''(iii) skill upgrading and retraining;

''(iv) entrepreneurial training;

''(v) education activities leading to a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent in combination with, concurrently or subsequently, occupational skills training;

''(vi) adult education and family literacy education activities provided in conjunction with other training services authorized under this subparagraph;

''(vii) workplace training combined with related instruction;

''(viii) occupational skills training that incorporates English language acquisition;

''(ix) customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training; and

''(x) training programs operated by the private sector.'';

(iv) by striking subparagraph (E) and redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively;

(v) in subparagraph (E) (as so redesignated)—

(I) in clause (ii)—

(aa) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking ''subsection (c)'' and inserting ''section 121'';

(bb) in subclause (I), by striking ''section 122(e)'' and inserting ''section 122(d)'' and by striking ''section 122(h)'' and inserting ''section 122(i)''; and

(cc) in subclause (II), by striking ''subsections (e) and (h)'' and inserting ''subsections (d) and (i)''; and

(II) by striking clause (iii) and inserting the following:

''(iii) CAREER ENHANCEMENT ACCOUNTS.—An individual who seeks training services and who is eligible pursuant to subparagraph (A), may, in consultation with a case manager, select an eligible provider of training services from the list or identifying information for providers described in clause (ii)(I). Upon such selection, the one-stop operator involved shall, to the extent practicable, refer such individual to the eligible provider of training services, and arrange for payment for such services through a career enhancement account.

''(iv) COORDINATION.—Each local board may, through one-stop centers, coordinate career enhancement accounts with other Federal, State, local, or private job training programs or sources to assist the individual in obtaining training services from (notwithstanding any provision of this title) eligible providers for those programs and sources.

''(v) ASSISTANCE.—Each local board may, through one-stop centers, assist individuals receiving career enhancement accounts in obtaining funds (in addition to the funds provided under this section) from other programs and sources that will assist the individual in obtaining training services.''; and

(vi) in subparagraph (F) (as so redesignated)—

(I) in the subparagraph heading, by striking ''INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS'' and inserting ''CAREER ENHANCEMENT ACCOUNTS'';

(II) in clause (i), by striking ''individual training accounts'' and inserting ''career enhancement accounts'';

(III) in clause (ii)—

(aa) by striking ''an individual training account'' and inserting ''a career enhancement account'';

(bb) by striking ''subparagraph (F)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (E)'';

(cc) in subclause (II), by striking ''individual training accounts'' and inserting ''career enhancement accounts'';

(dd) in subclause (II), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon;

(ee) in subclause (III), by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(ff) by adding at the end the following:

''(IV) the local board determines that it would be most appropriate to award a contract to a postsecondary educational institution that has been identified as a priority eligible provider under section 117(d)(5)(B) in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industries or occupations important to the State or local economy, that such contract may be used to enable the expansion of programs provided by a priority eligible provider, and that such contract does not limit customer choice.'';

(IV) in clause (iii), by striking ''adult or dislocated worker'' and inserting ''individual''; and

(V) in clause (iv)—

(aa) by redesignating subclause (IV) as subclause (V); and

(bb) by inserting after subclause (III) the following:

''(IV) Individuals with disabilities.'';

(6) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) DISCRETIONARY ONE-STOP DELIVERY ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Funds allocated to a local area under section 133(b)(2) may be used to provide, through the one-stop delivery system—

''(i) customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers;

''(ii) customized employment-related services to employers on a fee-for-service basis;

''(iii) customer supports, including transportation and child care, to navigate among multiple services and activities for special participant populations that face multiple barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities;

''(iv) employment and training assistance provided in coordination with child support enforcement activities of the State agency carrying out subtitle D of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 651 et seq.);

''(v) incorporation of pay-for-performance contract strategies as an element in funding activities under this section;

''(vi) activities to facilitate remote access to services provided through a one-stop delivery system, including facilitating access through the use of technology; and

''(vii) activities to carry out business services and strategies that meet the workforce investment needs of local area employers, as determined by the local board, consistent with the local plan under section 118.'';

(B) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(2) INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The local board may use funds allocated to a local area under section 133(b)(2) to carry out incumbent worker training programs in accordance with this paragraph.

''(B) TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—The training programs for incumbent workers under this paragraph shall be carried out by the local area in conjunction with the employers of such workers for the purpose of assisting such workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment and avert layoffs.

''(C) EMPLOYER MATCH REQUIRED.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Employers participating in programs under this paragraph shall be required to pay a proportion of the costs of providing the training to the incumbent workers of the employers. The local board shall establish the required payment toward such costs, which may include in-kind contributions.

''(ii) CALCULATION OF MATCH.—The wages paid by an employer to a worker while they are attending training may be included as part of the required payment of the employer.''; and

(7) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) PRIORITY FOR PLACEMENT IN PRIVATE SECTOR JOBS.—In providing employment and training activities authorized under this section, the State board and local board shall give priority to placing participants in jobs in the private sector.

''(f) VETERAN EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (8), a local board shall hire and employ one or more veteran employment specialists to carry out employment, training, supportive, and placement services under this subsection in the local area served by the local board.

''(2) PRINCIPAL DUTIES.—A veteran employment specialist in a local area shall—

''(A) conduct outreach to employers in the local area to assist veterans, including disabled veterans, in gaining employment, including—

''(i) conducting seminars for employers; and

''(ii) in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops, and establishing job search groups; and

''(B) facilitate the furnishing of employment, training, supportive, and placement services to veterans, including disabled and homeless veterans, in the local area.

''(3) HIRING PREFERENCE FOR VETERANS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH EXPERTISE IN SERVING VETERANS.—Subject to paragraph (8), a local board shall, to the maximum extent practicable, employ veterans or individuals with expertise in serving veterans to carry out the services described in paragraph (2) in the local area served by the local board. In hiring an individual to serve as a veteran employment specialist, a local board shall give preference to veterans and other individuals in the following order:

''(A) To service-connected disabled veterans.

''(B) If no veteran described in subparagraph (A) is available, to veterans.

''(C) If no veteran described in subparagraph (A) or (B) is available, to any member of the Armed Forces transitioning out of military service.

''(D) If no veteran or member described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) is available, to any spouse of a veteran or a spouse of a member of the Armed Forces transitioning out of military service.

''(E) If no veteran or member described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) is available and no spouse described in paragraph (D) is available, to any other individuals with expertise in serving veterans.

''(4) ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each veteran employment specialist shall be administratively responsible to the one-stop operator of the one-stop center in the local area and shall provide, at a minimum, quarterly reports to the one-stop operator of such center and to the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training for the State on the specialist's performance, and compliance by the specialist with Federal law (including regulations), with respect to the—

''(i) principal duties (including facilitating the furnishing of services) for veterans described in paragraph (2); and

''(ii) hiring preferences described in paragraph (3) for veterans and other individuals.

''(B) REPORT TO SECRETARY.—Each State shall submit to the Secretary an annual report on the qualifications used by each local board in the State in making hiring determinations for a veteran employment specialist and the salary structure under which such specialist is compensated.

''(C) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate an annual report summarizing the reports submitted under subparagraph (B), and including summaries of outcomes achieved by participating veterans, disaggregated by local areas.

''(5) PART-TIME EMPLOYEES.—A part-time veteran employment specialist shall perform the functions of a veteran employment specialist under this subsection on a halftime basis.

''(6) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.—Each veteran employment specialist described in paragraph (2) shall satisfactorily complete training provided by the National Veterans' Employment and Training Institute during the 3-year period that begins on the date on which the employee is so assigned.

''(7) SPECIALIST'S DUTIES.—A full-time veteran employment specialist shall perform only duties related to employment, training, supportive, and placement services under this subsection, and shall not perform other non-veteran-related duties if such duties detract from the specialist's ability to perform the specialist's duties related to employment, training, supportive, and placement services under this subsection.

''(8) STATE OPTION.—At the request of a local board, a State may opt to assume the duties assigned to the local board under paragraphs (1) and (3), including the hiring and employment of one or more veteran employment specialists for placement in the local area served by the local board.''.

SEC. 423. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM.

Section 136 (29 U.S.C. 2871) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by amending paragraphs (1) and (2) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For each State, the State performance measures shall consist of—

''(A)(i) the core indicators of performance described in paragraph (2)(A); and

''(ii) additional indicators of performance (if any) identified by the State under paragraph (2)(B); and

''(B) a State adjusted level of performance for each indicator described in subparagraph (A).

''(2) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(A) CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The core indicators of performance for the program of employment and training activities authorized under sections 132(a)(2) and 134, the program of adult education and family literacy education activities authorized under title II, and the program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741), shall consist of the following indicators of performance (with performance determined in the aggregate and as disaggregated by the populations identified in the State and local plan in each case):

''(I) The percentage and number of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second full calendar quarter after exit from the program.

''(II) The percentage and number of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth full calendar quarter after exit from the program.

''(III) The difference in the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second full calendar quarter after exit from the program, compared to the median earnings of such participants prior to participation in such program.

''(IV) The percentage and number of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential (such as an industry-recognized credential or a certificate from a registered apprenticeship program), or a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (ii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.

''(V) The percentage and number of program participants who, during a program year—

''(aa) are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential (such as an industry-recognized credential or a certificate from a registered apprenticeship program), a certificate from an on-the-job training program, a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or unsubsidized employment; and

''(bb) are achieving measurable basic skill gains toward such a credential, certificate, diploma, or employment.

''(VI) The percentage and number of program participants who obtain unsubsidized employment in the field relating to the training services described in section 134(c)(4) that such participants received.

''(ii) INDICATOR RELATING TO CREDENTIAL.—For purposes of clause (i)(IV), program participants who obtain a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent shall be included in the percentage counted as meeting the criterion under such clause

only if such participants (in addition to obtaining such diploma or its recognized equivalent), within 1 year after exit from the program, have obtained or retained employment, have been removed from public assistance, or have begun an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential.

''(B) ADDITIONAL INDICATORS.—A State may identify in the State plan additional indicators for workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle.''; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in the heading, by striking ''AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDICATOR'';

(II) in clause (i), by striking ''and the customer satisfaction indicator described in paragraph (2)(B)'';

(III) in clause (ii), by striking ''and the customer satisfaction indicator of performance, for the first 3'' and inserting '', for all 3'';

(IV) in clause (iii)—

(aa) in the heading, by striking ''FOR FIRST 3 YEARS''; and

(bb) by striking ''and the customer satisfaction indicator of performance, for the first 3 program years'' and inserting ''for all 3 program years'';

(V) in clause (iv)—

(aa) by striking ''or (v)'';

(bb) by striking subclause (I) and redesignating subclauses (II) and (III) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively; and

(cc) in subclause (I) (as so redesignated)—

(AA) by inserting '', such as unemployment rates and job losses or gains in particular industries'' after ''economic conditions''; and

(BB) by inserting '', such as indicators of poor work experience, dislocation from high-wage employment, low levels of literacy or English proficiency, disability status (including disability status among veterans), and welfare dependency,'' after ''program'';

(VI) by striking clause (v) and redesignating clause (vi) as clause (v); and

(VII) in clause (v) (as so redesignated)—

(aa) by striking ''described in clause (iv)(II)'' and inserting ''described in clause (iv)(I)''; and

(bb) by striking ''or (v)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''paragraph (2)(C)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)(B)'';

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by amending clause (i) of paragraph (1)(A) to read as follows:

''(i) the core indicators of performance described in subsection (b)(2)(A) for activities described in such subsection, other than statewide workforce investment activities; and'';

(B) in clause (ii) of paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''(b)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''(b)(2)(B)''; and

(C) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

''(3) DETERMINATIONS.—In determining such local levels of performance, the local board, the chief elected official, and the Governor shall ensure such levels are adjusted based on the specific economic conditions (such as unemployment rates and job losses or gains in particular industries), or demographic characteristics or other characteristics of the population to be served, in the local area.'';

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''127 or'';

(ii) by striking ''and the customer satisfaction indicator'' each place it appears; and

(iii) in the last sentence, by inserting before the period the following: '', and on the amount and percentage of the State's annual allotment under section 132 the State spends on administrative costs and on the amount and percentage of its annual allocation under section 133 each local area in the State spends on administrative costs'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D);

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (A);

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (B);

(iv) in subparagraph (B), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking ''(excluding participants who received only self-service and informational activities)''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(v) by striking subparagraph (F); and

(vi) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) with respect to each local area in the State—

''(i) the number of individuals who received work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) and the number of individuals who received training services described in section 134(c)(4), during the most recent program year and fiscal year, and the preceding 5 program years, disaggregated (for individuals who received work ready services) by the type of entity that provided the work ready services and disaggregated (for individuals who received training services) by the type of entity that provided the training services, and the amount of funds spent on each of the 2 types of services during the most recent program year and fiscal year, and the preceding 5 fiscal years;

''(ii) the number of individuals who successfully exited out of work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) and the number of individuals who exited out of training services described in section 134(c)(4), during the most recent program year and fiscal year, and the preceding 5 program years, disaggregated (for individuals who received work ready services) by the type of entity that provided the work ready services and disaggregated (for individuals who received training services) by the type of entity that provided the training services; and

''(iii) the average cost per participant of those individuals who received work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) and the average cost per participant of those individuals who received training services described in section 134(c)(4), during the most recent program year and fiscal year, and the preceding 5 program years, disaggregated (for individuals who received work ready services) by the type of entity that provided the work ready services and disaggregated (for individuals who received training services) by the type of entity that provided the training services; and

''(D) the amount of funds spent on training services and discretionary activities described in section 134(d), disaggregated by the populations identified under section 112(b)(16)(A)(iv) and section 118(b)(10).'';

(C) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking ''through publication'' and inserting ''through electronic means''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) DATA VALIDATION.—In preparing the reports described in this subsection, each State shall establish procedures, consistent with guidelines issued by the Secretary, to ensure the information contained in the reports is valid and reliable.

''(5) STATE AND LOCAL POLICIES.—

''(A) STATE POLICIES.—Each State that receives an allotment under section 132 shall maintain a central repository of policies related to access, eligibility, availability of services, and other matters, and plans approved by the State board and make such repository available to the public, including by electronic means.

''(B) LOCAL POLICIES.—Each local area that receives an allotment under section 133 shall maintain a central repository of policies related to access, eligibility, availability of services, and other matters, and plans approved by the local board and make such repository available to the public, including by electronic means.'';

(4) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''or (B)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''may reduce by not more than 5 percent,'' and inserting ''shall reduce''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) FUNDS RESULTING FROM REDUCED ALLOTMENTS.—The Secretary shall return to the Treasury the amount retained, as a result of a reduction in an allotment to a State made under paragraph (1)(B).'';

(5) in subsection (h)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or (B)''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by amending the matter preceding clause (i) to read as follows:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If such failure continues for a second consecutive year, the Governor shall take corrective actions, including the development of a reorganization plan. Such plan shall—'';

(ii) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively;

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (A), the following:

''(B) REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF GRANT.—If such failure continues for a third consecutive year, the Governor shall reduce the amount of the grant that would (in the absence of this subparagraph) be payable to the local area under such program for the program year after such third consecutive year. Such penalty shall be based on the degree of failure to meet local levels of performance.'';

(iv) in subparagraph (C)(i) (as so redesignated), by striking ''a reorganization plan under subparagraph (A) may, not later than 30 days after receiving notice of the reorganization plan, appeal to the Governor to rescind or revise such plan'' and inserting ''corrective action under subparagraph (A) or (B) may, not later than 30 days after receiving notice of the action, appeal to the Governor to rescind or revise such action''; and

(v) in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated), by striking ''subparagraph (B)'' each place it appears and inserting ''subparagraph (C)'';

(6) in subsection (i)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''subsection (b)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''subsection (b)(2)(B)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''(b)(3)(A)(vi)'' and inserting ''(b)(3)(A)(v)'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''the activities described in section 502 concerning''; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking ''described in paragraph (1) and in the activities described in section 502'' and inserting ''and activities described in this subsection''; and

(7) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

''(j) USE OF CORE INDICATORS FOR OTHER PROGRAMS.—Consistent with the requirements of the applicable authorizing laws, the Secretary shall use the core indicators of performance described in subsection (b)(2)(A) to assess the effectiveness of the programs described in section 121(b)(1)(B) (in addition to the programs carried out under chapter 5) that are carried out by the Secretary.

''(k) ESTABLISHING PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of the Governor of a State, a State may establish an incentive system for local boards to implement pay-for-performance contract strategies for the delivery of employment and training activities in the local areas served by the local boards.

''(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—A State that establishes a pay-for-performance incentive system shall reserve not more than 10 percent of the total amount allotted to the State under section 132(b)(2) for a fiscal year to provide funds to local areas in the State whose local boards have implemented a pay-for-performance contract strategy.

''(3) EVALUATIONS.—A State described in paragraph (2) shall use funds reserved by the State under section 133(a)(1) to evaluate the return on investment of pay-for-performance contract strategies implemented by local boards in the State.''.

SEC. 424. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 137 (29 U.S.C. 2872) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 137. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the activities described in section 132, $5,945,639,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years.''.

CHAPTER 3—JOB CORPS

SEC. 426. JOB CORPS PURPOSES.

Paragraph (1) of section 141 (29 U.S.C. 2881(1)) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) to maintain a national Job Corps program for at-risk youth, carried out in partnership with States and communities, to assist eligible youth to connect to the workforce by providing them with intensive academic, career and technical education, and service-learning opportunities, in residential and nonresidential centers, in order for such youth to obtain regular secondary school diplomas and recognized postsecondary credentials leading to successful careers in in-demand industries that will result in opportunities for advancement;''.

SEC. 427. JOB CORPS DEFINITIONS.

Section 142 (29 U.S.C. 2882) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''APPLICABLE ONE-STOP'' and inserting ''ONE-STOP'';

(B) by striking ''applicable'';

(C) by striking ''customer service''; and

(D) by striking ''intake'' and inserting ''assessment'';

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking ''before completing the requirements'' and all that follows and inserting ''prior to becoming a graduate.''; and

(3) in paragraph (5), by striking ''has completed the requirements'' and all that follows and inserting the following: ''who, as a result of participation in the Job Corps program, has received a regular secondary school diploma, completed the requirements of a career and technical education and training program, or received, or is making satisfactory progress (as defined under section 484(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1091(c))) toward receiving, a recognized postsecondary credential (including an industry-recognized credential) that prepares individuals for employment leading to economic self-sufficiency.''.

SEC. 428. INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR THE JOB CORPS.

Section 144 (29 U.S.C. 2884) is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) not less than age 16 and not more than age 24 on the date of enrollment;'';

(2) in paragraph (3)(B), by inserting ''secondary'' before ''school''; and

(3) in paragraph (3)(E), by striking ''vocational'' and inserting ''career and technical education and''.

SEC. 429. RECRUITMENT, SCREENING, SELECTION, AND ASSIGNMENT OF ENROLLEES.

Section 145 (29 U.S.C. 2885) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(C)(i) by striking ''vocational'' and inserting ''career and technical education and training''; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''To the extent practicable, the'' and inserting ''The'';

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''applicable''; and

(II) by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon;

(iii) by striking subparagraphs (B) and (C); and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) organizations that have a demonstrated record of effectiveness in placing at-risk youth into employment.'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting ''and agrees to such rules'' after ''failure to observe the rules''; and

(ii) by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

''(C) the individual has passed a background check conducted in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary, which shall include—

''(i) a search of the State criminal registry or repository in the State where the individual resides and each State where the individual previously resided;

''(ii) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in the State where the individual resides and each State where the individual previously resided;

''(iii) a search of the National Crime Information Center;

''(iv) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and

''(v) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.).''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) INDIVIDUALS CONVICTED OF A CRIME.—An individual shall be ineligible for enrollment if the individual—

''(A) makes a false statement in connection with the criminal background check described in paragraph (1)(C);

''(B) is registered or is required to be registered on a State sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); or

''(C) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

''(i) homicide;

''(ii) child abuse or neglect;

''(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

''(iv) a crime involving rape or sexual assault; or

''(v) physical assault, battery, or a drug-related offense, committed within the past 5 years.'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''2 years'' and inserting ''year''; and

(ii) by striking ''an assignment'' and inserting ''a''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking '', every 2 years,'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) by inserting ''the education and training'' after ''including''; and

(II) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) the performance of the Job Corps center relating to the indicators described in paragraphs (1) and (2) in section 159(c), and whether any actions have been taken with respect to such center pursuant to section 159(f).''; and

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''is closest to the home of the enrollee, except that the'' and inserting ''offers the type of career and technical education and training selected by the individual and, among the centers that offer such education and training, is closest to the home of the individual. The'';

(ii) by striking subparagraph (A); and

(iii) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''that offers the career and technical education and training desired by'' after ''home of the enrollee''.

SEC. 430. JOB CORPS CENTERS.

Section 147 (29 U.S.C. 2887) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''vocational'' both places it appears and inserting ''career and technical''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking ''subsections (c) and (d) of section 303 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (41 U.S.C. 253)'' and inserting ''subsections (a) and (b) of section 3304 of title 41, United States Code''; and

(II) by striking ''industry council'' and inserting ''workforce council'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(i)—

(I) by amending subclause (II) to read as follows:

''(II) the ability of the entity to offer career and technical education and training that the workforce council proposes under section 154(c);'';

(II) in subclause (III), by striking ''is familiar with the surrounding communities, applicable'' and inserting ''demonstrates relationships with the surrounding communities, employers, workforce boards,'' and by striking ''and'' at the end;

(III) by amending subclause (IV) to read as follows:

''(IV) the performance of the entity, if any, relating to operating or providing activities described in this subtitle to a Job Corps center, including the entity's demonstrated effectiveness in assisting individuals in achieving the primary and secondary indicators of performance described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 159(c); and''; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following new subclause:

''(V) the ability of the entity to demonstrate a record of successfully assisting at-risk youth to connect to the workforce, including by providing them with intensive academic, and career and technical education and training.''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (B)(ii)—

(I) by striking '', as appropriate''; and

(II) by striking ''through (IV)'' and inserting ''through (V)'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''In any year, no more than 20 percent of the individuals enrolled in the Job Corps may be nonresidential participants in the Job Corps.'';

(3) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

''(c) CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Job Corps centers may include Civilian Conservation Centers, operated under an agreement between the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Agriculture, that are located primarily in rural areas. Such centers shall adhere to all the provisions of this subtitle, and shall provide, in addition to education, career and technical education and training, and workforce preparation skills training described in section 148, programs of work experience to conserve, develop, or manage public natural resources or public recreational areas or to develop community projects in the public interest.

''(2) SELECTION PROCESS.—The Secretary shall select an entity that submits an application under subsection (d) to operate a Civilian Conservation Center on a competitive basis, as provided in subsection (a).''; and

(4) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to operate a Job Corps center under this subtitle, an entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including—

''(1) a description of the program activities that will be offered at the center, including how the career and technical education and training reflect State and local employment opportunities, including in in-demand industries;

''(2) a description of the counseling, placement, and support activities that will be offered at the center, including a description of the strategies and procedures the entity will use to place graduates into unsubsidized employment upon completion of the program;

''(3) a description of the demonstrated record of effectiveness that the entity has in placing at-risk youth into employment, including past performance of operating a Job Corps center under this subtitle;

''(4) a description of the relationships that the entity has developed with State and local workforce boards, employers, State and local educational agencies, and the surrounding communities in an effort to promote a comprehensive statewide workforce investment system;

''(5) a description of the strong fiscal controls the entity has in place to ensure proper accounting of Federal funds, and a description of how the entity will meet the requirements of section 159(a);

''(6) a description of the strategies and policies the entity will utilize to reduce participant costs;

''(7) a description of the steps taken to control costs in accordance with section 159(a)(3);

''(8) a detailed budget of the activities that will be supported using funds under this subtitle;

''(9) a detailed budget of the activities that will be supported using funds from non-Federal resources;

''(10) an assurance the entity will comply with the administrative cost limitation included in section 151(c);

''(11) an assurance the entity is licensed to operate in the State in which the center is located; and

''(12) an assurance the entity will comply with and meet basic health and safety codes, including those measures described in section 152(b).

''(e) LENGTH OF AGREEMENT.—The agreement described in subsection (a)(1)(A) shall be for not longer than a 2-year period. The Secretary may renew the agreement for 3 1-year periods if the entity meets the requirements of subsection (f).

''(f) RENEWAL.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may renew the terms of an agreement described in subsection (a)(1)(A) for an entity to operate a Job Corps center if the center meets or exceeds each of the indicators of performance described in section 159(c)(1).

''(2) RECOMPETITION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary shall not renew the terms of the agreement for an entity to operate a Job Corps center if such center is ranked in the bottom quintile of centers described in section 159(f)(2) for any program year. Such entity may submit a new application under subsection (d) only if such center has shown significant improvement on the indicators of performance described in section 159(c)(1) over the last program year.

''(B) VIOLATIONS.—The Secretary shall not select an entity to operate a Job Corps center if such entity or such center has been found to have a systemic or substantial material failure that involves—

''(i) a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of program participants or staff;

''(ii) the misuse of funds received under this subtitle;

''(iii) loss of legal status or financial viability, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds;

''(iv) failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the entity has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified; or

''(v) an unresolved area of noncompliance.

''(g) CURRENT GRANTEES.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the SKILLS Act and notwithstanding any previous grant award or renewals of such award under this subtitle, the Secretary shall require all entities operating a Job Corps center under this subtitle to submit an application under subsection (d) to carry out the requirements of this section.''.

SEC. 431. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

Section 148 (29 U.S.C. 2888) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) ACTIVITIES PROVIDED THROUGH JOB CORPS CENTERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Job Corps center shall provide enrollees with an intensive, well-organized, and supervised program of education, career and technical education and training, work experience, recreational activities, physical rehabilitation and development, and counseling. Each Job Corps center shall provide enrollees assigned to the center with access to work ready services described in section 134(c)(2).

''(2) RELATIONSHIP TO OPPORTUNITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The activities provided under this subsection shall be targeted to helping enrollees, on completion of their enrollment—

''(i) secure and maintain meaningful unsubsidized employment;

''(ii) complete secondary education and obtain a regular secondary school diploma;

''(iii) enroll in and complete postsecondary education or training programs, including obtaining recognized postsecondary credentials (such as industry-recognized credentials and certificates from registered apprenticeship programs); or

''(iv) satisfy Armed Forces requirements.

''(B) LINK TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.—The career and technical education and training provided shall be linked to the employment opportunities in in-demand industries in the State in which the Job Corps center is located.'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL'' and inserting ''ACADEMIC AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND'';

(B) by striking ''may'' after ''The Secretary'' and inserting ''shall''; and

(C) by striking ''vocational'' each place it appears and inserting ''career and technical''; and

(3) by amending paragraph (3) of subsection (c) to read as follows:

''(3) DEMONSTRATION.—Each year, any operator seeking to enroll additional enrollees in an advanced career training program shall demonstrate, before the operator may carry out such additional enrollment, that—

''(A) participants in such program have achieved a satisfactory rate of completion and placement in training-related jobs; and

''(B) such operator has met or exceeded the indicators of performance described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 159(c) for the previous year.''.

SEC. 432. COUNSELING AND JOB PLACEMENT.

Section 149 (29 U.S.C. 2889) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''vocational'' and inserting ''career and technical education and'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking ''make every effort to arrange to''; and

(B) by striking ''to assist'' and inserting ''assist''; and

(3) by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 433. SUPPORT.

Subsection (b) of section 150 (29 U.S.C. 2890) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) TRANSITION ALLOWANCES AND SUPPORT FOR GRADUATES.—The Secretary shall arrange for a transition allowance to be paid to graduates. The transition allowance shall be incentive-based to reflect a graduate's completion of academic, career and technical education or training, and attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential, including an industry-recognized credential.''.

SEC. 434. OPERATIONS.

Section 151 (29 U.S.C. 2891) is amended—

(1) in the header, by striking ''**OPERATING PLAN**.'' and inserting ''**OPERATIONS**.'';

(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''IN GENERAL.—'' and inserting ''OPERATING PLAN.—'';

(3) by striking subsection (b) and redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b);

(4) by amending subsection (b) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in the heading by inserting ''OF OPERATING PLAN'' after ''AVAILABILITY''; and

(B) by striking ''subsections (a) and (b)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more than 10 percent of the funds allotted under section 147 to an entity selected to operate a Job Corps center may be used by the entity for administrative costs under this subtitle.''.

SEC. 435. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

Section 153 (29 U.S.C. 2893) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 153. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

''The director of each Job Corps center shall encourage and cooperate in activities to establish a mutually beneficial relationship between Job Corps centers in the State and nearby communities. Such activities may include the use of any local workforce development boards established under section 117 to provide a mechanism for joint discussion of common problems and for planning programs of mutual interest.''.

SEC. 436. WORKFORCE COUNCILS.

Section 154 (29 U.S.C. 2894) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 154. WORKFORCE COUNCILS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each Job Corps center shall have a workforce council appointed by

the Governor of the State in which the Job Corps center is located.

''(b) WORKFORCE COUNCIL COMPOSITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A workforce council shall be comprised of—

''(A) business members of the State board described in section 111(b)(1)(B)(i);

''(B) business members of the local boards described in section 117(b)(2)(A) located in the State;

''(C) a representative of the State board described in section 111(f); and

''(D) such other representatives and State agency officials as the Governor may designate.

''(2) MAJORITY.—A ⅔ majority of the members of the workforce council shall be representatives described in paragraph (1)(A).

''(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The responsibilities of the workforce council shall be—

''(1) to review all the relevant labor market information, including related information in the State plan described in section 112, to—

''(A) determine the in-demand industries in the State in which enrollees intend to seek employment after graduation;

''(B) determine the skills and education that are necessary to obtain the employment opportunities described in subparagraph (A); and

''(C) determine the type or types of career and technical education and training that will be implemented at the center to enable the enrollees to obtain the employment opportunities; and

''(2) to meet at least once a year to reevaluate the labor market information, and other relevant information, to determine any necessary changes in the career and technical education and training provided at the center.''.

SEC. 437. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 156 (29 U.S.C. 2896) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 156. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CENTERS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—From the funds reserved under section 132(a)(3), the Secretary shall provide, directly or through grants, contracts, or other agreements or arrangements as the Secretary considers appropriate, technical assistance and training for the Job Corps program for the purposes of improving program quality.

''(b) ACTIVITIES.—In providing training and technical assistance and for allocating resources for such assistance, the Secretary shall—

''(1) assist entities, including those entities not currently operating a Job Corps center, in developing the application described in section 147(d);

''(2) assist Job Corps centers and programs in correcting deficiencies and violations under this subtitle;

''(3) assist Job Corps centers and programs in meeting or exceeding the indicators of performance described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 159(c); and

''(4) assist Job Corps centers and programs in the development of sound management practices, including financial management procedures.''.

SEC. 438. SPECIAL PROVISIONS.

Section 158(c)(1) (29 U.S.C. 2989(c)(1)) is amended by striking ''title II of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 481 et seq.)'' and inserting ''chapter 5 of title 40, United States Code,''.

SEC. 439. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MANAGEMENT.

Section 159 (29 U.S.C. 2899) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**'' and inserting ''**PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY AND MANAGEMENT**'';

(2) in subsection (a)(3), by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', or operating costs for such centers result in a budgetary shortfall'';

(3) by striking subsections (c) through (g); and

(4) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(1) PRIMARY INDICATORS.—The annual primary indicators of performance for Job Corps centers shall include—

''(A) the percentage and number of enrollees who graduate from the Job Corps center;

''(B) the percentage and number of graduates who entered unsubsidized employment related to the career and technical education and training received through the Job Corps center, except that such calculation shall not include enrollment in education, the military, or volunteer service;

''(C) the percentage and number of graduates who obtained a recognized postsecondary credential, including an industry-recognized credential or a certificate from a registered apprenticeship program; and

''(D) the cost per successful performance outcome, which is calculated by comparing the number of graduates who were placed in unsubsidized employment or obtained a recognized postsecondary credential, including an industry-recognized credential, to total program costs, including all operations, construction, and administration costs at each Job Corps center.

''(2) SECONDARY INDICATORS.—The annual secondary indicators of performance for Job Corps centers shall include—

''(A) the percentage and number of graduates who entered unsubsidized employment not related to the career and technical education and training received through the Job Corps center;

''(B) the percentage and number of graduates who entered into postsecondary education;

''(C) the percentage and number of graduates who entered into the military;

''(D) the average wage of graduates who are in unsubsidized employment—

''(i) on the first day of employment; and

''(ii) 6 months after the first day;

''(E) the number and percentage of graduates who entered unsubsidized employment and were retained in the unsubsidized employment—

''(i) 6 months after the first day of employment; and

''(ii) 12 months after the first day of employment;

''(F) the percentage and number of enrollees compared to the percentage and number of enrollees the Secretary has established as targets in section 145(c)(1);

''(G) the cost per training slot, which is calculated by comparing the program's maximum number of enrollees that can be enrolled in a Job Corps center at any given time during the program year to the number of enrollees in the same program year; and

''(H) the number and percentage of former enrollees, including the number dismissed under the zero tolerance policy described in section 152(b).

''(3) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE FOR RECRUITERS.—The annual indicators of performance for recruiters shall include the measurements described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) and subparagraphs (F), (G), and (H) of paragraph (2).

''(4) INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE OF CAREER TRANSITION SERVICE PROVIDERS.—The annual indicators of performance of career transition service providers shall include the measurements described in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1) and subparagraphs, (B), (C), (D), and (E) of paragraph (2).

''(d) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall collect, and submit in the report described in subsection (f), information on the performance of each Job Corps center, and the Job Corps program, regarding—

''(1) the number and percentage of former enrollees who obtained a regular secondary school diploma;

''(2) the number and percentage of former enrollees who entered unsubsidized employment;

''(3) the number and percentage of former enrollees who obtained a recognized postsecondary credential, including an industry-recognized credential;

''(4) the number and percentage of former enrollees who entered into military service; and

''(5) any additional information required by the Secretary.

''(e) METHODS.—The Secretary shall collect the information described in subsections (c) and (d), using methods described in section 136(f)(2) and consistent with State law, by entering into agreements with the States to access such data for Job Corps enrollees, former enrollees, and graduates.

''(f) TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—

''(1) REPORT.—The Secretary shall collect and annually submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate, and make available to the public by electronic means, a report containing—

''(A) information on the performance of each Job Corps center, and the Job Corps program, on the performance indicators described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c);

''(B) a comparison of each Job Corps center, by rank, on the performance indicators described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c);

''(C) a comparison of each Job Corps center, by rank, on the average performance of all primary indicators described in paragraph (1) of subsection (c);

''(D) information on the performance of the service providers described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (c) on the performance indicators established under such paragraphs; and

''(E) a comparison of each service provider, by rank, on the performance of all service providers described in paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (c) on the performance indicators established under such paragraphs.

''(2) ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary shall conduct an annual assessment of the performance of each Job Corps center which shall include information on the Job Corps centers that—

''(A) are ranked in the bottom 10 percent on the performance indicator described in paragraph (1)(C); or

''(B) have failed a safety and health code review described in subsection (g).

''(3) PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT.—With respect to a Job Corps center that is identified under paragraph (2) or reports less than 50 percent on the performance indicators described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (c)(1), the Secretary shall develop and implement a 1 year performance improvement plan. Such a plan shall require action including—

''(A) providing technical assistance to the center;

''(B) changing the management staff of the center;

''(C) replacing the operator of the center;

''(D) reducing the capacity of the center; or

''(E) closing the center.

''(4) CLOSURE OF JOB CORPS CENTERS.—Job Corps centers that have been identified under paragraph (2) for more than 4 consecutive years shall be closed. The Secretary shall ensure—

''(A) that the proposed decision to close the center is announced in advance to the

general public through publication in the Federal Register and other appropriate means; and

''(B) the establishment of a reasonable comment period, not to exceed 30 days, for interested individuals to submit written comments to the Secretary.

''(g) PARTICIPANT HEALTH AND SAFETY.—The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with the General Services Administration or the appropriate State agency responsible for inspecting public buildings and safeguarding the health of disadvantaged students, to conduct an in-person review of the physical condition and health-related activities of each Job Corps center annually. Such review shall include a passing rate of occupancy under Federal and State ordinances.''.

CHAPTER 4—NATIONAL PROGRAMS

SEC. 441. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 170 (29 U.S.C. 2915) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b);

(2) by striking:

''(a) GENERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—'';

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subsections (a), (b), and (c) respectively, and moving such subsections 2 ems to the left, and conforming the casing style of the headings of such subsections to the casing style of the heading of subsection (d), as added by paragraph (7) of this section;

(4) in subsection (a) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by inserting ''the training of staff providing rapid response services and additional assistance, the training of other staff of recipients of funds under this title, assistance regarding accounting and program operation practices (when such assistance would not be duplicative to assistance provided by the State), technical assistance to States that do not meet State performance measures described in section 136,'' after ''localities,''; and

(B) by striking ''from carrying out activities'' and all that follows up to the period and inserting ''to implement the amendments made by the SKILLS Act'';

(5) in subsection (b) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)'';

(B) by striking '', or recipient of financial assistance under any of sections 166 through 169,''; and

(C) by striking ''or grant recipient'';

(6) in subsection (c) (as so redesignated), by striking ''paragraph (1)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)''; and

(7) by inserting, after subsection (c) (as so redesignated), the following:

''(d) BEST PRACTICES COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) establish a system through which States may share information regarding best practices with regard to the operation of workforce investment activities under this Act; and

''(2) evaluate and disseminate information regarding best practices and identify knowledge gaps.''.

SEC. 442. EVALUATIONS.

Section 172 (29 U.S.C. 2917) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''the Secretary shall provide for the continuing evaluation of the programs and activities, including those programs and activities carried out under section 171'' and inserting ''the Secretary, through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, shall conduct, at least once every 5 years, an independent evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this Act'';

(2) by amending subsection (a)(4) to read as follows:

''(4) the impact of receiving services and not receiving services under such programs and activities on the community, businesses, and individuals;'';

(3) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

''(c) TECHNIQUES.—Evaluations conducted under this section shall utilize appropriate and rigorous methodology and research designs, including the use of control groups chosen by scientific random assignment methodologies, quasi-experimental methods, impact analysis and the use of administrative data. The Secretary shall conduct an impact analysis, as described in subsection (a)(4), of the formula grant program under subtitle B not later than 2016, and thereafter shall conduct such an analysis not less than once every 4 years.'';

(4) in subsection (e), by striking ''the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the Senate'' and inserting ''the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate'';

(5) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g) and inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) REDUCTION OF AMOUNTS AUTHORIZED TO BE APPROPRIATED FOR LATE REPORTING.—If a report required to be transmitted to Congress under this section is not transmitted on or before the time period specified for that report, amounts authorized to be appropriated under this title shall be reduced by 10 percent for the fiscal year that begins after the date on which the final report required under this section is required to be transmitted and reduced by an additional 10 percent each subsequent fiscal year until each such report is transmitted to Congress.''; and

(6) by adding at the end, the following:

''(h) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The results of the evaluations conducted under this section shall be made publicly available, including by posting such results on the Department's website.''.

CHAPTER 5—ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 446. REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS.

Section 181 (29 U.S.C. 2931) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(6), by striking '', including representatives of businesses and of labor organizations,'';

(2) in subsection (c)(2)(A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking ''shall'' and inserting ''may'';

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking ''training for'' and inserting ''the entry into employment, retention in employment, or increases in earnings of''; and

(B) by striking ''subtitle B'' and inserting ''this Act'';

(4) in subsection (f)(4), by striking ''134(a)(3)(B)'' and inserting ''133(a)(4)''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(g) SALARY AND BONUS LIMITATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—No funds provided under this title shall be used by a recipient or subrecipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of the rate prescribed in level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

''(2) VENDORS.—The limitation described in paragraph (1) shall not apply to vendors providing goods and services as defined in OMB Circular A–133.

''(3) LOWER LIMIT.—In a case in which a State is a recipient of such funds, the State may establish a lower limit than is provided in paragraph (1) for salaries and bonuses of those receiving salaries and bonuses from a subrecipient of such funds, taking into account factors including the relative cost of living in the State, the compensation levels for comparable State or local government employees, and the size of the organizations that administer the Federal programs involved.

''(h) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor (referred to in this Act as the 'Administration') shall administer all programs authorized under title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.). The Administration shall be headed by an Assistant Secretary appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Except for title II and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), the Administration shall be the principal agency, and the Assistant Secretary shall be the principal officer, of such Department for carrying out this Act.

''(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—The Assistant Secretary shall be an individual with substantial experience in workforce development and in workforce development management. The Assistant Secretary shall also, to the maximum extent possible, possess knowledge and have worked in or with the State or local workforce investment system or have been a member of the business community.

''(3) FUNCTIONS.—In the performance of the functions of the office, the Assistant Secretary shall be directly responsible to the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Labor, as determined by the Secretary. The functions of the Assistant Secretary shall not be delegated to any officer not directly responsible, both with respect to program operation and administration, to the Assistant Secretary. Any reference in this Act to duties to be carried out by the Assistant Secretary shall be considered to be a reference to duties to be carried out by the Secretary acting through the Assistant Secretary.''.

SEC. 447. PROMPT ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

Section 182 (29 U.S.C. 2932) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking ''127 or''; and

(B) by striking '', except that'' and all that follows and inserting a period; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking ''sections 128 and 133'' and inserting ''section 133''; and

(B) by striking ''127 or''.

SEC. 448. FISCAL CONTROLS; SANCTIONS.

Section 184(a)(2) (29 U.S.C. 2934(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(A)'' and all that follows through ''Each'' and inserting ''Each''; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (B).

SEC. 449. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

Section 185 (29 U.S.C. 2935) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) shall have the option to submit or disseminate electronically any reports, records, plans, or other data that are required to be collected or disseminated under this title.''; and

(2) in subsection (e)(2), by inserting ''and the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate,'' after ''Secretary,''.

SEC. 450. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

Section 189 (29 U.S.C. 2939) is amended—

(1) in subsection (g)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Appropriations for any fiscal year for programs and activities carried out under this title shall be available for obligation only on the basis of a program year. The program year shall begin on October 1 in the fiscal year for which the appropriation is made.''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the first sentence, by striking ''each State'' and inserting ''each recipient (except

as otherwise provided in this paragraph)''; and

(ii) in the second sentence, by striking ''171 or'';

(2) in subsection (i)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (2);

(C) by amending paragraph (2)(A), as so redesignated—

(i) in clause (i), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a period at the end;

(ii) by striking ''requirements of subparagraph (B)'' and all that follows through ''any of the statutory or regulatory requirements of subtitle B'' and inserting ''requirements of subparagraph (B) or (D), any of the statutory or regulatory requirements of subtitle B''; and

(iii) by striking clause (ii); and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) EXPEDITED PROCESS FOR EXTENDING APPROVED WAIVERS TO ADDITIONAL STATES.—The Secretary may establish an expedited procedure for the purpose of extending to additional States the waiver of statutory or regulatory requirements that have been approved for a State pursuant to a request under subparagraph (B), in lieu of requiring the additional States to meet the requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C). Such procedure shall ensure that the extension of such a waiver to additional States is accompanied by appropriate conditions relating to the implementation of such waiver.

''(E) EXTERNAL CONDITIONS.—The Secretary shall not require or impose new or additional requirements, that are not specified under this Act, on a State in exchange for providing a waiver to the State or a local area in the State under this paragraph.''.

SEC. 451. STATE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY.

Section 191(a) (29 U.S.C. 2941(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''consistent with the provisions of this title'' and inserting ''consistent with State law and the provisions of this title''; and

(2) by striking ''consistent with the terms and conditions required under this title'' and inserting ''consistent with State law and the terms and conditions required under this title''.

SEC. 452. GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.

Section 195 (29 U.S.C. 2945) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by inserting at the end the following:

''(D) Funds received under a program by a public or private nonprofit entity that are not described in subparagraph (B), such as funds privately raised from philanthropic foundations, businesses, or other private entities, shall not be considered to be income under this title and shall not be subject to the requirements of this paragraph.'';

(2) by striking paragraph (9);

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (13) as paragraphs (9) through (12), respectively; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(13) Funds provided under this title shall not be used to establish or operate standalone fee-for-service enterprises that compete with private sector employment agencies within the meaning of section 701(c) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e(c)), except that for purposes of this paragraph, such an enterprise does not include a one-stop center.

''(14) Any report required to be submitted to Congress, or to a Committee of Congress, under this title shall be submitted to both the chairmen and ranking minority members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate.''.

SEC. 453. FEDERAL AGENCY STAFF AND RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL AND LOBBYING ACTIVITIES.

Subtitle E of title I (29 U.S.C. 2931 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

''SEC. 196. FEDERAL AGENCY STAFF.

''The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall—

''(1) not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of the SKILLS Act—

''(A) identify the number of Federal government employees who, on the day before the date of enactment of the SKILLS Act, worked on or administered each of the programs and activities that were authorized under this Act or were authorized under a provision listed in section ___71 of the SKILLS Act; and

''(B) identify the number of full-time equivalent employees who on the day before that date of enactment, worked on or administered each of the programs and activities described in subparagraph (A), on functions for which the authorizing provision has been repealed, or for which an amount has been consolidated (if such employee is in a duplicate position), on or after such date of enactment;

''(2) not later than 90 after such date of enactment, publish the information described in paragraph (1) on the Office of Management and Budget website; and

''(3) not later than 1 year after such date of enactment—

''(A) reduce the workforce of the Federal Government by the number of full-time equivalent employees identified under paragraph (1)(B); and

''(B) submit to Congress a report on how the Director carried out the requirements of subparagraph (A).

''SEC. 197. RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

''(a) LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS.—

''(1) PUBLICITY RESTRICTIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), no funds provided under this Act shall be used or proposed for use, for—

''(i) publicity or propaganda purposes; or

''(ii) the preparation, distribution, or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, electronic communication, radio, television, or video presentation designed to support or defeat the enactment of legislation before the Congress or any State or local legislature or legislative body.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to—

''(i) normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships;

''(ii) the preparation, distribution, or use of the materials described in subparagraph (A)(ii) in presentation to the Congress or any State or local legislature or legislative body (except that this subparagraph does not apply with respect to such preparation, distribution, or use in presentation to the executive branch of any State or local government); or

''(iii) such preparation, distribution, or use of such materials, that are designed to support or defeat any proposed or pending regulation, administrative action, or order issued by the executive branch of any State or local government.

''(2) SALARY PAYMENT RESTRICTION.—No funds provided under this Act shall be used, or proposed for use, to pay the salary or expenses of any grant or contract recipient, or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment or issuance of legislation, appropriations, regulations, administrative action, or an Executive order proposed or pending before the Congress or any State government, or a State or local legislature or legislative body, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships or participation by an agency or officer of a State, local, or tribal government in policymaking and administrative processes within the executive branch of that government.

''(b) POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—No funds received by a participant of a program or activity under this Act shall be used for—

''(A) any partisan or nonpartisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, in an election for public or party office; or

''(B) any activity to provide voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election.

''(2) RESTRICTION ON VOTER REGISTRATION ACTIVITIES.—No funds under this Act shall be used to conduct voter registration activities.

''(3) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this subsection, the term 'participant' includes any State, local area, or government, nonprofit, or for-profit entity receiving funds under this Act.''.

CHAPTER 6—STATE UNIFIED PLAN

SEC. 456. STATE UNIFIED PLAN.

Section 501 (20 U.S.C. 9271) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

''(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall receive and approve State unified plans developed and submitted in accordance with this section.'';

(2) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) STATE UNIFIED PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A State may develop and submit to the Secretary a State unified plan for 2 or more of the activities or programs set forth in paragraph (2). The State unified plan shall cover one or more of the activities or programs set forth in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) and shall cover one or more of the activities or programs set forth in subparagraphs (C) through (N) of paragraph (2).

''(2) ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'activity or program' means any 1 of the following 14 activities or programs:

''(A) Activities and programs authorized under title I.

''(B) Activities and programs authorized under title II.

''(C) Programs authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 710 et seq.).

''(D) Secondary career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

''(E) Postsecondary career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

''(F) Activities and programs authorized under title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2251 et seq.).

''(G) Programs and activities authorized under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the 'National Apprenticeship Act'; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

''(H) Programs authorized under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.).

''(I) Programs authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).

''(J) Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law).

''(K) Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o)).

''(L) Activities and programs authorized under title I of the Housing and Community

Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.).

''(M) Activities and programs authorized under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3121 et seq.).

''(N) Activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code.'';

(3) by amending subsection (d) to read as follows:

''(d) APPROVAL.—

''(1) JURISDICTION.—In approving a State unified plan under this section, the Secretary shall—

''(A) submit the portion of the State unified plan covering an activity or program described in subsection (b)(2) to the head of the Federal agency who exercises administrative authority over the activity or program for the approval of such portion by such Federal agency head; or

''(B) coordinate approval of the portion of the State unified plan covering an activity or program described in subsection (b)(2) with the head of the Federal agency who exercises administrative authority over the activity or program.

''(2) TIMELINE.—A State unified plan shall be considered to be approved by the Secretary at the end of the 90-day period beginning on the day the Secretary receives the plan, unless the Secretary makes a written determination, during the 90-day period, that details how the plan is not consistent with the requirements of the Federal statute authorizing an activity or program described in subsection (b)(2) and covered under the plan or how the plan is not consistent with the requirements of subsection (c)(3).

''(3) SCOPE OF PORTION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the portion of the State unified plan covering an activity or program shall be considered to include the plan described in subsection (c)(3) and any proposal described in subsection (e)(2), as that part and proposal relate to the activity or program.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FUNDS.—

''(1) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this subsection to reduce inefficiencies in the administration of federally funded State and local employment and training programs.

''(2) IN GENERAL.—In developing a State unified plan for the activities or programs described in subsection (b)(2), and subject to paragraph (4) and to the State plan approval process under subsection (d), a State may propose to consolidate the amount, in whole or part, provided for the activities or programs covered by the plan into the Workforce Investment Fund under section 132(b) to improve the administration of State and local employment and training programs.

''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—A State that has a State unified plan approved under subsection (d) with a proposal for consolidation under paragraph (2), and that is carrying out such consolidation, shall—

''(A) in providing an activity or program for which an amount is consolidated into the Workforce Investment Fund—

''(i) continue to meet the program requirements, limitations, and prohibitions of any Federal statute authorizing the activity or program; and

''(ii) meet the intent and purpose for the activity or program; and

''(B) continue to make reservations and allotments under subsections (a) and (b) of section 133.

''(4) EXCEPTIONS.—A State may not consolidate an amount under paragraph (2) that is allocated to the State under—

''(A) the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.); or

''(B) title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 710 et seq.).''.

Subtitle B—Adult Education and Family Literacy Education

SEC. 461. AMENDMENT.

Title II (20 U.S.C. 9201 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

''TITLE II—ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY EDUCATION

''SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

''This title may be cited as the 'Adult Education and Family Literacy Education Act'.

''SEC. 202. PURPOSE.

''It is the purpose of this title to provide instructional opportunities for adults seeking to improve their literacy skills, including their basic reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills, and support States and local communities in providing, on a voluntary basis, adult education and family literacy education programs, in order to—

''(1) increase the literacy of adults, including the basic reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills, to a level of proficiency necessary for adults to obtain employment and self-sufficiency and to successfully advance in the workforce;

''(2) assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education (or its equivalent) and the transition to a postsecondary educational institution;

''(3) assist adults who are parents to enable them to support the educational development of their children and make informed choices regarding their children's education including, through instruction in basic reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills; and

''(4) assist adults who are not proficient in English in improving their reading, writing, speaking, listening, comprehension, and mathematics skills.

''SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:

''(1) ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—The term 'adult education and family literacy education programs' means a sequence of academic instruction and educational services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak English and perform mathematical computations leading to a level of proficiency equivalent to at least a secondary school completion that is provided for individuals—

''(A) who are at least 16 years of age;

''(B) who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and

''(C) who—

''(i) lack sufficient mastery of basic reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills to enable the individuals to function effectively in society;

''(ii) do not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or

''(iii) are English learners.

''(2) ELIGIBLE AGENCY.—The term 'eligible agency'—

''(A) means the primary entity or agency in a State or an outlying area responsible for administering or supervising policy for adult education and family literacy education programs in the State or outlying area, respectively, consistent with the law of the State or outlying area, respectively; and

''(B) may be the State educational agency, the State agency responsible for administering workforce investment activities, or the State agency responsible for administering community or technical colleges.

''(3) ELIGIBLE PROVIDER.—The term 'eligible provider' means an organization of demonstrated effectiveness that is—

''(A) a local educational agency;

''(B) a community-based or faith-based organization;

''(C) a volunteer literacy organization;

''(D) an institution of higher education;

''(E) a public or private educational agency;

''(F) a library;

''(G) a public housing authority;

''(H) an institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (G) and has the ability to provide adult education, basic skills, and family literacy education programs to adults and families; or

''(I) a consortium of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (H).

''(4) ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROGRAM.—The term 'English language acquisition program' means a program of instruction—

''(A) designed to help English learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and

''(B) that may lead to—

''(i) attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

''(ii) transition to success in postsecondary education and training; and

''(iii) employment or career advancement.

''(5) FAMILY LITERACY EDUCATION PROGRAM.—The term 'family literacy education program' means an educational program that—

''(A) assists parents and students, on a voluntary basis, in achieving the purpose of this title as described in section 202; and

''(B) is of sufficient intensity in terms of hours and of sufficient quality to make sustainable changes in a family, is evidence-based, and, for the purpose of substantially increasing the ability of parents and children to read, write, and speak English, integrates—

''(i) interactive literacy activities between parents and their children;

''(ii) training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;

''(iii) parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and

''(iv) an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

''(6) GOVERNOR.—The term 'Governor' means the chief executive officer of a State or outlying area.

''(7) INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'individual with a disability' means an individual with any disability (as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

''(B) INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.—The term 'individuals with disabilities' means more than one individual with a disability.

''(8) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term 'English learner' means an adult or out-of-school youth who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or understanding the English language, and—

''(A) whose native language is a language other than English; or

''(B) who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

''(9) INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING.—The term 'integrated education and training' means services that provide adult education and literacy activities contextually and concurrently with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Such services may include offering adult education services concurrent with

postsecondary education and training, including through co-instruction.

''(10) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

''(11) LITERACY.—The term 'literacy' means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at a level of proficiency necessary to obtain employment and to successfully make the transition to postsecondary education.

''(12) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term 'local educational agency' has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

''(13) OUTLYING AREA.—The term 'outlying area' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of this Act.

''(14) POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term 'postsecondary educational institution' means—

''(A) an institution of higher education that provides not less than a 2-year program of instruction that is acceptable for credit toward a bachelor's degree;

''(B) a tribally controlled community college; or

''(C) a nonprofit educational institution offering certificate or apprenticeship programs at the postsecondary level.

''(15) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Education.

''(16) STATE.—The term 'State' means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

''(17) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term 'State educational agency' has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

''(18) WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAM.—The term 'workplace literacy program' means an educational program that is offered in collaboration between eligible providers and employers or employee organizations for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills.

"SEC. 204. HOME SCHOOLS.

''Nothing in this title shall be construed to affect home schools, whether or not a home school is treated as a home school or a private school under State law, or to compel a parent engaged in home schooling to participate in adult education and family literacy education activities under this title.

"SEC. 205. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title, $606,294,933 for fiscal year 2015 and for each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years.

"Subtitle A—Federal Provisions

"SEC. 211. RESERVATION OF FUNDS; GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE AGENCIES; ALLOTMENTS.

''(a) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—From the sums appropriated under section 205 for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall reserve 2.0 percent to carry out section 242.

''(b) GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE AGENCIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—From the sums appropriated under section 205 and not reserved under subsection (a) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall award a grant to each eligible agency having a State plan approved under section 224 in an amount equal to the sum of the initial allotment under subsection (c)(1) and the additional allotment under subsection (c)(2) for the eligible agency for the fiscal year, subject to subsections (f) and (g).

''(2) PURPOSE OF GRANTS.—The Secretary may award a grant under paragraph (1) only if the eligible agency involved agrees to expend the grant in accordance with the provisions of this title.

''(c) ALLOTMENTS.—

''(1) INITIAL ALLOTMENTS.—From the sums appropriated under section 205 and not reserved under subsection (a) for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each eligible agency having a State plan approved under section 224—

''(A) $100,000, in the case of an eligible agency serving an outlying area; and

''(B) $250,000, in the case of any other eligible agency.

''(2) ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENTS.—From the sums appropriated under section 205, not reserved under subsection (a), and not allotted under paragraph (1), for a fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each eligible agency that receives an initial allotment under paragraph (1) an additional amount that bears the same relationship to such sums as the number of qualifying adults in the State or outlying area served by the eligible agency bears to the number of such adults in all States and outlying areas.

''(d) QUALIFYING ADULT.—For the purpose of subsection (c)(2), the term 'qualifying adult' means an adult who—

''(1) is at least 16 years of age;

''(2) is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance under the law of the State or outlying area;

''(3) does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and

''(4) is not enrolled in secondary school.

''(e) SPECIAL RULE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made available under subsection (c) for the Republic of Palau, the Secretary shall award grants to Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Republic of Palau to carry out activities described in this title in accordance with the provisions of this title as determined by the Secretary.

''(2) TERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Republic of Palau shall be eligible to receive a grant under this title until an agreement for the extension of United States education assistance under the Compact of Free Association for the Republic of Palau becomes effective.

''(f) HOLD-HARMLESS PROVISIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (c) and subject to paragraph (2), for—

''(A) fiscal year 2015, no eligible agency shall receive an allotment under this title that is less than 90 percent of the allotment the eligible agency received for fiscal year 2012 under this title; and

''(B) fiscal year 2016 and each succeeding fiscal year, no eligible agency shall receive an allotment under this title that is less than 90 percent of the allotment the eligible agency received for the preceding fiscal year under this title.

''(2) RATABLE REDUCTION.—If, for any fiscal year the amount available for allotment under this title is insufficient to satisfy the provisions of paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ratable reduce the payments to all eligible agencies, as necessary.

''(g) REALLOTMENT.—The portion of any eligible agency's allotment under this title for a fiscal year that the Secretary determines will not be required for the period such allotment is available for carrying out activities under this title, shall be available for reallotment from time to time, on such dates during such period as the Secretary shall fix, to other eligible agencies in proportion to the original allotments to such agencies under this title for such year.

"SEC. 212. PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM.

''Programs and activities authorized under this title are subject to the performance accountability provisions described in paragraphs (2)(A) and (3) of section 136(b) and may, at a State's discretion, include additional indicators identified in the State plan approved under section 224.

"Subtitle B—State Provisions

"SEC. 221. STATE ADMINISTRATION.

''Each eligible agency shall be responsible for the following activities under this title:

''(1) The development, submission, implementation, and monitoring of the State plan.

''(2) Consultation with other appropriate agencies, groups, and individuals that are involved in, or interested in, the development and implementation of activities assisted under this title.

''(3) Coordination and avoidance of duplication with other Federal and State education, training, corrections, public housing, and social service programs.

"SEC. 222. STATE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS; MATCHING REQUIREMENT.

''(a) STATE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—Each eligible agency receiving a grant under this title for a fiscal year—

''(1) shall use not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under section 231 and to carry out section 225, of which not more than 10 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out section 225;

''(2) shall use not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out State leadership activities under section 223; and

''(3) shall use not more than 5 percent of the grant funds, or $65,000, whichever is greater, for the administrative expenses of the eligible agency.

''(b) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to receive a grant from the Secretary under section 211(b), each eligible agency shall provide, for the costs to be incurred by the eligible agency in carrying out the adult education and family literacy education programs for which the grant is awarded, a non-Federal contribution in an amount that is not less than—

''(A) in the case of an eligible agency serving an outlying area, 12 percent of the total amount of funds expended for adult education and family literacy education programs in the outlying area, except that the Secretary may decrease the amount of funds required under this subparagraph for an eligible agency; and

''(B) in the case of an eligible agency serving a State, 25 percent of the total amount of funds expended for adult education and family literacy education programs in the State.

''(2) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION.—An eligible agency's non-Federal contribution required under paragraph (1) may be provided in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, and shall include only non-Federal funds that are used for adult education and family literacy education programs in a manner that is consistent with the purpose of this title.

"SEC. 223. STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible agency may use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for any of the following adult education and family literacy education programs:

''(1) The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b).

''(2) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and family literacy education programs, including for the development and dissemination of evidence based research instructional practices in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition programs.

''(3) The provision of assistance to eligible providers in developing, implementing, and reporting measurable progress in achieving the objectives of this title.

''(4) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.

''(5) The provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and family literacy education programs, including distance education activities, to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities.

''(6) The development and implementation of technology applications or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.

''(7) Coordination with other public programs, including programs under title I of this Act, and other welfare-to-work, workforce development, and job training programs.

''(8) Coordination with existing support services, such as transportation, child care, and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in, and successful completion of, adult education and family literacy education programs, for adults enrolled in such activities.

''(9) The development and implementation of a system to assist in the transition from adult basic education to postsecondary education.

''(10) Activities to promote workplace literacy programs.

''(11) Other activities of statewide significance, including assisting eligible providers in achieving progress in improving the skill levels of adults who participate in programs under this title.

''(12) Integration of literacy, instructional, and occupational skill training and promotion of linkages with employees.

''(b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out this section, eligible agencies shall coordinate where possible, and avoid duplicating efforts, in order to maximize the impact of the activities described in subsection (a).

''(c) STATE-IMPOSED REQUIREMENTS.—Whenever a State or outlying area implements any rule or policy relating to the administration or operation of a program authorized under this title that has the effect of imposing a requirement that is not imposed under Federal law (including any rule or policy based on a State or outlying area interpretation of a Federal statute, regulation, or guideline), the State or outlying area shall identify, to eligible providers, the rule or policy as being imposed by the State or outlying area.

''SEC. 224. STATE PLAN.

''(a) 3-YEAR PLANS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible agency desiring a grant under this title for any fiscal year shall submit to, or have on file with, the Secretary a 3-year State plan.

''(2) STATE UNIFIED PLAN.—The eligible agency may submit the State plan as part of a State unified plan described in section 501.

''(b) PLAN CONTENTS.—The eligible agency shall include in the State plan or any revisions to the State plan—

''(1) an objective assessment of the needs of individuals in the State or outlying area for adult education and family literacy education programs, including individuals most in need or hardest to serve;

''(2) a description of the adult education and family literacy education programs that will be carried out with funds received under this title;

''(3) an assurance that the funds received under this title will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities under this title;

''(4) a description of how the eligible agency will annually evaluate and measure the effectiveness and improvement of the adult education and family literacy education programs funded under this title using the indicators of performance described in section 136, including how the eligible agency will conduct such annual evaluations and measures for each grant received under this title;

''(5) a description of how the eligible agency will fund local activities in accordance with the measurable goals described in section 231(d);

''(6) an assurance that the eligible agency will expend the funds under this title only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements in section 241;

''(7) a description of the process that will be used for public participation and comment with respect to the State plan, which—

''(A) shall include consultation with the State workforce investment board, the State board responsible for administering community or technical colleges, the Governor, the State educational agency, the State board or agency responsible for administering block grants for temporary assistance to needy families under title IV of the Social Security Act, the State council on disabilities, the State vocational rehabilitation agency, and other State agencies that promote the improvement of adult education and family literacy education programs, and direct providers of such programs; and

''(B) may include consultation with the State agency on higher education, institutions responsible for professional development of adult education and family literacy education programs instructors, representatives of business and industry, refugee assistance programs, and faith-based organizations;

''(8) a description of the eligible agency's strategies for serving populations that include, at a minimum—

''(A) low-income individuals;

''(B) individuals with disabilities;

''(C) the unemployed;

''(D) the underemployed; and

''(E) individuals with multiple barriers to educational enhancement, including English learners;

''(9) a description of how the adult education and family literacy education programs that will be carried out with any funds received under this title will be integrated with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities in the State or outlying area served by the eligible agency;

''(10) a description of the steps the eligible agency will take to ensure direct and equitable access, as required in section 231(c)(1), including—

''(A) how the State will build the capacity of community-based and faith-based organizations to provide adult education and family literacy education programs; and

''(B) how the State will increase the participation of business and industry in adult education and family literacy education programs;

''(11) an assessment of the adequacy of the system of the State or outlying area to ensure teacher quality and a description of how the State or outlying area will use funds received under this subtitle to improve teacher quality, including evidence-based professional development to improve instruction; and

''(12) a description of how the eligible agency will consult with any State agency responsible for postsecondary education to develop adult education that prepares students to enter postsecondary education without the need for remediation upon completion of secondary school equivalency programs.

''(c) PLAN REVISIONS.—When changes in conditions or other factors require substantial revisions to an approved State plan, the eligible agency shall submit the revisions of the State plan to the Secretary.

''(d) CONSULTATION.—The eligible agency shall—

''(1) submit the State plan, and any revisions to the State plan, to the Governor, the chief State school officer, or the State officer responsible for administering community or technical colleges, or outlying area for review and comment; and

''(2) ensure that any comments regarding the State plan by the Governor, the chief State school officer, or the State officer responsible for administering community or technical colleges, and any revision to the State plan, are submitted to the Secretary.

''(e) PLAN APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) approve a State plan within 90 days after receiving the plan unless the Secretary makes a written determination within 30 days after receiving the plan that the plan does not meet the requirements of this section or is inconsistent with specific provisions of this subtitle; and

''(2) not finally disapprove of a State plan before offering the eligible agency the opportunity, prior to the expiration of the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the eligible agency received the written determination described in paragraph (1), to review the plan and providing technical assistance in order to assist the eligible agency in meeting the requirements of this subtitle.

''SEC. 225. PROGRAMS FOR CORRECTIONS EDUCATION AND OTHER INSTITUTIONALIZED INDIVIDUALS.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From funds made available under section 222(a)(1) for a fiscal year, each eligible agency shall carry out corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals.

''(b) USES OF FUNDS.—The funds described in subsection (a) shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for—

''(1) basic skills education;

''(2) special education programs as determined by the eligible agency;

''(3) reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics programs;

''(4) secondary school credit or diploma programs or their recognized equivalent; and

''(5) integrated education and training.

''(c) PRIORITY.—Each eligible agency that is using assistance provided under this section to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term 'correctional institution' means any—

''(A) prison;

''(B) jail;

''(C) reformatory;

''(D) work farm;

''(E) detention center; or

''(F) halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

''(2) CRIMINAL OFFENDER.—The term 'criminal offender' means any individual who is charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offense.

''Subtitle C—Local Provisions

''SEC. 231. GRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS.

''(a) GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—From grant funds made available under section 222(a)(1),

each eligible agency shall award multi-year grants or contracts, on a competitive basis, to eligible providers within the State or outlying area that meet the conditions and requirements of this title to enable the eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and family literacy education programs within the State.

''(b) LOCAL ACTIVITIES.—The eligible agency shall require eligible providers receiving a grant or contract under subsection (a) to establish or operate—

''(1) programs that provide adult education and literacy activities;

''(2) programs that provide integrated education and training activities; or

''(3) credit-bearing postsecondary coursework.

''(c) DIRECT AND EQUITABLE ACCESS; SAME PROCESS.—Each eligible agency receiving funds under this title shall ensure that—

''(1) all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts under this section; and

''(2) the same grant or contract announcement process and application process is used for all eligible providers in the State or outlying area.

''(d) MEASURABLE GOALS.—The eligible agency shall require eligible providers receiving a grant or contract under subsection (a) to demonstrate—

''(1) the eligible provider's measurable goals for participant outcomes to be achieved annually on the core indicators of performance described in section 136(b)(2)(A);

''(2) the past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the basic academic skills of adults and, for eligible providers receiving grants in the prior year, the success of the eligible provider receiving funding under this title in exceeding its performance goals in the prior year;

''(3) the commitment of the eligible provider to serve individuals in the community who are the most in need of basic academic skills instruction services, including individuals with disabilities and individuals who are low-income or have minimal reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics skills, or are English learners;

''(4) the program is of sufficient intensity and quality for participants to achieve substantial learning gains;

''(5) educational practices are evidence-based;

''(6) the activities of the eligible provider effectively employ advances in technology, and delivery systems including distance education;

''(7) the activities provide instruction in real-life contexts, including integrated education and training when appropriate, to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

''(8) the activities are staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet minimum qualifications established by the State;

''(9) the activities are coordinated with other available resources in the community, such as through strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, local workforce investment boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, community-based and faith-based organizations, and social service agencies;

''(10) the activities offer flexible schedules and support services (such as child care and transportation) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

''(11) the activities include a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 136) and to monitor program performance;

''(12) the local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs, and integrated education and training programs;

''(13) the capacity of the eligible provider to produce valid information on performance results, including enrollments and measurable participant outcomes;

''(14) adult education and family literacy education programs offer rigorous reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics content that are evidence based; and

''(15) applications of technology, and services to be provided by the eligible providers, are of sufficient intensity and duration to increase the amount and quality of learning and lead to measurable learning gains within specified time periods.

''(e) SPECIAL RULE.—Eligible providers may use grant funds under this title to serve children participating in family literacy programs assisted under this part, provided that other sources of funds available to provide similar services for such children are used first.

''SEC. 232. LOCAL APPLICATION.

''Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract under this title shall submit an application to the eligible agency containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including—

''(1) a description of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;

''(2) a description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and family literacy education programs; and

''(3) each of the demonstrations required by section 231(d).

''SEC. 233. LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE COST LIMITS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), of the amount that is made available under this title to an eligible provider—

''(1) at least 95 percent shall be expended for carrying out adult education and family literacy education programs; and

''(2) the remaining amount shall be used for planning, administration, personnel and professional development, development of measurable goals in reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics, and interagency coordination.

''(b) SPECIAL RULE.—In cases where the cost limits described in subsection (a) are too restrictive to allow for adequate planning, administration, personnel development, and interagency coordination, the eligible provider may negotiate with the eligible agency in order to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for noninstructional purposes.

''Subtitle D—General Provisions

''SEC. 241. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

''Funds made available for adult education and family literacy education programs under this title shall supplement and not supplant other State or local public funds expended for adult education and family literacy education programs.

''SEC. 242. NATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

''The Secretary shall establish and carry out a program of national activities that may include the following:

''(1) Providing technical assistance to eligible entities, on request, to—

''(A) improve their fiscal management, research-based instruction, and reporting requirements to carry out the requirements of this title;

''(B) improve its performance on the core indicators of performance described in section 136;

''(C) provide adult education professional development; and

''(D) use distance education and improve the application of technology in the classroom, including instruction in English language acquisition for English learners.

''(2) Providing for the conduct of research on national literacy basic skill acquisition levels among adults, including the number of adult English learners functioning at different levels of reading proficiency.

''(3) Improving the coordination, efficiency, and effectiveness of adult education and workforce development services at the national, State, and local levels.

''(4) Determining how participation in adult education, English language acquisition, and family literacy education programs prepares individuals for entry into and success in postsecondary education and employment, and in the case of prison-based services, the effect on recidivism.

''(5) Evaluating how different types of providers, including community and faith-based organizations or private for-profit agencies measurably improve the skills of participants in adult education, English language acquisition, and family literacy education programs.

''(6) Identifying model integrated basic and workplace skills education programs, including programs for English learners coordinated literacy and employment services, and effective strategies for serving adults with disabilities.

''(7) Initiating other activities designed to improve the measurable quality and effectiveness of adult education, English language acquisition, and family literacy education programs nationwide.''.

Subtitle C—Amendments to the Wagner-Peyser Act

SEC. 466. AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT.

Section 15 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 491–2) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 15. WORKFORCE AND LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM.

''(a) SYSTEM CONTENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor (referred to in this section as the 'Secretary'), in accordance with the provisions of this section, shall oversee the development, maintenance, and continuous improvement of a nationwide workforce and labor market information system that includes—

''(A) statistical data from cooperative statistical survey and projection programs and data from administrative reporting systems that, taken together, enumerate, estimate, and project employment opportunities and conditions at national, State, and local levels in a timely manner, including statistics on—

''(i) employment and unemployment status of national, State, and local populations, including self-employed, part-time, and seasonal workers;

''(ii) industrial distribution of occupations, as well as current and projected employment opportunities, wages, benefits (where data is available), and skill trends by occupation and industry, with particular attention paid to State and local conditions;

''(iii) the incidence of, industrial and geographical location of, and number of workers displaced by, permanent layoffs and plant closings; and

''(iv) employment and earnings information maintained in a longitudinal manner to be used for research and program evaluation;

''(B) information on State and local employment opportunities, and other appropriate statistical data related to labor market dynamics, which—

''(i) shall be current and comprehensive;

''(ii) shall meet the needs identified through the consultations described in subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subsection (e)(1); and

''(iii) shall meet the needs for the information identified in section 121(e)(1)(E) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2841(e)(1)(E));

''(C) technical standards (which the Secretary shall publish annually) for data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) that, at a minimum, meet the criteria of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code;

''(D) procedures to ensure compatibility and additivity of the data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) from national, State, and local levels;

''(E) procedures to support standardization and aggregation of data from administrative reporting systems described in subparagraph (A) of employment-related programs;

''(F) analysis of data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) for uses such as—

''(i) national, State, and local policymaking;

''(ii) implementation of Federal policies (including allocation formulas);

''(iii) program planning and evaluation; and

''(iv) researching labor market dynamics;

''(G) wide dissemination of such data, information, and analysis in a user-friendly manner and voluntary technical standards for dissemination mechanisms; and

''(H) programs of—

''(i) training for effective data dissemination;

''(ii) research and demonstration; and

''(iii) programs and technical assistance.

''(2) INFORMATION TO BE CONFIDENTIAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—No officer or employee of the Federal Government or agent of the Federal Government may—

''(i) use any submission that is furnished for exclusively statistical purposes under the provisions of this section for any purpose other than the statistical purposes for which the submission is furnished;

''(ii) disclose to the public any publication or media transmittal of the data contained in the submission described in clause (i) that permits information concerning an individual subject to be reasonably inferred by either direct or indirect means; or

''(iii) permit anyone other than a sworn officer, employee, or agent of any Federal department or agency, or a contractor (including an employee of a contractor) of such department or agency, to examine an individual submission described in clause (i),

without the consent of the individual, agency, or other person who is the subject of the submission or provides that submission.

''(B) IMMUNITY FROM LEGAL PROCESS.—Any submission (including any data derived from the submission) that is collected and retained by a Federal department or agency, or an officer, employee, agent, or contractor of such a department or agency, for exclusively statistical purposes under this section shall be immune from the legal process and shall not, without the consent of the individual, agency, or other person who is the subject of the submission or provides that submission, be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose in any action, suit, or other judicial or administrative proceeding.

''(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide immunity from the legal process for such submission (including any data derived from the submission) if the submission is in the possession of any person, agency, or entity other than the Federal Government or an officer, employee, agent, or contractor of the Federal Government, or if the submission is independently collected, retained, or produced for purposes other than the purposes of this Act.

''(b) SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The workforce and labor market information system described in subsection (a) shall be planned, administered, overseen, and evaluated through a cooperative governance structure involving the Federal Government and States.

''(2) DUTIES.—The Secretary, with respect to data collection, analysis, and dissemination of workforce and labor market information for the system, shall carry out the following duties:

''(A) Assign responsibilities within the Department of Labor for elements of the workforce and labor market information system described in subsection (a) to ensure that all statistical and administrative data collected is consistent with appropriate Bureau of Labor Statistics standards and definitions.

''(B) Actively seek the cooperation of other Federal agencies to establish and maintain mechanisms for ensuring complementarity and nonduplication in the development and operation of statistical and administrative data collection activities.

''(C) Eliminate gaps and duplication in statistical undertakings, with the systemization of wage surveys as an early priority.

''(D) In collaboration with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and States, develop and maintain the elements of the workforce and labor market information system described in subsection (a), including the development of consistent procedures and definitions for use by the States in collecting the data and information described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1).

''(E) Establish procedures for the system to ensure that—

''(i) such data and information are timely;

''(ii) paperwork and reporting for the system are reduced to a minimum; and

''(iii) States and localities are fully involved in the development and continuous improvement of the system at all levels.

''(c) NATIONAL ELECTRONIC TOOLS TO PROVIDE SERVICES.—The Secretary is authorized to assist in the development of national electronic tools that may be used to facilitate the delivery of work ready services described in section 134(c)(2) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864(c)(2)) and to provide workforce and labor market information to individuals through the one-stop delivery systems described in section 121 and through other appropriate delivery systems.

''(d) COORDINATION WITH THE STATES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, working through the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration, shall regularly consult with representatives of State agencies carrying out workforce information activities regarding strategies for improving the workforce and labor market information system.

''(2) FORMAL CONSULTATIONS.—At least twice each year, the Secretary, working through the Bureau of Labor Statistics, shall conduct formal consultations regarding programs carried out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics with representatives of each of the Federal regions of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, elected (pursuant to a process established by the Secretary) from the State directors affiliated with State agencies that perform the duties described in subsection (e)(1).

''(e) STATE RESPONSIBILITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to receive Federal financial assistance under this section, the Governor of a State shall—

''(A) be responsible for the management of the portions of the workforce and labor market information system described in subsection (a) that comprise a statewide workforce and labor market information system;

''(B) establish a process for the oversight of such system;

''(C) consult with State and local employers, participants, and local workforce investment boards about the labor market relevance of the data to be collected and disseminated through the statewide workforce and labor market information system;

''(D) consult with State educational agencies and local educational agencies concerning the provision of workforce and labor market information in order to meet the needs of secondary school and postsecondary school students who seek such information;

''(E) collect and disseminate for the system, on behalf of the State and localities in the State, the information and data described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(1);

''(F) maintain and continuously improve the statewide workforce and labor market information system in accordance with this section;

''(G) perform contract and grant responsibilities for data collection, analysis, and dissemination for such system;

''(H) conduct such other data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities as will ensure an effective statewide workforce and labor market information system;

''(I) actively seek the participation of other State and local agencies in data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities in order to ensure complementarity, compatibility, and usefulness of data;

''(J) participate in the development of, and submit to the Secretary, an annual plan to carry out the requirements and authorities of this subsection; and

''(K) utilize the quarterly records described in section 136(f)(2) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(f)(2)) to assist the State and other States in measuring State progress on State performance measures.

''(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the ability of a Governor to conduct additional data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities with State funds or with Federal funds from sources other than this section.

''(f) NONDUPLICATION REQUIREMENT.—None of the functions and activities carried out pursuant to this section shall duplicate the functions and activities carried out under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

''(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $60,153,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years.''.

Subtitle D—Repeals and Conforming Amendments

SEC. 471. REPEALS.

The following provisions are repealed:

(1) Chapter 4 of subtitle B of title I, and sections 123, 155, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171, 173, 173A, 174, 192, 194, 502, 503, and 506 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the SKILLS Act.

(2) Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.).

(3) Sections 1 through 14 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.).

(4) The Twenty-First Century Workforce Commission Act (29 U.S.C. 2701 note).

(5) Public Law 91–378, 16 U.S.C. 1701 et seq. (popularly known as the ''Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970'').

(6) Section 821 of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 (20 U.S.C. 1151).

(7) The Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Act (29 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.).

(8) Sections 4103A and 4104 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 472. AMENDMENTS TO OTHER LAWS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO THE FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008.—

(1) DEFINITION.—Section 3(t) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(t)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''means (1) the agency'' and inserting the following: ''means—

''(A) the agency'';

(B) by striking ''programs, and (2) the tribal'' and inserting the following: ''programs;

''(B) the tribal''; and

(C) by striking ''this Act.'' and inserting the following: ''this Act; and

''(C) in the context of employment and training activities under section 6(d)(4), a State board as defined in section 101 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801).''.

(2) ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.—Section 5 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014) is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)(14) by striking ''section 6(d)(4)(I)'' and inserting ''section 6(d)(4)(C)'', and

(B) in subsection (g)(3), in the first sentence, by striking ''constitutes adequate participation in an employment and training program under section 6(d)'' and inserting ''allows the individual to participate in employment and training activities under section 6(d)(4)''.

(3) ELIGIBILITY DISQUALIFICATIONS.—Section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)) is amended to read as follows:

''(D) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.—

''(i) IMPLEMENTATION.—Each State agency shall provide employment and training services authorized under section 134 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864) to eligible members of households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program in gaining skills, training, work, or experience that will increase their ability to obtain regular employment.

''(ii) STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.—Consistent with subparagraph (A), employment and training services shall be provided through the statewide workforce development system, including the one-stop delivery system authorized by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.).

''(iii) REIMBURSEMENTS.—

''(I) ACTUAL COSTS.—The State agency shall provide payments or reimbursement to participants served under this paragraph for—

''(aa) the actual costs of transportation and other actual costs (other than dependent care costs) that are reasonably necessary and directly related to the individual participating in employment and training activities; and

''(bb) the actual costs of such dependent care expenses as are determined by the State agency to be necessary for the individual to participate in employment and training activities (other than an individual who is the caretaker relative of a dependent in a family receiving benefits under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) in a local area where an employment, training, or education program under title IV of that Act is in operation), except that no such payment or reimbursement shall exceed the applicable local market rate.

''(II) SERVICE CONTRACTS AND VOUCHERS.—In lieu of providing reimbursements or payments for dependent care expenses under clause (i), a State agency may, at the option of the State agency, arrange for dependent care through providers by the use of purchase of service contracts or vouchers or by providing vouchers to the household.

''(III) VALUE OF REIMBURSEMENTS.—The value of any dependent care services provided for or arranged under clause (ii), or any amount received as a payment or reimbursement under clause (i), shall—

''(aa) not be treated as income for the purposes of any other Federal or federally assisted program that bases eligibility for, or the amount of benefits on, need; and

''(bb) not be claimed as an employment-related expense for the purposes of the credit provided under section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 21).''.

(4) ADMINISTRATION.—Section 11(e)(19) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020(e)(11) is amended to read as follows:

''(S) the plans of the State agency for providing employment and training services under section 6(d)(4);''.

(5) ADMINISTRATIVE COST-SHARING AND QUALITY CONTROL.—Section 16(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(h)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''carry out employment and training programs'' and inserting ''provide employment and training services to eligible households under section 6(d)(4)''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''operating an employment and training program'' and inserting ''providing employment and training services consistent with section 6(d)(4)'';

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking ''participation in an employment and training program'' and inserting ''the individual participating in employment and training activities''; and

(ii) by striking ''section 6(d)(4)(I)(i)(II)'' and inserting ''section 6(d)(4)(C)(i)(II)'';

(C) in paragraph (4), by striking ''for operating an employment and training program'' and inserting ''to provide employment and training services''; and

(D) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

''(E) MONITORING.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in conjunction with the Secretary of Labor, shall monitor each State agency responsible for administering employment and training services under section 6(d)(4) to ensure funds are being spent effectively and efficiently.

''(ii) ACCOUNTABILITY.—Each program of employment and training receiving funds under section 6(d)(4) shall be subject to the requirements of the performance accountability system, including having to meet the State performance measures described in section 136 of the Workforce Investment Act (29 U.S.C. 2871).''.

(6) RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION, AND EVALUATIONS.—Section 17 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(B)(iv)(III)(dd), by striking '', (4)(F)(i), or (4)(K)'' and inserting ''or (4)''; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (3); and

(B) in subsection (g), in the first sentence in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''programs established'' and inserting ''activities provided to eligible households''; and

(ii) by inserting '', in conjunction with the Secretary of Labor,'' after ''Secretary''.

(7) MINNESOTA FAMILY INVESTMENT PROJECT.—Section 22(b)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2031(b)(4)) is amended by striking ''equivalent to those offered under the employment and training program''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 412 OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT.—

(1) CONDITIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS.—Section 412(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking ''make available sufficient resources for employment training and placement'' and inserting ''provide refugees with the opportunity to access employment and training services, including job placement,''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''services;'' and inserting ''services provided through the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.);'';

(B) in paragraph (2)(C)(iii)(II), by inserting ''and training'' after ''employment'';

(C) in paragraph (6)(A)(ii)—

(i) by striking ''insure'' and inserting ''ensure'';

(ii) by inserting ''and training'' after ''employment''; and

(iii) by inserting after ''available'' the following: ''through the one-stop delivery system under section 121 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2841)''; and

(D) in paragraph (9), by inserting ''the Secretary of Labor,'' after ''Education,''.

(2) PROGRAM OF INITIAL RESETTLEMENT.—Section 412(b)(2) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(b)(2)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''orientation, instruction'' and inserting ''orientation and instruction''; and

(B) by striking '', and job training for refugees, and such other education and training of refugees, as facilitates'' and inserting ''for refugees to facilitate''.

(3) PROJECT GRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR SERVICES FOR REFUGEES.—Section 412(c) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(c)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)(i), by inserting ''and training'' after ''employment''; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (C);

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ''paragraph—'' and all that follows through ''in a manner'' and inserting ''paragraph in a manner''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) In carrying out this section, the Director shall ensure that employment and training services are provided through the statewide workforce development system, as appropriate, authorized by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.). Such action may include—

''(i) making employment and training activities described in section 134 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2864) available to refugees; and

''(ii) providing refugees with access to a one-stop delivery system established under section 121 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2841).''.

(4) CASH ASSISTANCE AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES.—Section 412(e) of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(e)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2)(A)(i), by inserting ''and training'' after ''providing employment''; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking ''The'' and inserting ''Consistent with subsection (c)(3), the''.

(c) AMENDMENTS RELATING TO THE SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007.—

(1) FEDERAL PRISONER REENTRY INITIATIVE.—Section 231 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17541) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)(E)—

(i) by inserting ''the Department of Labor and'' before ''other Federal agencies''; and

(ii) by inserting ''State and local workforce investment boards,'' after ''community-based organizations,'';

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking at the end ''and'';

(ii) in paragraph (3), by striking at the end the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(D) to coordinate reentry programs with the employment and training services provided through the statewide workforce investment system under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 et seq.).''; and

(C) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(F) INTERACTION WITH THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section, the Director shall ensure that employment and training services, including such employment and services offered through reentry programs, are provided, as appropriate, through the statewide workforce investment system under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 et seq.), which may include—

''(I) making employment and training services available to prisoners prior to and immediately following the release of such prisoners; or

''(II) providing prisoners with access by remote means to a one-stop delivery system under section 121 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2841) in the State in which the prison involved is located.

''(ii) SERVICE DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term 'employment and training services' means those services described in section 134 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864) offered by the Bureau of Prisons, including—

''(I) the skills assessment described in subsection (a)(1)(A);

''(II) the skills development plan described in subsection (a)(1)(B); and

''(III) the enhancement, development, and implementation of reentry and skills development programs.''.

(2) DUTIES OF THE BUREAU OF PRISONS.—Section 4042(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E), as added by section 231(d)(1)(C) of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–199; 122 Stat. 685), as paragraphs (6) and (7), respectively, and adjusting the margin accordingly;

(B) in paragraph (6), as so redesignated, by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and adjusting the margin accordingly;

(C) in paragraph (7), as so redesignated—

(i) in clause (ii), by striking ''Employment'' and inserting ''Employment and training services (as defined in paragraph (6) of section 231(d) of the Second Chance Act of 2007), including basic skills attainment, consistent with such paragraph''; and

(ii) by striking clause (iii); and

(D) by redesignating clauses (i), (ii), (iv), (v), (vi), and (vii) as subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), and (F), respectively, and adjusting the margin accordingly.

(d) AMENDMENTS TO THE OMNIBUS CRIME CONTROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.—Section 2976 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797w) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''vocational'' and inserting ''career and technical education (as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)) and training'';

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (5), (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(D) coordinating employment and training services provided through the statewide workforce investment system under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 et seq.), including a one-stop delivery system under section 121 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2841), for offenders upon release from prison, jail, or a juvenile facility, as appropriate;'';

(2) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting '', including local workforce investment boards established under section 117 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2832),'' after ''nonprofit organizations'';

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''victims services, and employment services'' and inserting ''and victim services'';

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(D) provides employment and training services through the statewide workforce investment system under subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2811 et seq.), including a one-stop delivery system under section 121 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2841);''; and

(4) in subsection (k)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting '', in accordance with paragraph (2)'' after ''under this section'';

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

''(B) EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.—The Attorney General shall require each grantee under this section to measure the core indicators of performance as described in section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(b)(2)(A)) with respect to the program of such grantee funded with a grant under this section.''.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.—Title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in section 3672(d)(1), by striking ''disabled veterans' outreach program specialists under section 4103A'' and inserting ''veteran employment specialists appointed under section 134(f) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998'';

(2) in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 41, by striking the items relating to sections 4103A and 4104;

(3) in section 4102A—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking paragraphs (5), (6), and (7); and

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (8) as paragraph (5);

(B) by striking subsections (c) and (h);

(C) by redesignating subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (c), (d), (e), and (f); and

(D) in subsection (e)(1) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by striking '', including disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives providing employment, training, and placement services under this chapter in a State''; and

(ii) by striking ''for purposes of subsection (c)'';

(4) in section 4104A—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(i) the appropriate veteran employment specialist (in carrying out the functions described in section 134(f) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998);''; and

(B) in subsection (c)(1), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(i) collaborate with the appropriate veteran employment specialist (as described in section 134(f)) and the appropriate State boards and local boards (as such terms are defined in section 101 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801));'';

(5) in section 4109—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking ''disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representative'' and inserting ''veteran employment specialists appointed under section 134(f) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998''; and

(B) in subsection (d)(1), by striking ''disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives'' and inserting ''veteran employment specialists appointed under section 134(f) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998''; and

(6) in section 4112(d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''disabled veterans' outreach program specialist'' and inserting ''veteran employment specialist appointed under section 134(f) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(f) COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE, COMPENSATION, AND LIABILITY ACT OF 1980.—Section 104(k)(6)(A) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9604(k)(6)(A)) is amended by striking ''training, research, and'' and inserting ''research and''.

SEC. 473. CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents in section 1(b) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

''Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

''TITLE I—WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEMS

''Subtitle A—Workforce Investment Definitions

''Sec. 101. Definitions.

''Subtitle B—Statewide and Local Workforce Investment Systems

''Sec. 106. Purpose.

''CHAPTER 1—STATE PROVISIONS

''Sec. 111. State workforce investment boards.

''Sec. 112. State plan.

''CHAPTER 2—LOCAL PROVISIONS

''Sec. 116. Local workforce investment areas.

''Sec. 117. Local workforce investment boards.

''Sec. 118. Local plan.

''CHAPTER 3—WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES PROVIDERS

''Sec. 121. Establishment of one-stop delivery systems.

''Sec. 122. Identification of eligible providers of training services.

''CHAPTER 5—EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

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Subtitle E—Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

SEC. 476. FINDINGS.

Section 2(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) there is a substantial need to improve and expand services for students with disabilities under this Act.''.

SEC. 477. REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.

(a) REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 3(a) (29 U.S.C. 702(a))—

(A) by striking ''Office of the Secretary'' and inserting ''Department of Education'';

(B) by striking ''President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate'' and inserting ''Secretary''; and

(C) by striking '', and the Commissioner shall be the principal officer,'';

(2) by striking ''Commissioner'' each place it appears (except in section 21) and inserting ''Director'';

(3) in section 12(c) (29 U.S.C. 709(c)), by striking ''Commissioner's'' and inserting ''Director's'';

(4) in section 21 (29 U.S.C. 718)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1)—

(i) by striking ''Commissioner'' the first place it appears and inserting ''Director of the Rehabilitation Services Administration'';

(ii) by striking ''(referred to in this subsection as the 'Director')''; and

(iii) by striking ''The Commissioner and the Director'' and inserting ''Both such Directors''; and

(B) by striking ''the Commissioner and the Director'' each place it appears and inserting ''both such Directors'';

(5) in the heading for subparagraph (B) of section 100(d)(2) (29 U.S.C. 720(d)(2)), by striking ''COMMISSIONER'' and inserting ''DIRECTOR'';

(6) in section 401(a)(1) (29 U.S.C. 781(a)(1)), by inserting ''of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research'' after ''Director'';

(7) in the heading for section 706 (29 U.S.C. 796d–1), by striking ''**COMMISSIONER**'' and inserting ''**DIRECTOR**''; and

(8) in the heading for paragraph (3) of section 723(a) (29 U.S.C. 796f–2(a)), by striking ''COMMISSIONER'' and inserting ''DIRECTOR''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICATION.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall—

(1) take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) apply with respect to the appointments of Directors of the Rehabilitation Services Administration made on or after the date of enactment of this Act, and the Directors so appointed.

SEC. 478. DEFINITIONS.

Section 7 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (35) through (39) as paragraphs (36) through (40), respectively;

(2) in subparagraph (A)(ii) of paragraph (36) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking ''paragraph (36)(C)'' and inserting ''paragraph (37)(C)''; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (34) the following:

''(35)(A) The term 'student with a disability' means an individual with a disability who—

''(i) is not younger than 16 and not older than 21;

''(ii) has been determined to be eligible under section 102(a) for assistance under this title; and

''(iii)(I) is eligible for, and is receiving, special education under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.); or

''(II) is an individual with a disability, for purposes of section 504.

''(B) The term 'students with disabilities' means more than 1 student with a disability.''.

SEC. 479. CARRYOVER.

Section 19(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 716(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''part B of title VI,''.

SEC. 480. TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS.

Section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 718) is amended, in paragraphs (1) and (2)(A) of subsection (b), and in subsection (c), by striking ''VI,''.

SEC. 481. STATE PLAN.

Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (10)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''on the eligible individuals'' and all that follows and inserting ''of information necessary to assess the State's performance on the core indicators of performance described in section 136(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(b)(2)(A)).''; and

(B) in subparagraph (E)(ii), by striking '', to the extent the measures are applicable to individuals with disabilities'';

(2) in paragraph (11)—

(A) in subparagraph (D)(i), by inserting before the semicolon the following: '', which may be provided using alternative means of meeting participation (such as participation through video conferences and conference calls)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(G) COORDINATION WITH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS.—The State plan shall include an assurance that the designated State

unit and the lead agency or implementing entity responsible for carrying out duties under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.'';

(3) in paragraph (15)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) in subclause (II), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(II) in subclause (III), by adding ''and'' at the end; and

(III) by adding at the end the following:

''(IV) students with disabilities, including their need for transition services;'';

(ii) by redesignating clauses (ii) and (iii) as clauses (iii) and (iv), respectively; and

(iii) by inserting after clause (i) the following:

''(ii) include an assessment of the transition services provided under this Act, and coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), about the extent to which those 2 types of services meet the needs of individuals with disabilities;'';

(B) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking ''and under part B of title VI''; and

(C) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) by redesignating clauses (iii), (iv), and (v) as clauses (iv), (v), and (vi), respectively;

(ii) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

''(iii) the methods to be used to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under this title or to postsecondary education or employment;''; and

(iii) in clause (v), as redesignated by clause (i) of this subparagraph, by striking ''evaluation standards'' and inserting ''performance standards'';

(4) in paragraph (22)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT'';

(B) by striking ''carrying out part B of title VI, including''; and

(C) by striking ''that part to supplement funds made available under part B of'';

(5) in paragraph (24)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking ''CONTRACTS'' and inserting ''GRANTS''; and

(B) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the subparagraph heading, by striking ''CONTRACTS'' and inserting ''GRANTS''; and

(ii) by striking ''part A of title VI'' and inserting ''section 109A''; and

(6) by adding at the end the following:

''(25) COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY.—The State plan shall describe how the designated State agency will carry out the provisions of section 109A, including—

''(A) the criteria such agency will use to award grants under such section; and

''(B) how the activities carried out under such grants will be coordinated with other services provided under this title.

''(26) SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.—The State plan shall provide an assurance satisfactory to the Secretary that the State—

''(A) has developed and implemented strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments described in paragraph (15), and achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State in that paragraph, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis in accordance with paragraph (15); and

''(B) from funds reserved under section 110A, shall carry out programs or activities designed to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities that—

''(i) facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school, to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under this title, including, at a minimum, those services specified in the interagency agreement required in paragraph (11)(D);

''(ii) improve the achievement of post-school goals of students with disabilities, including improving the achievement through participation (as appropriate when career goals are discussed) in meetings regarding individualized education programs developed under section 614 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1414);

''(iii) provide career guidance, career exploration services, job search skills and strategies, and technical assistance to students with disabilities;

''(iv) support the provision of training and technical assistance to State and local educational agencies and designated State agency personnel responsible for the planning and provision of services to students with disabilities; and

''(v) support outreach activities to students with disabilities who are eligible for, and need, services under this title.''.

SEC. 482. SCOPE OF SERVICES.

Section 103 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 723) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (15) and inserting the following:

''(15) transition services for students with disabilities, that facilitate the achievement of the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment involved, including services described in clauses (i) through (iii) of section 101(a)(26)(B);'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

''(6)(A)(i) Consultation and technical assistance services to assist State and local educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.

''(ii) Training and technical assistance described in section 101(a)(26)(B)(iv).

''(B) Services for groups of individuals with disabilities who meet the requirements of clauses (i) and (iii) of section 7(35)(A), including services described in clauses (i), (ii), (iii), and (v) of section 101(a)(26)(B), to assist in the transition from school to post-school activities.''; and

(3) in subsection (b), by inserting at the end the following:

''(7) The establishment, development, or improvement of assistive technology demonstration, loan, reutilization, or financing programs in coordination with activities authorized under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) to promote access to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities and employers.''.

SEC. 483. STANDARDS AND INDICATORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 726) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking ''**EVALUATION STANDARDS**'' and inserting ''**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**'';

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

''(a) STANDARDS AND INDICATORS.—The performance standards and indicators for the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this title—

''(1) shall be subject to paragraphs (2)(A) and (3) of section 136(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2871(b)); and

''(2) may, at a State's discretion, include additional indicators identified in the State plan submitted under section 101.''; and

(3) in subsection (b)(2)(B), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) on a biannual basis, review the program improvement efforts of the State and, if the State has not improved its performance to acceptable levels, as determined by the Director, direct the State to make revisions to the plan to improve performance; and''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 107 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 727) is amended—

(1) in subsections (a)(1)(B) and (b)(2), by striking ''evaluation standards'' and inserting ''performance standards''; and

(2) in subsection (c)(1)(B), by striking ''an evaluation standard'' and inserting ''a performance standard''.

SEC. 484. EXPENDITURE OF CERTAIN AMOUNTS.

Section 108(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 728(a)) is amended by striking ''under part B of title VI, or''.

SEC. 485. COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is amended by inserting after section 109 (29 U.S.C. 728a) the following:

''SEC. 109A. COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY.

''(a) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—For the purposes of this section, the term 'eligible entity' means a for-profit business, alone or in partnership with one or more of the following:

''(1) Community rehabilitation program providers.

''(2) Indian tribes.

''(3) Tribal organizations.

''(b) AUTHORITY.—A State shall use not less than one-half of one percent of the payment the State receives under section 111 for a fiscal year to award grants to eligible entities to pay for the Federal share of the cost of carrying out collaborative programs, to create practical job and career readiness and training programs, and to provide job placements and career advancement.

''(c) AWARDS.—Grants under this section shall—

''(1) be awarded for a period not to exceed 5 years; and

''(2) be awarded competitively.

''(d) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant under this section, an eligible entity shall submit an application to a designated State agency at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as such agency shall require. Such application shall include, at a minimum—

''(1) a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the collaborative program;

''(2) a plan for collecting and reporting the data and information described under subparagraphs (A) through (C) of section 101(a)(10), as determined appropriate by the designated State agency; and

''(3) a plan for providing for the non-Federal share of the costs of the program.

''(e) ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall use the grant funds to carry out a program that provides one or more of the following:

''(1) Job development, job placement, and career advancement services for individuals with disabilities.

''(2) Training in realistic work settings in order to prepare individuals with disabilities for employment and career advancement in the competitive market.

''(3) Providing individuals with disabilities with such support services as may be required in order to maintain the employment and career advancement for which the individuals have received training.

''(f) ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES.—An individual shall be eligible for services provided under a program under this section if the individual is determined under section 102(a)(1) to be eligible for assistance under this title.

''(g) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share for a program under this section shall not exceed 80 percent of the costs of the program.''.

SEC. 486. RESERVATION FOR EXPANDED TRANSITION SERVICES.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is amended by inserting after section 110 (29 U.S.C. 730) the following:

''SEC. 110A. RESERVATION FOR EXPANDED TRANSITION SERVICES.

''Each State shall reserve not less than 10 percent of the funds allotted to the State under section 110(a) to carry out programs or activities under sections 101(a)(26)(B) and 103(b)(6).''.

SEC. 487. CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 112(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 732(e)(1)) is amended by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E) and inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

''(D) The Secretary shall make grants to the protection and advocacy system serving the American Indian Consortium under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15001 et seq.) to provide services in accordance with this section, as determined by the Secretary. The amount of such grants shall be the same as the amount provided to territories under this subsection.''.

SEC. 488. RESEARCH.

Section 204(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 764(a)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''VI,''.

SEC. 489. TITLE III AMENDMENTS.

Title III of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 771 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 301(a) (21 U.S.C. 771(a))—

(A) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''and'' at the end;

(B) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4); and

(C) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (3);

(2) in section 302 (29 U.S.C. 772)—

(A) in subsection (g)—

(i) in the heading, by striking ''AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING''; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (3); and

(B) in subsection (h), by striking ''section 306'' and inserting ''section 304'';

(3) in section 303 (29 U.S.C. 773)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''section 306'' and inserting ''section 304''; and

(B) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (4)—

(I) by amending subparagraph (A)(ii) to read as follows:

''(ii) to coordinate activities and work closely with the parent training and information centers established pursuant to section 671 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1471), the community parent resource centers established pursuant to section 672 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 1472), and the eligible entities receiving awards under section 673 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1473); and''; and

(II) in subparagraph (C), by inserting '', and demonstrate the capacity for serving,'' after ''serve''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''(8) RESERVATION.—From the amount appropriated to carry out this subsection for a fiscal year, 20 percent of such amount or $500,000, whichever is less, shall be reserved to carry out paragraph (6).'';

(4) by striking sections 304 and 305 (29 U.S.C. 774, 775); and

(5) by redesignating section 306 (29 U.S.C. 776) as section 304.

SEC. 490. REPEAL OF TITLE VI.

Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 795 et seq.) is repealed.

SEC. 491. TITLE VII GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) PURPOSE.—Section 701(3) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 796(3)) is amended by striking ''State programs of supported employment services receiving assistance under part B of title VI,''.

(b) CHAIRPERSON.—Section 705(b)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 796d(b)(5)) is amended to read as follows:

''(5) CHAIRPERSON.—The Council shall select a chairperson from among the voting membership of the Council.''.

SEC. 492. AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.) is further amended—

(1) in section 100 (29 U.S.C. 720)—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$3,066,192,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years''; and

(B) in subsection (d)(1)(B), by striking ''2003'' and inserting ''2021'';

(2) in section 110(c) (29 U.S.C. 730(c)), by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

''(2) The sum referred to in paragraph (1) shall be, as determined by the Secretary, not less than 1 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the amount referred to in paragraph (1) for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020.'';

(3) in section 112(h) (29 U.S.C. 732(h)), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$11,600,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(4) by amending subsection (a) of section 201 (29 U.S.C. 761(a)) to read as follows: ''(a) There are authorized to be appropriated $103,125,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years to carry out this title.'';

(5) in section 302(i) (29 U.S.C. 772(i)), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$33,657,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(6) in section 303(e) (29 U.S.C. 773(e)), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$5,046,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(7) in section 405 (29 U.S.C. 785), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$3,081,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(8) in section 502(j) (29 U.S.C. 792(j)), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$7,013,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(9) in section 509(l) (29 U.S.C. 794e(l)), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$17,088,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(10) in section 714 (29 U.S.C. 796e–3), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$22,137,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years'';

(11) in section 727 (29 U.S.C. 796f–6), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$75,772,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years''; and

(12) in section 753 (29 U.S.C. 796l), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003'' and inserting ''$32,239,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 6 succeeding fiscal years''.

SEC. 493. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

Section 1(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is amended—

(1) by inserting after the item relating to section 109 the following:

''Sec. 109A. Collaboration with industry.'';

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 110 the following:

''Sec. 110A. Reservation for expanded transition services.'';

(3) by striking the item related to section 304 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 304. Measuring of project outcomes and performance.'';

(4) by striking the items related to sections 305 and 306;

(5) by striking the items related to title VI; and

(6) by striking the item related to section 706 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 706. Responsibilities of the Director.''.

Subtitle F—Studies by the Comptroller General

SEC. 496. STUDY BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL ON EXHAUSTING FEDERAL PELL GRANTS BEFORE ACCESSING WIA FUNDS.

Not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete and submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report that—

(1) evaluates the effectiveness of subparagraph (B) of section 134(d)(4) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864(d)(4)(B)) (as such subparagraph was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act), including—

(A) a review of the regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Labor to State and local areas on how to comply with such subparagraph;

(B) a review of State policies to determine how local areas are required to comply with such subparagraph;

(C) a review of local area policies to determine how one-stop operators are required to comply with such subparagraph; and

(D) a review of a sampling of individuals receiving training services under section 134(d)(4) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2864(d)(4)) to determine if, before receiving such training services, such individuals have exhausted funds received through the Federal Pell Grant program under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.); and

(2) makes appropriate recommendations with respect to the matters evaluated under paragraph (1).

SEC. 497. STUDY BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL ON ADMINISTRATIVE COST SAVINGS.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete and submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report that—

(1) determines the amount of administrative costs at the Federal and State levels for the most recent fiscal year for which satisfactory data are available for—

(A) each of the programs authorized under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et seq.) or repealed under section __71, as such programs were in effect for such fiscal year; and

(B) each of the programs described in subparagraph (A) that have been repealed or consolidated on or after the date of enactment of this Act;

(2) determines the amount of administrative cost savings at the Federal and State levels as a result of repealing and consolidating programs by calculating the differences in the amount of administrative costs between subparagraph (A) and subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1); and

(3) estimates the administrative cost savings at the Federal and State levels for a fiscal year as a result of States consolidating amounts under section 501(e) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (20 U.S.C. 9271(e)) to reduce inefficiencies in the administration of federally-funded State and local employment and training programs.

(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ''administrative costs'' has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801).

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the oversight hearing scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources will now be held before the Subcommittee on Water and Power. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 16, 2014, at 1 p.m., at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the successes and challenges of meeting sustainability goals in Hawaii and the Pacific, including oversight of existing activities and Federal-Island partnerships in energy, water, land use, marine resources, and other sectors.

For further information, please contact Al Stayman at (202) 224–7865 or John Assini at (202) 224–9313.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, at 10:15 a.m. in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Examining the GM Recall and NHTSA's Defect Investigation Process.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, at 10 a.m. in order to conduct a hearing entitled ''Data Breach on the Rise: Protecting Personal Information From Harm.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, at 9:15 a.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Commtitee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 2, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Braylin Cathey, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the Congress.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Theresa Harrison, a legislative fellow in Senator SCHUMER's office, be granted privileges of the floor for the duration of today's session.

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

APOLOGIES TO PRESIDING OFFICER AND STAFF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, from time to time I have to express my apologies to everyone—staff, the Presiding Officer—but I just can't come to the floor until we know what we are going to do tomorrow, and that takes a lot of time. That is what is going on while I am in my office.

So I apologize to everyone. I am sorry that things take so long, and it appears we are doing nothing, but there are things being done.

CONGRATULATING THE PENN STATE WRESTLING TEAM

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 409.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

The resolution (S. Res. 409) congratulating the Penn State University wrestling team for winning the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association Wrestling Championships.

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

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, 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. 409) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business tonight, we adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 3, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 3979; and that all time during adjournment count postcloture on the Reed amendment to H.R. 3979.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are doing our best to reach an agreement both on the unemployment insurance and some executive nominations during tomorrow's session.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:02 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 3, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 2, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TOMASZ P. MALINOWSKI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

PORTIA Y. WU, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEBORAH L. BIRX, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE AND COORDINATOR OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT HIV/AIDS GLOBALLY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LYNDEN GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 2014 Lynden Christian High School girls basketball team. On March 8, the Lynden Lyncs won the 1A state championship, culminating their impressive season with a record of 25–2. I congratulate them on this impressive achievement.

This title is Lynden's 10th and their first since 2008. The Lyncs had one focus all year, ''Team is greater than I.'' Their motto was evident in the championship game as the Lyncs built an early lead that they never relinquished. In the final quarter, King's High School made a late push to bring the game within 4 points, 44–40. But the Lyncs stepped up, determined not to lose this one.

After consecutive scoring drives and solid defense, the Lyncs secured their spot as state champions by a score of 55–40.

I would like to give special recognition to Kara Bajema, the tournament MVP. Senior guard Courtney Hollander also played a pivotal role in the final game, finishing with 11 points and 13 rebounds. The Lyncs' impressive record this season is a testament to their incredible work ethic and the impressive coaching of Curt De Haan. Coach De Haan provided the girls with the training and encouragement necessary to achieve this notable feat.

Again, I congratulate the Lynden Christian High School girls basketball team on all of their success. Their victory was hard-earned and well-deserved.

RECOGNIZING DR. EDWARD LEE FOR 40 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP SERVICE WITH SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH IN McDONOUGH, GEORGIA

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend Dr. Edward W. Lee for his 40 years of servant leadership at Shiloh Baptist Church located in McDonough, Georgia. Over 148 years ago Shiloh Baptist Church opened its doors as the Colored Baptist Church of McDonough as one of the first churches in the area founded by former slaves. Since Shiloh's opening, the church continues to steadfastly serve the spiritual needs of the surrounding community.

On April 5, 2014, Shiloh will honor an essential leader in their community, Reverend Dr. Edward W. Lee, as he marks 40 years of service and leadership with their congregation. Since the start of his tenure in 1974, Reverend Lee has shepherded in monumental growth. Under his guidance, the church moved into a new 30,000 square foot space, drastically increasing the number of available seats from 350 to 1100. Further, he has been instrumental in the fundraising and construction of a new Family Life Center which will house the Shiloh Youth Academy. Even after 40 years of tireless service, Reverend Lee remains steadfast in his commitment to growing and strengthening the Shiloh community.

In addition to serving Shiloh, Reverend Lee is an active member of the Henry County community, regularly volunteering his time to several organizations. Notably, he serves as the chaplain of the Henry County Police Department, chairman of the Henry County United Way Advisory Board, president of the Henry County Ministerial Alliance, board member of the McDonough Housing Authority, and moderator of the Shoal Creek Baptist Association. Further, he previously served as director of the New Era State Congress of Christian Education, board chair of the New Era Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, and as a member of the Board of Directors for Henry County Residential Housing. As a result of his admirable efforts and status as a pillar of the McDonough community, Mayor Richard Craig marked Sunday April 3, 2005, as a day of honor for Reverend Lee.

Reverend Lee has been happily married for 45 years to his dynamic wife Betty. Together, they are the proud parents of two sons and five grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to thank Reverend Lee for his tireless engagement with Shiloh Baptist Church and the surrounding community of McDonough, Georgia. I ask my colleagues to do the same.

CONDEMNING KESSAB ATTACKS

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in Congress in condemning attacks on the Syrian Armenian population in Kessab by extremist fighters connected to al-Qaeda. On March 21, al-Qaeda affiliated terrorists out of Turkey attacked the peaceful Christian-Armenian community in a town that has served as a place of refuge for those trying desperately to escape the bloodshed of the past three years. This brutal assault is yet another consequence of the increasingly dangerous violence in Syria that leaves innocent civilians with no choice but to again flee as they have already done from their homes in Aleppo.

This war and the escalating brutality in the past months have put far too many innocent civilians at risk and I am deeply troubled that recent events including mass exoduses and violent strikes upon the peaceful Armenian communities hark back to the early days of the Armenian Genocide under Ottoman rule nearly 100 years ago. No innocent civilian in any part of the world should be targeted because of their ancestry, ethnicity or religion, and I want to work with my colleagues to find a way to bring an end to such brutal attacks and the increasingly violent civil war ravaging the region that has left over 100,000 dead and forced over 2 million to flee their homes and communities. I will work with my colleagues on the House Foreign Affairs Committee to help find a diplomatic solution to this crisis and ensure that Armenians of Kessab and Aleppo can return to their peaceful lives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2014, I was unavoidably absent and missed the following rollcall votes: No. 149, to Concur in the Senate Amendment to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; No. 150 to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; and No. 151 on approval of the Journal. Had I voted, I would have voted ''aye'' all three votes.

THE WOMEN OFFICIALS NETWORK FOUNDATION WONDER WOMAN AWARDS

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, the Women Officials Network Foundation will be honoring five extraordinary women at the WONder Woman Awards banquet April 30 at the San Marino Club in Troy. The award honors women who have improved the quality of life in Southeast Michigan through their civic, philanthropic and professional accomplishments. This year marks the 30th celebration of WONder Women and many past honorees will attend. The 2014 WONder Women are: Debra Ehrmann, Lisa Gorcyca, Mattie McKinney Hatchett, Ruth Holmes, and Cynthia Walker.

The Honorable Debra Ehrmann has held elected and appointed office including service on the State Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs and the Oakland County Employment Diversity Council. Debra has been Vice President of Centro Multicultural since 2007 and previously worked as the Health Care Coordinator of Clinica Santa Teresa. She is well known and respected for developing networks of stakeholders and volunteers. She is recognized for her dedication to vulnerable populations and for providing interpretation, relationship-building and vital connections for their connection with community services. Debra currently serves on the Genisys Credit Union Board of Directors-VP Supervisory Committee.

The Honorable Lisa Gorcyca is Presiding Judge of the Family Division of the Oakland County Circuit Court. Before her election to the bench in 2008, she spent fifteen years working at the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office as Chief of the Domestic Violence and Elder Abuse Unit. She chairs the Oakland County Coordinating Council Against Domestic Violence and is founder and member of the Oakland County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team. She was recently recognized as a Top Circuit Court Judge for 2014.

The Honorable Mattie McKinney Hatchett was first elected to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners in 2002 and made history in 2011, when she became the first African-American woman to serve as President of the Michigan Association of Counties. Known as "The Mother of Pontiac," Mattie served as Deputy Mayor and has spent more than fifty years advocating for her community. Since 1963, she has been actively involved with the Pontiac School District as an employee and volunteer. Presently, she is a Trustee on the Pontiac Board of Education.

Ruth Elliott Holmes is President of the International Women's Forum—Michigan which brings together a global membership of women to exchange ideas, to learn, to inspire and to promote better leadership for a changing world. In eleven years overseas, she worked for the African-American Institute in Abidjan in the Ivory Coast and was active in the international community in Brussels, Belgium. She serves on many professional boards and is a Trustee for the National Association of Document Examiners. A handwriting examiner and personnel consultant, Ruth owns her own business and was named 2010 Innovator of the Year, one of Michigan's Top 10 Women Business Owners and, in 2002, Corp! magazine listed her among Michigan's 95 Most Powerful Women.

The Honorable Cynthia Thomas Walker currently serves as Chief Judge of the 50th District Court in Pontiac and has been a district judge since 2003. Before taking the bench, she worked as Court Administrator of that court, as Pontiac City Attorney, and as a staff attorney for UAW Legal Services and for Legal Services of Eastern Michigan. She serves on the board of the Oakland County Bar Association and is active in judicial, professional and civic organizations. She supports the Teen Court program at her court and volunteers her time at local schools, churches, and non-profit organizations.

All WONder Women demonstrate achievement in each of the following areas: contribute to the community beyond that which is required in their employment; demonstrate character, commitment and leadership; and assist women/girls in reaching full leadership potential through civic engagement, personal and professional contacts, or resources.

The WON Foundation advances the vision and mission of the Women Officials Network: empowering leaders of today and mentoring women leaders of tomorrow. The Women Officials Network envisions more women in Leadership positions at all levels of government.

TALLGRASS ENERGY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Tallgrass Energy for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Tallgrass Energy provides natural gas transportation and storage services for customers in the Rocky Mountain region through its pipelines and natural gas processing assets. Tallgrass Energy is committed to public safety, monitoring their pipeline operation 24 hours a day every day. The company recently added 58 high paying jobs in 2013.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Tallgrass Energy for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to innovation high standards and delivering quality products.

RECOGNITION OF SHEN YUN PERFORMANCE AT PROCTORS THEATER IN SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the upcoming Shen Yun Performing Arts presentation at Proctors Theatre in Schenectady, New York on April 27, 2014.

Shen Yun Performing Arts troupe performances incorporate Chinese dance, ethnic folk dance, and story-based dance, accompanied by an orchestra mixing modern and traditional Chinese instruments. These performances incorporate large groups of dancers presenting traditional vignettes spanning several millennia of Chinese history. Dancers wear ornate costumes and make use of a variety of props, while performing in front of a projected backdrop.

As the largest Chinese music and dance ensemble in the world, Shen Yun offers an opportunity for cultural and artistic enrichment this month at historic Proctors Theatre in Schenectady, New York.

COMMENDING THE ALL INDIA SHRI SHIVAJI MEMORIAL SOCIETY (AISSMS)

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the All India Shri Shivaji Memorial Society (AISSMS) established in 1917 by the late His Highness Shrimant Chattrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur and His Highness Alija Bahadur Madhavrao Scindia Maharaj of Gwalior, with the foundation stone laid by the Prince of Wales on November 19, 1921 in Pune, India.

AISSMS was established for the purpose of "throwing open to all alike the doors of knowledge through liberal education." It was established to memorialize the great Shivaji, a statesman and warrior, a bold reformer who not only founded an Empire, but created a Nation, based on a vision of ideals and dreams which AISSMS is realizing.

From a renowned military school to Day schools to Junior Colleges to a foray into higher and technical education, AISSMS now runs world class institutions in various disciplines. AISSMS institutions have obtained accreditation from the National Board of Accreditation and have signed MOU's with Universities from the UK, the USA and Germany to run joint programs of global standards.

I am proud of AISSMS and recognize the importance of its history and impact on past, present and future generations. I especially commend its Office Bearers—H.H. Shrimant Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj who serves as President; Vice President Shrimant Yuvraj Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati; Honorary Secretary Shri Malojiraje Chhatrapati; Treasurer Shri Ajay Uttamrao Patil; Chairman of the Governing Council Shri Vishwas Bajirao Patil; Honorary Joint Secretary Shri Ratnakar K. Jitkar Shri Ajay Uttamrao; Chairman of the Managing Committee Shri Sahebrao R. Jadhav, the Governing Council, the Managing Committee and other notables.

I also pay tribute to Captain Shivaji Mahadkar, Managing Trustee of the Takshashila Education Trust, who visited my office in Washington, DC and personally extended an invite for me to speak to members of the esteemed All India Shri Shivaji Memorial Society and to a gathering of faculty, staff and students. In my absence, I have entered this Statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for historical purposes as a matter of appreciation for the invitation which was extended to me but moreover to recognize and commend AISSMS for the critical role it has played in shaping and defining India, and for bringing hope to all who are, have been, or will be associated with its noble cause.

As the former Chairman and current Ranking Member of the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, which has broad jurisdiction for U.S. policy affecting the region, including India, I am proud to be associated with AISSMS. The U.S. and India are on a path to expanding higher education partnerships with a focus to build more purposeful connections. In doing so, it is my sincere hope that AISSMS and my alma mater, Brigham Young University, and other institutions of learning, will connect in ways that bring new hope and new ideas to both countries.

I thank Mr. Sanjay Puri, founder and Chairman of the Alliance for U.S.-India Business (AUSIB) for introducing me to AISSMS, and for the good work he continues to do for and on behalf of India and Indian Americans. In 2011 and 2013, AUSIB hosted two of the largest U.S.-India education conclaves and, on March 13, 2013, Mr. Puri testified as an expert witness before the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, calling for enhanced education collaboration as a means to strengthen U.S.-India relations.

Now more than ever, the U.S. and India must be about academic collaboration and exchange, and I commend those with the foresight to march ahead, echoing the vision of the founders of AISSMS.

CONGRATULATING IRAM ALI

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend congratulations to my constituent, Iram Ali, on her appointment to the Senior Executive Service at the Department of Defense as the White House liaison. Iram served in this body as a distinguished professional staff member on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence under Chairman Reyes. After briefly working in the Senate, Iram was recruited by the Obama Administration to serve in the Department of Defense as the legislative lead for the Under Secretary for Policy.

She now returns to the Department with the duty of ensuring the President has the right personnel in place to implement his policies, a position of great responsibility and distinction. As one of the few Muslim-Americans serving in such senior positions, Iram represents the finest qualities of a public servant and is an asset to her nation. I am honored to have her as a constituent, and I wish her all of the best in her new position.

OUTLAST TECHNOLOGIES LLC

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Outlast Technologies LLC for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Outlast Technologies LLC, located in Golden, Colorado, was founded on technology developed by a group of NASA researchers. The company develops temperature controlling technology that can absorb heat and reduce moisture in products such as ski jackets, socks, blankets and mattress pads. Outlast Technologies LLC owns over 96 issued patents and 59 pending patents related to thermally adaptive materials. They continue to explore medical, military, furnishings and other markets.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Outlast Technologies LLC for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to innovation, high standards and quality products.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 1, I missed 3 rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on Nos. 149 and 151, and "yea" on No. 150.

HONORING THE REV. FRANCE DAVIS

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rev. France Davis for a remarkable 40-year career building bridges, fighting racial discrimination and living the principles he teaches his flock at the historic Calvary Baptist Church in Salt Lake City, Utah.

With his wife Willene by his side, Rev. Davis has both lived and taught the Gospel of Jesus Christ, advocating for the impoverished, inspiring the young and invigorating the fight against racism. He has been a powerful mentor to young people, sponsoring scholarships as well as educational programs. His belief that everybody has worth and value, nobody is nobody and everybody is somebody has influenced a generation of youth.

Born in 1946 in Gough, Georgia, Rev. Davis graduated from the segregated Waynesboro High and Industrial School. He went on to serve as an aircraft mechanic in the U.S. Air Force. He has earned five college degrees, including a B.A. in rhetoric from Berkeley, a B.S. in religion from Westminster College and an M.A. in mass communication from University of Utah. Rev. Davis came to Salt Lake City for a one-year teaching fellowship at the University of Utah, but became an integral part of the city's religious and cultural fabric over the next four decades.

Rev. Davis was a pioneer in his own right before coming to Utah in 1972. He participated in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, meeting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in person and marching from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to promote voting rights. He has been a tireless advocate for minorities in Utah. His own experiences with racial discrimination only inspired him to fight harder for equality. An NAACP board member for many years, Rev. Davis was instrumental in making Martin Luther King, Jr. Day an official state-recognized holiday. It goes without saying that he has been an integral part of Utah's cultural evolution on civil rights.

In addition to his ministry, Rev. Davis is the author of several books, has taught at the University of Utah and served as a member of the Utah Higher Education Board of Regents. He is also the benefactor of a scholarship for minority students. Professionally, he has served as the secretary of the Salt Lake Ministerial Association, a member of the South Africa Preaching Team for the National Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission and as an advisor, vice-president and assistant to the Dean of the Intermountain General Baptist Convention.

Mr. Speaker, Utah is a better place because of the efforts of Rev. Davis. We honor his significant contributions, his willingness to be a voice for the voiceless, and his personal history of overcoming adversity. But most of all, we recognize his example as a teacher and follower of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

HONORING JOAN PRICE

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Joan Price, a leader in San Antonio whose life and work was a testament that neighborhood associations are vital to a democracy and in exercising civic responsibility and power.

Mrs. Price was born in Philadelphia, PA in 1932 but it was in San Antonio, TX where, as one of the founders of the Ingram Hills Neighborhood Association, she made an enduring mark. For 14 remarkable and trail-blazing years, she served as the association's president.

Earlier than most, Mrs. Price saw the democratic and communitarian potential of neighborhoods. She understood and demonstrated that neighborhood associations are ideal for building relationships, creating community, developing leadership, raising voices and keeping officials accountable. She knew that the advocacy of good neighborhood associations led to quality services such as public safety, parks, community centers and zoning laws that did not violate the character of a neighborhood.

Mrs. Price worked closely with all of her elected officials in thinking about and carrying out projects that would benefit not just the neighborhood she deeply loved but also the city she equally cherished. For many years, Mrs. Price successfully fought hard for a neighborhood park. In 2011, that park was renamed in her honor

Mrs. Price wrote the award-winning Ingram Hills Neighborhood Association newsletter, "The Neighbor Connection." That title also speaks to her life and work. Not only was she the distinctive voice of a neighborhood but in the true spirit of neighborliness, she connected people with each other, connected them with their elected officials and connected them with their civic ideals and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have been blessed to have Joan Price as a friend and I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize this magnificent woman, great San Antonian and true neighbor to all she knew.

SPOTXCHANGE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud SpotXchange for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

SpotXchange is a digital video advertising technology company connecting thousands of publishers with trusted demand sources. Each month SpotXchange video inventory reaches over 200 million visitors in more than 80 countries. Their advanced transparency and unmatched customer service around the world is a testament to their success. SpotXchange hired 48 engineers and is poised to expand rapidly this year.

I extend my deepest congratulations to SpotXchange for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to outstanding customer service, high standards and quality products.

RECOGNIZING THE MANIGAULT-HURLEY FAMILY'S SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate to recognize the Manigault-Hurley Family for their dedicated service to the Midlands community. After 90 years of dedicated service to generations of South Carolinians, the oldest family-owned funeral home in the Columbia area, closed its doors earlier last month.

Founded in 1923, by William Manigault, the Manigault-Hurley Funeral Home was a family business in every sense of the word. After William's passing his wife, Annie Rivers Manigault continued to operate the funeral home until 1954. Anna May Manigault-Hurley, daughter of William and Annie, took over the business becoming the first female licensed embalmer in the state. She managed the successful business for 50 years. Anna's son and current owner Anthony (Tony) M. Hurley grew up helping with the family business which he operated with the help of his wife, Alice Wyche Hurley, and their three children, Brian, Kelly, and Michelle.

According to The State Newspaper's March 15th article 'Nothing is Forever,' ''Manigault's was one of four black undertaking establishments operating in Columbia during the late 1920's according to the Roberts photo book, 'A True Likeness.' His shot of the storefront, in the 700 block of Main, shows a street lined with black Cadillacs.

Manigault expanded into caskets. During the Depression, his Congaree Casket Co. reportedly employed more black people than any other black-owned business in South Carolina.''

Nate Abraham, Jr., in Carolina Panorama on March 20 reported ''We have served four generations of the Columbia community,'' said Mrs. [Alice] Hurley. ''And we are happy with that. We will certainly miss being a part of the business community, but like everything else, life goes in stages. We are just now moving into another stage.''

With its closing, the Manigault-Hurley Funeral Home leaves behind a legacy of a family business dedicated to professionalism and compassionate service. The Wilson and Johnson families know firsthand of the Hurley Family's thoughtfulness in times of grief. They were instrumental in providing world-class arrangements. South Carolinians will offer the Manigault-Hurley family best wishes for success in future endeavors. May their lives be filled with health and happiness knowing they have made a lasting difference for so many families.

RECOGNIZING SUSAN FINN BRITA

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Susan Finn Brita for her more than 29 years of dedicated public service, in both the legislative and executive branches. Susan was my closest committee advisor when I came to the House in 1991 and remained invaluable counsel until she became General Services Administration (GSA) Deputy Administrator in 2010.

Susan began her career in public service as Chief of Staff to then GSA Administrator Terence Golden in 1985, after earning her Master's degree in Public Administration from George Washington University. In 1992, Susan was recruited to become Staff Director for the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, a position she held for 15 years. In 2010, Susan was recruited by the Obama administration to become GSA Deputy Administrator.

During her 29 years of federal service, Ms. Brita has mastered all phases of federal property management, including asset acquisition through construction, leasing, purchase, and long-term financing, repair and alterations, and surplus property disposal. She also has played a key role in the implementation of federal energy policy in federal buildings, including courthouses, as well as in the implementation of policies directed at building sustainability. Ms. Brita was heavily involved in evaluating and making recommendations to improve GSA's nationwide leasing program, reforming the GSA Courthouse Construction Program, and giving GSA the authority to redevelop and sell underutilized federal property. In addition she played pivotal roles in many projects under the jurisdiction of GSA, including the redevelopment of the Old Post Office Building, the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center, the Hotel Monaco, the Southeast Federal Center, and the West Campus of St. Elizabeths.

On March 31, 2014, Susan Brita retired from the GSA. Susan's advice and counsel have been indispensable to me, to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and the Congress in helping to make GSA a true partner with the private sector to construct and redevelop property across the nation, while containing cost to federal taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Susan Finn Brita for a life of committed service to the people of the United States and the federal government, and in congratulating her on her extraordinary achievements as she retires from the administration and federal service.

TRIBUTE TO CLARKSON UNIVERSITY DIVISION I WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Clarkson University women's ice hockey team for winning the 2014 Women's ''Frozen Four'' NCAA Division I National Championship.

The Clarkson University women's ice hockey team also led the nation with the fewest goals allowed per game (1.12) and a top-ranked penalty kill of 92.5 percent. Their efforts earned them an impressive 31–5–5 record and the first NCAA Division I national championship in the history of Clarkson University athletics.

Numerous players on Clarkson's championship team were recognized for their individual achievements. Three players, forward Jamie Lee Rattray, defenseman Renata Fast, and goalie Erica Howe were named to the 2014 NCAA Frozen Four All-Tournament Team, with Rattray also recognized as the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

Several days before the championship, Ms. Rattray was recognized with the prestigious Patty Kazmaier Award presented annually to the top player in NCAA Division I women's ice hockey. According to the USA Hockey Foundation, selection criteria for this award include outstanding individual and team skills, sportsmanship, performance in the clutch, personal character, competitiveness, and a love of hockey. Consideration is also given to academic achievement and civic involvement.

Clarkson players also led the nation in several categories this year. Ms. Rattray finished the season leading in total points with 66 and in power-play goals with 10. Erin Ambrose led among defensemen with 50 points, 14 goals, and 36 assists. Clarkson goalie Erica Howe compiled the lowest goals against average, 1.10, and the most shutouts with 14.

This championship is an historic achievement for Clarkson University's women's ice hockey team. While I was unfortunately unable to attend the championship game, the team's success serves as an enduring example of what can be achieved through great teamwork and a shared commitment to excellence.

OZ SNOWBOARDS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Oz Snowboards for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Oz Snowboards manufacturer integrated aerospace design concepts into its construction by replacing heavy fiberglass with high

performance tri-axial grade carbon fiber to manufacture state of the art snowboards. In addition, Oz Snowboards is committed to maintaining its manufacturing operation here in Colorado.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Oz Snowboards for receiving this prestigious award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment innovation, high standards and quality products.

RECOGNIZING THE JOURNEY HOME

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Journey Home, a veterans homeless shelter in east-central Indiana.

On March 21, 2014, The Journey Home started serving disadvantaged veterans throughout 5 Indiana counties. The program will help veterans overcome challenges such as homelessness, addiction, alcoholism, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The organization functions as a 6-month program in which veterans make a personal commitment to recovery and establish an environment of support for when they leave the shelter.

The Journey Home serves Delaware, Henry, Jay, Randolph, and Wayne Counties. I want to personally recognized Bill Davis, Linda DeHaven, and Mike Kennedy for the tremendous effort each individual contributed to make this project happen. Through passion for our veterans and dedication to seeing a positive change, these three people have helped create an organization that will benefit our veterans, their families, and their neighbors.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to join me in recognizing the incredible potential impact The Journey Home will have on the 5 counties it serves in Indiana. This nonprofit organization demonstrates the great work that can be done when hardworking individuals come together to improve their community and the quality of life of others.

HONORING LAURYN WILLIAMS OF HOUSTON, TEXAS: 3-TIME OLYMPIAN, RECORD-SETTING ATHLETE, AND MENTOR AND ROLE MODEL FOR YOUNG PERSONS THE WORLD OVER

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in order to not only recognize but also honor Ms. Lauryn Williams for her extraordinary Olympic achievements and leadership.

Lauryn Williams is one of the greatest athletes in the history of track and field; a three-time Olympian, the Silver Medalist in the 100 meters at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and a member of the team that won the Gold Medal in the 4 × 100 meters relay at 2012 Olympic Games in London.

As a collegian at the University of Miami from which she graduated with a B.A. in Finance, Lauryn Williams won the 100 meters at the 2004 NCAA Championship and followed that performance the next year by winning the Gold Medal in the 100 meters at the 2005 World Championship Games in Helsinki, Finland.

She solidified her place at the top of her sport in 2006 by winning Silver medals in the 6o meters at both the World Indoor Championships and the U.S. Championship.

In 2004, Lauryn Williams ran the fastest legal-wind time and the second fastest time in the world that year. She was named the 2004 Big East Most Outstanding Performer and honored as the 2004 Athlete of the Year by the Sports Council.

In 2007, at the World Championships in Osaka, Lauryn Williams once again showed that she is one the best. Using great form and her will to succeed, she took the Silver medal in one of the closest finishes ever seen in the history of track and field.

Lauryn Williams is one of only five persons in history to medal in both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

In December 2013, Lauryn Williams embarked upon the World Cup Race Circuit and won 2 silver and 1 gold medal in the four races.

In January 2014, she was named to the USA Olympic Bobsled Team representing the United States with just six (6) total months of participation in the sport.

Paired with Elana Meyers in the BMW USA–1 sled, Lauryn Williams won the Silver medal at the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, missing out on winning the Gold Medal by a mere 0.10 second.

As a three-time Olympian, Lauryn Williams knows the hard work and dedication required to take bobsled to the next level and bring home a medal; she has a work ethic matched by few.

From an early age, her parents stressed the importance of education and the message stuck. While succeeding on the track, she also succeeded and excelled in the classroom.

She received her Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Miami in 2004, and even gave the commencement address at her own graduation. She also obtained a Florida Real Estate Sale Associate license in 2006.

Additionally, during the 2008 Olympic year, while training full time to make the Olympic team, she also managed to simultaneously work on a Master of Business Administration degree, which she received from the University of Phoenix, AZ in 2009.

Recently, Lauryn Williams was struck with a passion for empowering athletes with financial literacy and stability so she completed the course work for Certified Financial Planning and will soon take the exam for CFP certification.

After Lauryn Williams returned home from the Sochi Olympic Games, she turned her focus to working with Olympians and other athletes to improve their financial literacy and stability in an effort to continue making a difference in the sporting world.

Lauryn's inspiring story of hard work, dedication and perseverance will motivate and inspire people of all ages.

Mr. Speaker, Lauryn Williams has been the recipient of many honors, including: Pennsylvania Sportswoman of the Decade 2009; member Iron Arrow Honor Society, highest honor attainable at The University of Miami; Jefferson Award for Public Service Dream Team 2009; Miami Alumni Association William R. Butler Community Service Award 2008; Women in Sports Foundation honoree 2007; Visa Humanitarian 2006; Dapper Dan Sports woman of the year 2005; Runner's World-Hero of Running 2005; University of Miami Athletic Department Community Service Award 2002–2003.

Mr. Speaker, as an athlete Lauryn Williams represented our country with skill and grace and excellence and has earned the respect and affection of millions around the world. I take pride in saluting the remarkable achievements of this remarkable woman and world class athlete.

IN TRIBUTE TO REVEREND DOCTOR CHARLES EVERTON THORNHILL

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Doctor, Charles Everton Thornhill will celebrate his 85th birthday on Friday, April 11, 2014. He will be celebrating this special occasion with members of his congregation, colleagues, family and friends. The Reverend Dr. Charles Everton Thornhill is pastor of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Reverend Thornhill said that God chose his mate, Mary Catherine Thornhill, and they have been married for over 56 years.

Dr. Thornhill was born April 9, 1929 in Cambridge, Massachusetts and was educated in the Cambridge Public Schools. He graduated from Zion Bible College in East Providence, Rhode Island, receiving a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Doctorate of Ministry from St. Martin College & Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and a Doctorate of Divinity Degree from the Urban Bible College in Detroit, Michigan.

Reverend Thornhill has been a pastor both preaching and teaching for over 50 years. The first church he pastored was Zion Mission which he led for two years in Hyannis, Massachusetts. This was followed by his leadership at Beulah Temple Church for four years in Louisville, Kentucky. He moved to Milwaukee to join his friend, the late Reverend Kenneth Bowen pastor of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church. Rev. Bowen was also a native of Cambridge, Massachusetts; Reverend Thornhill served as the Assistant Pastor of Mt. Moriah for 12 years. He left Mt. Moriah to become Pastor of Greater Mount Eagle Baptist Church in Racine, Wisconsin where he served for 24 years. Reverend Thornhill was asked to return to Mt. Moriah Baptist Church and has continued to pastor for nearly 20 years.

Dr. Thornhill is in the midst of a rebuilding and renovation program for their worship facility. In April, 2014, a chapel will be completed where the Mt. Moriah Educational Building once stood. Further, the current church building will be razed and be replaced with a new church building. The chapel constructed in 2014 will then be converted to the fellowship hall.

Dr. Thornhill is in great demand as a speaker around his community, city, and this country. He is an instructor at the National Baptist

Congress of Christian Education and the Wisconsin General Baptist State Congress of Christian Education. He teaches a theology class every Monday night in ''Milwaukee to Pastors.'' He has served on boards of various social, economic, educational and philanthropic organizations. Pastor Thornhill has announced that this is his ''Caleb Year'' because Caleb was 85 years of age when he and descendants were rewarded by God with their promise. Caleb awaited his promise for 40 years remaining faithful and displaying triumphant faith; like Caleb, time has neither dimmed Reverend Thornhill's faith nor his spiritual vision.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to praise Reverend Dr. Charles Everton Thornhill who is my pastor and my friend. I honor his many accomplishments and life time commitment to the entire Milwaukee Community and the 4th Congressional District.

ZACHARY FOULKE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Zachary Foulke for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Zachary Foulke is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Zachary Foulke is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Zachary Foulke for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,601,227,291,213.89. We've added $6,974,350,242,300.81 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $6.9 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the upcoming anniversary of the essential diplomatic relationship between the United States and Taiwan. This enduring partnership is built upon strong cultural ties and the shared values of democracy and the rule of law.

The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which was passed by the United States Congress and signed into law on April 10, 1979, serves as the legal basis for relations between United States and Taiwan. 35 years later, the TRA remains the foundation of the continuous bilateral relationship between our two countries and represents the United States' commitment to the people on Taiwan.

I was proud to support US-Taiwan relations in 1979, and I am proud to support US-Taiwan relations today.

The TRA has enabled Taiwan to flourish as a democracy while at the same time achieving miraculous economic growth. The TRA provides the confidence that has allowed Taiwan to govern itself, expand trade with the global marketplace, and engage in cross-Strait negotiations. We, as a Congress, are proud of what we created with the Taiwan Relations Act and will do everything in our power to uphold this law that has proved so fruitful for Taiwan and the United States.

As we commemorate the 35th anniversary of the TRA, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new chief representative of Taiwan to the United States, Ambassador Lyushun Shen. Ambassador Shen is a seasoned diplomat with many years of experience working in Washington, D.C. I am confident that he will continue developing the common interests for our countries, and I look forward to working with him.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER WARHAWKS

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's Warhawks, who won the Division III Basketball National Championship on March 22, 2014. The Warhawks, led by point guard KJ Evans and Head Coach Pat Miller, displayed a tremendous amount of grit, determination, skill, and athleticism throughout their season. In a hard-fought battle, Whitewater beat Williams College 75–73. The victory marked the fourth national title for the Warhawks. They now have the second-most basketball championships of all time in Division III.

The success of UW-Whitewater basketball has made the residents of Wisconsin proud and I salute the entire team: Alex Merg, Patrick Souter, Brian Roedl, Quardell Young, Cody Odegaard, Sean Klemp, KJ Evans, Reggie Hearn, Eric Bryson, Terrence Bradley, Drew Bryson, Miles Chamberlain, Ryan McBride, Dylan Graf, Steve Egan, Alex LeGault, Clay Stevens, and Cole Van Schyndel.

Winning a national championship is never easy. On behalf of my congressional office and my constituents in Wisconsin's fifth district, I commend the coaches and players at UW-Whitewater for their hard work and dedication, and wish them continued success in the future.

YAMILE HERNANDEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yamile Hernandez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Yamile Hernandez is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5–8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Yamile Hernandez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Yamile Hernandez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING SOEURS CHARMANTES SOCIAL AND CIVIC CLUB

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a group of women who has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication and a desire to serve their community, the Les Soeurs Charmantes Social and Civic Club. This Social and Civic Club has served as an informational vehicle in the Warren County community and the State of Mississippi.

The Les Soeurs Charmantes Social and Civic Club was organized at the home of Mrs. Melissa L. Demby on November 3, 1968. The purpose of the organization is to promote service, philanthropic as well as cultural and social interests. Colors selected for the organization are blue and white. The club song was written to the tune of ''My Fair Lady'' by club member Daisy Bell. In 1970, the club became affiliated with the National Association of Colored Women's Club. Chartered members who are still active with the club today are: Mrs. Gwendolyn Brown, Mrs. Helen Bowman, Mrs. Beverly Gaskin and Mrs. Carolyn Strothers.

The first debutante ball was held in March, 1971 at the Vicksburg City Auditorium and 16 girls were presented to society. The purpose

of the event was to encourage black girls to take pride in their character and scholarship. Proceeds from the debutante ball have provided scholarships to young ladies for over 40 years.

Also proceeds have been used to fund many civic projects in the Vicksburg, Mississippi community such as: donations to the local battered women's shelters, tutorial programs, art projects, NAACP, Meals-on-Wheels, Techno-Color Rewind (Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital), Patricia A. Segrest Memorial Sickle Cell Walk, Vicksburg Benevolent Homecoming Club Scholarship, donations of blankets to nursing homes and the We Care Community Service Organization Scholarship.

The club also provides the Clara Rhodman Prosser Scholarship, in honor of their beloved club member, to local high school graduates. Many of the debutantes have gone on to pursue various professional and educational paths as teachers, lawyers, doctors, entrepreneurs, military, etc.

The Les Soeurs Charmantes Social and Civic Club still stands strong as one of the few organizations still in existence today promoting achievement and academic excellence to young ladies ready to make their mark upon the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Les Soeurs Charmantes Social and Civic Club for its dedication to serving others and giving back to the community.

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL GME SUPPORT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.,

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of S. 1557, the Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act of 2013.

As every parent knows, it's very important to have a trusted doctor to turn to when their child gets sick. Since its inception in 1999, the Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Program—known as CHGME—has helped to make sure that a doctor is there and prepared to diagnose any symptoms our children face.

In fact, the program has been a true success. In the 1990s declines in pediatric training programs threatened the stability of the pediatric workforce. CHGME helped to reverse these dangerous declines. Even then, Congress, on a bipartisan manner recognized that if we didn't create and fund programs that would train doctors to treat these children, there won't be anyone left to take care of them.

That is why, the House overwhelmingly supported reauthorization of the program in the 112th and 113th Congresses, passing standalone legislation in September 2011, including the reauthorization in broader legislation in December 2012, and approving standalone legislation one year ago.

The legislation before us today—which has already cleared the Senate by unanimous consent—reauthorizes the program through fiscal year 2018 and makes two important changes to the program.

First, S. 1557 allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to undertake a limited program expansion to include children's psychiatric hospitals and other freestanding children's hospitals that have been ineligible to participate in the program for technical reasons.

Second, it gives the Secretary the authority to redistribute funding set-aside for the newly-eligible hospitals that is unused, based upon quality measures that are consistent with residency program accreditation criteria and that are developed in consultation with stakeholders.

With this federal CHGME support, children's hospitals can play a key role in ensuring the continued growth of our nation's pediatric workforce. In 2012, the program supported the training of 6,015 resident physicians nationally. The program will also help to enhance hospitals' research capabilities and improve hospitals' ability to provide care to vulnerable and underserved children.

I want to thank Congressman JOE PITTS, the Chairman of our Health Subcommittee, for working with me on the House bill. Together with his help and leadership, we advanced House CHGME legislation upon convening the 113th Congress. A special thanks to Chairman Upton and Ranking Member WAXMAN for their support in addressing this critical program.

I also want to commend Senators CASEY and ISAKSON for their leadership on this legislation in the Senate and hard work to address concerns raised about children's psychiatric hospitals and other children's hospitals being excluded from the program in a fair and balanced way.

Mr. Speaker, this program has proven results and it is past time that we finally reauthorize CHGME so that we can provide certainty to hospitals, doctors and their patients.

Children in our communities are counting on this program to train a future generation of pediatricians. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on S. 1557 and to send this measure to the President.

TRIBUTE TO BILLY D. WILLIAMS

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a loyal South Carolinian who has dedicated his life to public service.

Billy D. Williams is turning 75 on April 18 and will be celebrating with his wife, Anita Frazier, friends and family on April 5 at Savannah Grove Church.

Mr. Williams was born in Florence, South Carolina where he was the youngest of seven children. He graduated from Wilson High School and attended the Fashion Institute and Design. He is also a graduate of the Strom Thurmond Institute of Government.

As an African American growing up in the deep South just as integration was beginning to take hold, Billy made a commendable choice to take a life of public service in order to better the lives of his neighbors and the communities he has known all of his life.

In 1988, Billy was elected to the Florence City Council, where he served for 23 years. During that tenure, he also served as Mayor Pro Tem. During his time as an elected official, he served in several local, state and national capacities. He was one of the founders of the South Carolina Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials and served as its President for several years. He was a board member of the National League of Cities and the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC–LEO), and as a member of the Advisory Board of the National League of Cities.

During his tenure on the Florence City Council, Billy fought for and spearheaded reforms for better housing, improvements in education and access to affordable, quality health care for the citizens of Florence. His accomplishments included the construction of the Cambridge Apartments and Coit Village Apartments, an affordable housing subdivision in Williams Heights, 15 affordable houses in North Florence and several ''Habitat for Humanity'' houses in West Florence.

Billy also served as President of the Wilson High School PTA and was a member of the Wilson High School Alumni Association. He also organized the Latch Key Kids Program of America which is a partnership between Florence School District One and the National League of Cities.

Billy is a member of various social and civic organizations in South Carolina including the NAACP, Hiram Lodge #13 Prince Hall Masons, Pee Dee Consistory and Crescent Temple. He also served as a board member of the Pee Dee Transitional Shelter. He is currently the Vice President of the Pee Dee Healthy Start Board.

Most recently, Billy received the Palmetto Award and the National Service to Youth Award from the Boys and Girls Club of America for his 15 years of devoted service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Billy D. Williams on his 75th birthday and decades of dedicated and productive service to human kind. His commitment to his community is exemplary, and his contributions are incalculable. I wish him all the best and many more years of service.

APPLIED RESEARCH ASSOCIATES, INC.

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Applied Research Associates, Inc. for being honored with the Business Recognition Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Business Recognition Award is given to a Jefferson County company which shows growth in employment, sales and capital investment in the last year.

Applied Research Associates, Inc. is an international research engineering firm that provides technical solutions to help solve problems of national importance. The company's philosophy incorporates a code of ethics and standard of conduct in everything they do.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Applied Research Associates, Inc. for receiving the Business Recognition Award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your commitment to our nation and the Jefferson County community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAY HUTCHISON

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ray Hutchison, the husband of former U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison. Mr. Hutchison was a dedicated public servant and power broker who played a key role in the creation of many of North Texas' most important economic engines.

After serving in the Navy, Mr. Hutchison attended Southern Methodist University on the G.I. bill and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1957 and with a law degree in 1959. Mr. Hutchison, a lifelong active civil servant was elected to the Texas House Legislature in 1972. I consider it a privilege to have served in the Texas House Legislature with Mr. Hutchison from 1973 to 1977. It was in the State legislature where he and Mrs. Hutchison first met and began their 36 years of marriage. In 1976 Mr. Hutchison was elected as chairman of the Texas Republican Party and stepped down the following year in an unsuccessful run for governor.

Mr. Hutchison was known as a genius in the field of finance law. He served as senior counsel at the Dallas law firm of Bacewell & Giuliani where he worked as recently as this past Thursday. Mr. Hutchison used his expertise specializing in government finance to help implement major city improvements such as the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, DART and stadiums for the Mavericks, Cowboys and Rangers. He was a member of the Dallas Citizens Council, the Dallas Chamber of Commerce, and served on the Executive Board of the Chancellor's Council for the University of Texas System.

I extend my deepest condolences to the Hutchison family during this time of grieving. Our country has benefitted immensely from his career in public service and his memory will continue to inspire others. I wish to commend Ray Hutchison and thank him for his service to this great Nation. Through his work he has created positive pathways many future generations.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 149, 150, 151, weather issues in California caused me to miss my flight. Therefore I did not arrive in Washington, DC until late in the evening. Had I been present, I would have voted, "yes".

COMMENDING VIETNAM

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Viet Nam for its national report on the promotion and protection of human rights under the 2nd cycle universal periodic review.

The report is drafted in accordance with the guidelines of Resolution 60/251 dated 15 March 2006 of the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 5/1 dated 18 June 2007 of the Human Rights Council, and Decision 17/119 dated 19 June 2011 of the Human Rights Council.

The drafting of the report was carried out by an inter-agency working group composed of government agencies and National Assembly committees working in the field of human rights, including the Office of the Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Security, Government Committee for Religious Affairs (Ministry of Home Affairs), Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, Ministry of Information and Communications, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Committee of Ethnic Minorities, People's Supreme Court, People's Supreme Procuracy, National Assembly's Committee on Law, and the National Assembly's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In an effort to engage in international cooperation on human rights, Viet Nam holds annual human rights dialogues with a number of countries and partners including the United States, the European Union, Australia, Norway and Switzerland. These dialogues have produced positive outcomes. They not only enhance the understanding and relationship between Viet Nam and its partners, but also bring about discussions on best practices to address human rights matters of mutual concern.

On rights to freedom of expression, press and information, Viet Nam has made significant progress. Presently, there are 812 print newspapers and 1,084 publications; nearly 17,000 registered journalists; one national news agency, 67 radio and television stations; 101 TV channels and 78 broadcasting channels, 74 electronic newspapers and magazines; 336 social networks and 1,174 registered e-portals (compared to 46 e-newspapers and 287 e-portals in 2011). The Voice of Viet Nam (VOV) Radio Station broadcasts throughout 99.5 percent of Viet Nam's territory and many other countries via satellite. Today, the VOV reaches more than 90 percent of all households in Viet Nam.

Viet Nam law prohibits all actions harming the life, health, property, dignity and honor of detainees. Detainees have the right to meet their family, access to counsel or legal aid according to the law, access to information via newspapers, radio and television available in detention facilities and have the right to petition against violations of the law and detention regulations.

Prisoners have a right to education during their sentence and prisons strictly run education programs on literacy, elementary education, vocational training, laws and politics. Preventive healthcare and treatment for inmates are provided and prison health clinics have been upgraded or improved with professionally trained staff.

Freedoms of association and assembly are guaranteed by the Constitution (Article 69) and are legally protected in laws and by-law documents. There currently are 460 social, professional organizations whose geographic scope of activity are nationwide or interprovincial; 20 profession-based trade unions; 36,000 associations, federations, and social organizations which are local and, in general, these organizations have made great contributions to the development of the country, serving as a bridge between their members and the government.

Viet Nam is a multi-religious society with many religions represented including Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Cao Dai, Hoa Hao Buddhism, Four Debts of Gratitude, and others. Ninety-five percent of all the people have some form of belief. There are about 25,000 places of worship and about 24 million followers of various faiths. The consistent policy and law of Viet Nam is to respect the right to freedom of religion. Yearly, there are about 8,500 religious festivals. The closing ceremony of the 2011 Holy Year of the Catholic Church was attended by more than 50 bishops, 1,000 priests, 2,000 dignitaries and nearly 500,000 believers. The 100th anniversary of Protestantism in Viet Nam was also celebrated in 2011 and the many activities associated with the celebration were widely attended by dignitaries and followers from Viet Nam and throughout the world. In 2013, Viet Nam and the Vatican conducted the fourth round of the joint working group meeting on the strengthening of bilateral relations and cooperation. In 2014, the Buddhist Church of Viet Nam will host the UN Vesak Day which is also expected to attract thousands of followers.

When visiting Viet Nam in my official capacity as former Chairman and current Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I have attended different religious services in various houses of worship and did so unannounced. I have always found Viet Nam to be a place favorable for religious activities, and I appreciate that Viet Nam is working to protect activities of religious groups by law.

Much more could be said about the positive developments in Viet Nam regarding religious freedom, healthcare, the economy, education, gender equality and other areas of importance. As a Viet Nam veteran, I am proud of the progress Viet Nam is making. This is why I have entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a more accurate accounting of all Viet Nam is doing to promote and protect human rights so that history may counter any erroneous information that differs from the facts.

ZECH FRYE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Zech Frye for

receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Zech Frye is a 7th grader at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Zech Frye is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Zech Frye for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE LIFE OF METROPOLITAN PHILIP SALIBA

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Metropolitan Philip Saliba, who led the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church in North America for nearly 50 years and who passed from this life on March 19, 2014. Metropolitan Philip was the longest-serving bishop in any branch of Orthodoxy in the United States and leaves behind a tremendous legacy of service to the Orthodox Christian community.

Metropolitan Philip began leading Antiochian Orthodoxy in 1996 and frequently visited St. George Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral in Toledo and St. Elias Antiochian Church in Sylvania. His leadership will be greatly missed, as he played a key role in inspiring unity among Orthodox churches during his tenure. His compelling vision for unity was noted by The Toledo Blade, where he was quoted as saying: ''As long as we are fragmented and known by Antiochians and Greeks and Serbians and Bulgarians and Russians, we will have no impact as a church on this country''.

His eminence is remembered fondly for his personal warmth and compassion and has been described by his parishioners as a ''visionary''. One of the metropolitan's many accomplishments includes the founding of a church camp, Antioch Village, in Bolivar, Pennsylvania, which flourished under his direction. Indeed, he was lauded for this achievement, and for his other successful endeavors in expanding the reach of the church.

A staunch advocate for inclusion, Metropolitan Phillip welcomed converts without connections to the church's Middle Eastern roots and expanded the role of women in the church. He insisted on the creation of a women's organization and appointed women to the archdiocese's board. The metropolitan also urged the church to modernize in other capacities, by using English during liturgies and by beginning a clergy retirement program.

Under his purview, the number of parishes in the diocese quadrupled in size—a true testament to the significant impact of his leadership. Indeed, his imprint on the Orthodox Christian community will live on, as will his memory. To his brothers Nassif and Najib Saliba, and all those whose lives he touched, we offer our heartfelt sympathy. We hope that they draw comfort in the days ahead and in the memories of this extraordinary man and the gift of his life.

HONORING MS. FLORENCE FANG

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and contributions of my dear friend, Ms. Florence Fang, as she celebrates her 80th birthday and a lifetime of serving her community.

In her historic trip to China, First Lady Michelle Obama highlighted the work of the 100,000 Strong Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening US-China relations by sending American students of all economic and social backgrounds to study abroad in China as exchange students. By emphasizing foreign exchange education, programs like the 100,000 Strong Foundation are training young Americans to become global leaders in a new world where countries and economies are increasingly connected.

It comes as no surprise that the founders of the 100,000 Strong Foundation include leaders from the San Francisco Bay Area and Silicon Valley, notably the energetic and passionate Florence Fang. Ms. Fang is known internationally for her civic work, especially on building positive relationships with China, and in helping to develop our nation's future leaders.

Ms. Florence Fang was born in China and educated in Taiwan. In 1960, she immigrated to America, and was later adopted by the United States as an American citizen.

Ms. Fang and her husband, John T.C. Fang, had three sons who were born and raised in San Francisco: James, a graduate of Hastings Law School and currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system; Teddy, an Ethnic Studies graduate from UC Berkeley who was publisher of the Independent and SF Examiner newspapers; and Douglas, who received his Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Southern California and passed away in 2003.

In 1991, when the White House held a National Leadership Conference to discuss America giving China ''Most Favored Nation'' status, Ms. Fang was the only delegate invited to stand on the dais beside former U.S. President George H.W. Bush in the White House ceremony.

At the May 29, 1992 Asian/Pacific American Heritage Presidential Dinner, Ms. Fang shared the same stage with President George H.W. Bush, where she delivered a speech about her life in America, titled ''An Asian American Story''.

In 2006, she donated the priceless San Francisco Examiner newspaper archives to the UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library, where she delivered a speech and drew applause from UC Berkeley's Chancellor and professors. It is one of her most prized moments.

Also in 2006, she donated $3 million to help build UC Berkeley's East Asian Library. And in 2008, she donated a building to Peking University for the School of Chinese as a Second Language Department to teach the whole world Chinese language and culture.

In January 2013, together with the Ford Foundation, she became a co-founder of the 100,000 Strong Foundation, which was born out of U.S. President Obama's initiative in 2008 when he visited China's then-president Hu Jintao, to send 100,000 American students to study in China.

On March 22, 2014, Ms. Fang accompanied First Lady Michelle Obama when she spoke to students in Peking University on the First Lady's trip to China.

On April 4, 2014, over 100 organizations will join together to host Ms. Fang's 80th birthday celebration. They also arranged to have two Kepler celestial bodies or stars named after Ms. Fang as recorded with the Space Telescope Science Institute.

Ms. Fang has held many local and national positions. She was appointed as National Small Business Commissioner by former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, Stature for Women Commissioner by California Governor, and San Francisco Film Commissioner by former Mayor Willie Brown Jr. Currently, she holds the titles of: Honorary Trustee of Peking University, Honorary Professor of Wuhan University, Founder and Board Member of the 100K Strong Foundation, and Chairwoman of the Florence Fang Family Foundation.

As a result of her own life experiences, Ms. Fang has particularly focused her life on education and American and Chinese cultural exchange.

When she first immigrated to the United States in 1960, Ms. Fang did not speak any English and had never had a chance to study in an American school. Then, in the early 1970s, her husband suddenly became very ill and was hospitalized in the intensive care unit. Ms. Fang was forced to make a living for her family, and she had to single handedly run her husband's printing shop business. It was during these years that she learned much of her English from reading invoices coming into the business.

Today she has achieved her American dream, and it is articulated by what former U.S. President George H.W. Bush wrote in his 1999 preface for Ms. Fang's unpublished biography:

> America is a tale of immigrants who came to this land to build a nation and better their own lives.
>
> The Florence Fang story is yet another chapter on the American experience. Her pursuit and fulfillment of the American dream serves as a reminder that America is truly the land of opportunity.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I was absent on March 27, due to a death in the family. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Thursday, March 27, 2014: rollcall No. 148: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 4278, ''yea.''

LAKEWOOD BRICK AND TILE COMPANY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lakewood Brick and Tile Company for being honored with the Pioneer Award by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Pioneer Award is given to a Jefferson County company that provides standards for other businesses to follow and must demonstrate significant and sustained growth contributing to Jefferson County's economy.

Lakewood Brick and Tile Company has manufactured clay bricks in Jefferson County since 1932. You can find their products in everything from downtown residential lofts, school, libraries and the tallest skyscrapers in the world.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Lakewood Brick and Tile Company for receiving this prestigious award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your many years of service to the Jefferson County community.

TRIBUTE TO SUNY PLATTSBURGH DIVISION III WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Women's Ice Hockey Team of the State University of New York at Plattsburgh for winning this year's NCAA Division III National Championship.

Winning their third national title was the capstone on a remarkable season. The team finished the season with a record of 28–1–1, setting a new school record for wins and tying the NCAA Division III record. The team also set records for fewest goals allowed in a season (19), fewest goals allowed per game (0.63) and lowest goals-against average (0.63).

The team included three American Hockey Coaches Association (AHCA) All Americans: Sydney Aveson, Allison Era and Shannon Stewart. Ms. Aveson was also recognized with the AHCA Laura Hurd Award for the Division III Women's Hockey National Player of the Year.

In his 11th season with the team, Head Coach Kevin Houle was named the AHCA Division III Women's Ice Hockey Coach of the Year, his second in a row and fifth during his coaching career.

Let me also add that I attended the championship game with my wife and two friends. It was exciting to be part of such an enthusiastic crowd cheering on these tremendous student athletes.

With their record-setting season, the SUNY Plattsburgh Women's Ice Hockey Team has earned the enduring support of thousands of loyal fans in their region and a special place in NCAA history. The great character these players have shown makes them worthy examples for young athletes across northern New York and throughout the nation.

HONORING THE JACKSON ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable Jackson (MS) Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, a public service sorority who is rich in its heritage and rich in its depth of leadership and services. The chapter is a member of the largest of sororities organized by African American women. Initially, the chapter was listed under the nomenclature of Alpha Chi Sigma Chapter.

The idea of organizing the chapter in Mississippi grew out of a group of close friends who had been active members of undergraduate chapters in other states: Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio and Texas. They needed eight Deltas to charter the chapter and after a long delay, on May 3, 1941; Clara Marjorie Allen, Willie Dobbs Blackburn, Elese Whitiker Blackman, Emily Johnson Hall, Thelma Weathers Johnson, Loraine G. Crawford, Nellie Burbridge Williams, and Aurelia Norris Young made history. The chartering ceremony was held in the home of Aurelia Norris Young with the Southern Regional Director, Helen "Dolly" Work, conducting the ceremony. Aurelia Norris Young was elected the first Chapter President. Since the chapter's chartering, these ladies of vision have attracted many well-known women and outstanding students to become members of the sisterhood.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing The Jackson (MS) Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated for their dedication to serving others.

RECOGNIZING BOSMA ENTERPRISES AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of a great Indiana organization, Bosma Enterprises. Bosma, working through the AbilityOne Program, has helped thousands of Hoosiers who are blind or visually impaired and is Indiana's largest employer of people with vision loss.

AbilityOne is an initiative to help people who are blind or have other significant disabilities. For over 75 years this critical program has helped thousands of Americans find employment by working within a network of nonprofit agencies that sell products and services to the U.S. government. More than 700 Hoosiers in 2013 alone were served through Community and Center-Based Services at Bosma. These services helped them achieve a greater level of independence and self-esteem and allowed many people to gain employment in good paying jobs in central Indiana.

I have had the opportunity to visit Bosma Enterprises and see first-hand the impact that the AbilityOne program is having in the lives of so many Hoosiers. Nearly 60 percent of all employees at Bosma Enterprises are blind or visually impaired. One such employee is Preston Richardson. Preston lost his sight in 1988 and after several years of struggling with his disability was officially diagnosed in 1997. It was then that he found Bosma Enterprises, where he went to work in production. Preston's handwork and dedication enabled him to excel at Bosma, becoming the first visually-impaired employee in the customer service department. Preston was then promoted to account manager with the sales team where he now manages over 300 state and national accounts.

The largest AbilityOne contracts Bosma holds are with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Bosma supplies all of the VA hospitals and clinics with examination and surgical gloves. These contracts provide job opportunities to people who are blind or visually impaired while also providing the VA with the resources they need to take care of America's veterans.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to join me in recognizing the life changing work done every day by the men and women of Bosma Enterprises and the importance of the AbilityOne program. They have helped improve the lives of Hoosiers throughout the 6th District and central Indiana by enabling them to learn skills, find employment, and lead a more independent and fulfilling life. The dedication and commitment of AbilityOne employees is an example we can all aspire to. They have helped strengthen our communities and make the state of Indiana a better place to live.

MARTIN/MARTIN CONSULTING ENGINEERS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Martin/Martin Consulting Engineers for being honored with the Genesis Award given by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation.

The Genesis Award is given to a Jefferson County company which contributes to the economic vitality in Jefferson County through leadership, innovation, facilitation and collaboration within and outside Jefferson County.

Martin/Martin Consulting Engineers, operating in Colorado since 1940, is a full service civil and structural engineering and surveying firm. The company experienced steady growth over the years and recently added 23 high paying jobs in Jefferson County, Colorado.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Martin/Martin Consulting Engineers for receiving this prestigious award from the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation. I thank you for your many years of service to the Jefferson County community.

REMEMBERING JEANNETTE M. FORTUNATO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable life of Jeannette M. Fortunato, who passed away on January 24, 2014, at the tender age of eighty. Jeannette was born on May 12, 1933, in Youngstown, Ohio, to Steve and Edith Glazzy. Jeanette enjoyed cooking and bird watching, but most of all, she loved the time she spent with her family.

Jeannette led an exemplary life of service and dedication. She was a member of New Life Lutheran Church in Liberty, where she taught as a Sunday School Teacher and later joined Zion Lutheran Church. Not only did Jeannette touch the lives of those in the church community, she was incredibly loved by her family and friends.

Jeannette has joined her loving parents, Steve and Edith. She will be missed by a countless number of people in the community, and most of all by her husband of 58 years, Louis Fortunato, Jr., her children, Louis Fortunato III, David Fortunato and Lee Ann Fortunato-Heltzel, her grandchildren, Lynn, Rich, Nick, Chris, and Danielle, her great-grandson, Landon, her sister, Betty Schumacher, and her brother and sister-in-law, Steve and Dorothy Glazzy.

Jeannette was an extraordinary woman, and will live on in the hearts and minds of those she has touched. The state of Ohio lost an outstanding citizen and her community will miss her dearly.

IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 494, REAFFIRMING THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of House Resolution 494, a bill to reaffirm the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979.

I am proud to say I have long supported the Taiwan-American relationship, perhaps longer than most Members of Congress serving today. In fact, I cosponsored H. Res. 494 on March 13 of this year, exactly 35 years to the day after I voted in this chamber to support the original Taiwan Relations Act in 1979.

At that time, during the height of the Cold War, the United States was an essential ally and friend of Taiwan. Even as our nation sought to normalize relations with Mainland China, we were not about to abandon friends and allies, going back to the darkest days of World War II.

It was our hope then, and it remains our hope today, that Taiwan and Mainland China will peacefully resolve their differences. Thanks in part to the Taiwan Relations Act, Taiwan has enjoyed decades of peace and freedom as a successful representative Democracy.

Today, Taiwan's rightfully boasts of clean air and water, the rule of law in commerce and government, and enjoys a prosperous industry.

More than a political ally, Taiwan is also a vitally important American trade partner. In 2012, exports to Taiwan from my own State of Minnesota were valued at $489 million a year. This makes Taiwan the 5th largest Asian export market and the 10th largest export market for Minnesota worldwide.

As Taiwan and Mainland China have gradually strengthened their economic ties, Taiwan has become a vital front door to the massive Mainland Chinese market of 1.3 billion people and to additional markets throughout East Asia.

Minnesota and the United States benefit from this relationship. Business, Industry, and Labor welcome Taiwanese investment and trade in Minnesota, as well as the opportunity to expand our export markets worldwide.

By passing House Resolution 494, it is my hope that we can build upon these past successes, and reaffirm our continued political and economic support in this Congress for Taiwan.

LEGISLATION REGARDING UKRAINE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 2, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today express my strong support for today's pending legislation on Ukraine.

These two important pieces of legislation are similar in many respects to the Ukraine Support Act, which was adopted by the House with overwhelming bipartisan support last week. These measures will provide much-needed assistance to the government and people of Ukraine in the wake of Russia's illegal invasion and occupation of Crimea. They complement IMF efforts to restore the health of Ukraine's economy. They will support free and fair presidential elections in May, and they will expand funding for efforts to fight corruption and strengthen democratic institutions, the rule of law, and civil society in Ukraine. Just as importantly, the legislation condemns Russia's illegal invasion and occupation of Crimea and provides for additional sanctions if President Putin does not reverse course. With Russian forces now consolidating their control of Crimea and with tens of thousands of additional Russian troops threateningly massed on Ukraine's eastern border, we must remain resolute in calling on Russia to withdraw its troops and to engage in constructive dialogue with the Ukrainian government. In addition, any diplomatic effort to resolve the crisis must include the full participation of Ukrainian government representatives. Continued Russian refusal to meet these basic conditions must be met with additional sanctions.

Mr. Speaker, I commend colleagues from both sides of the aisle and from both Houses, and in particular Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who have worked so quickly to pass legislation that reaffirms the United States' longstanding support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine. These measures send a clear signal to the people of Ukraine and other countries in the region that we will continue to support the principle that countries must be free to choose their own paths, free from outside pressure.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 4

9:30 a.m.
Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine the employment situation for March 2014.
SH–216

APRIL 8

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine Army Active and Reserve force mix in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–G50

10 a.m.
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine advanced biofuels, focusing on creating jobs and lower prices at the pump.
SR–328A

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Nani A. Coloretti, of California, to be Deputy Secretary of Department of Housing and Urban Development.
SD–538

Committee on Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Janet Garvin McCabe, of the District of Columbia, and Ann Elizabeth Dunkin, of California, both to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Manuel H. Ehrlich, Jr., of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.
SD–406

Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine protecting taxpayers from incompetent and unethical return preparers.
SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed international affairs budget request for fiscal year 2015 for national security and foreign policy priorities.
SD–419

10:30 a.m.
Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine supporting broad-based economic growth and fiscal responsibility through a fairer tax code.
SD–608

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine the role of the Department of Defense science and technology enterprise for innovation and affordability in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Architect of the Capitol, the Library of Congress, and the Open World Leadership Center.
SD–138

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Vice Admiral Paul F. Zukunft, to be Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, and Elliot F. Kaye, of New York, to be Chairman, and Joseph P. Mohorovic, of Illinois, both to be a Commissioner, both of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
SR–253

Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism
To hold hearings to examine economic espionage and trade secret theft, focusing on if laws are adequate for today's threats.
SD–226

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine tactical aircraft programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

APRIL 9

Time to be announced
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.
SR–253

9:15 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Environmental Protection Agency.
SD–124

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Army modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

9:45 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine an assessment on how to keep our railways safe for passengers and communities.
SD–138

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Labor.
SD–192

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Science and Space
To hold hearings to examine from here to Mars.
SR–253

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging
To hold hearings to examine addressing primary care access and workforce challenges, focusing on voices from the field.
SD–430

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine the Comcast-Time Warner Cable merger and the impact on consumers.
SD–226

Committee on Rules and Administration
To hold hearings to examine election administration, focusing on making voter rolls more complete and more accurate.
SR–301

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
To hold hearings to examine Ukraine, focusing on confronting internal challenges and external threats, including Russia's seizure of Crimea.
SD–215

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Rules and Administration
Business meeting to consider S. 1728, to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to improve ballot accessibility to uniformed services voters and overseas voters, S. 1937, to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to develop contingency plans to address unexpected emergencies or natural disasters that may threaten to disrupt the administration of an election for Federal office, S. 1947, to rename the Government Printing Office the Government Publishing Office, S. 2197, to repeal certain requirements regarding newspaper advertising of Senate stationery contracts, and the nominations of Thomas Hicks, of Virginia, and Myrna Perez, of Texas, both to be a Member of the Election Assistance Commission.
SR–301

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Energy.
SD–192

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine National Nuclear Security Administration management of its National Security Laboratories and the status of the Nuclear Security Enterprise in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program
SR–222

Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian education, focusing on Indian students in public schools, and cultivating the next generation.
SD–628

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Small Business Administration.
SR–428A

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD–106

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for international development priorities.
SD–419

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine strategic forces programs of the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Office of Environmental Management of the Department of Energy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

APRIL 30

10 a.m.
Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine the President's 2014 Trade Policy Agenda.
SD–215

MAY 20

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SD–G50

11 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SR–222

2 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
Closed business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SR–222

3:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SD–G50

5 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SD–G50

MAY 21

10 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
Business meeting to markup those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SD–G50

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SR–222

MAY 22

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SR–222

MAY 23

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Closed business meeting to continue to markup the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2015.
SR–222

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2048–S2134

Measures Introduced: Three bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2200–2202, and S. Res. 409. **Page S2095**

Measures Reported:

S. Res. 384, expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis. **Page S2095**

Measures Passed:

Congratulating the Penn State University Wrestling Team: Senate agreed to S. Res. 409, congratulating the Penn State University wrestling team for winning the 2014 National Collegiate Athletic Association Wrestling Championships. **Page S2134**

Measures Considered:

Minimum Wage Fairness Act: Senate began consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 1737, 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. **Pages S2043–44**

Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 3979, 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, taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto:

Pages S2044–81, S2082–90

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874, of a perfecting nature. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2875 (to Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2877 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2874), to change the enactment date. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2878 (to Amendment No. 2877), of a perfecting nature. **Page S2045**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 61 yeas to 38 nays (Vote No. 96), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874 (listed above). **Page S2047**

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2879, to change the enactment date, fell when cloture was invoked on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2880 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2879), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 2879 fell. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2881 (to Amendment No. 2880), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid Amendment No. 2880 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 2879) fell. **Page S2045**

Reid Amendment No. 2876 (to Amendment No. 2875), of a perfecting nature, fell as it was not in order to be offered and its pendency is inconsistent with the Senate's precedents with respect to the offering of amendments, their number, degree, and kind. **Page S2045**

By 46 yeas to 50 nays (Vote No. 97), Senate failed to table Reid Amendment No. 2878 (to Amendment No. 2877) (listed above). **Page S2081**

By 67 yeas to 29 nays (Vote No. 98), Senate tabled the appeal of the ruling of the Chair that Vitter Amendment No. 2931 is not in order to be offered and its pendency is inconsistent with the Senate's precedents with respect to the offering of amendments, their number, degree, and kind. **Page S2081**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, April 3, 2014,

and that all time during adjournment count post-cloture on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874. **Page S2134**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Tomasz P. Malinowski, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. **Pages S2081–82, S2134**

Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor. **Pages S2081–82, S2134**

Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally. **Pages S2081–82, S2134**

Messages from the House: **Page S2092**

Measures Referred: **Page S2093**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S2043, S2093**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S2093**

Executive Communications: **Pages S2093–95**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2095–96**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2096–97**

Additional Statements: **Page S2092**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S2097–S2134**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S2134**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2134**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S2134**

Record Votes: Three record votes were taken today. (Total—98) **Pages S2047, S2081**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 8:02 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 3, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2134.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of the Air Force, after receiving testimony from Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force, General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Frank J. Grass, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lieutenant General Stanley E. Clarke III, Director of the Air National Guard, and Lieutenant General James F. Jackson, Chief of the Air Force Reserve, all of the Department of Defense.

APPROPRIATIONS: NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the National Institutes of Health, after receiving testimony from Francis S. Collins, Director, Anthony S. Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Harold Varmus, Director, National Cancer Institute, Gary H. Gibbons, Director, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Story Landis, Director, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and Christopher P. Austin, Director, National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, all of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, after receiving testimony from Shaun Donovan, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY'S OFFICE OF TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF SANCTIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of the Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence and its administration and enforcement of sanctions, after receiving testimony from David S. Cohen, Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence.

APPROPRIATIONS: UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2015 for the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior, after receiving testimony from Lowell Pimley,

Acting Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, and Anne Castle, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, both of the Department of the Interior; and Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, and Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, Chief of Engineers, Army Corps of Engineers, both of the Department of Defense.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army, after receiving testimony from Michael J. McCord, Principal Deputy Under Secretary (Comptroller), John Conger, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Installations and Environment, Katherine G. Hammack, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment, Major General Al Aycock, Director of Operations, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, Brigadier General Michael E. Bobeck, Special Assistant to the Director, Army National Guard, and James B. Balocki, Command Executive Officer, United States Army Reserve Command, all of the Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower concluded a hearing to examine Marine Corps modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from General John M. Paxton, Jr., USMC, Assistant Commandant, and Lieutenant General Kenneth J. Glueck, Jr., USMC, Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration, and Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, both of the United States Marine Corps, Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support concluded a hearing to examine military construction, environmental, energy, and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from John C. Conger, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Installations and Environment, Sharon E. Burke, Assistant Secretary for Operational Energy Plans and Programs, Katherine G. Hammack, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment, Dennis V. McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment, and Kathleen I. Ferguson, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics, all of the Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces concluded a hearing to examine ballistic missile defense policies and programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from M. Elaine Bunn, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy, J. Michael Gilmore, Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, Vice Admiral James D. Syring, USN, Director, Missile Defense Agency, and Lieutenant General David L. Mann, USA, Commander, United States Army Space and Missile Defense Command, Army Forces Strategic Command, and Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense, all of the Department of Defense; and Cristina T. Chaplain, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management, Government Accountability Office.

GENERAL MOTORS RECALL

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, and Insurance concluded a hearing to examine the General Motors (GM) recall and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) defect investigation process, after receiving testimony from David Friedman, Acting Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Calvin L. Scovel III, Inspector General, both of the Department of Transportation; and Mary Barra, General Motors, Detroit, Michigan.

DATA BREACHES AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine data breach on the rise, focusing on protecting personal information from harm, and how Federal agencies need to enhance responses to data breaches, after receiving testimony from Edith Ramirez, Chairwoman, Federal Trade Commission; William Noonan, Deputy Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, Criminal Investigative Division, Cyber Operations Branch, Department of Homeland Security; Gregory C. Wilshusen, Director, Information Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, The

Financial Services Roundtable, Washington, D.C.; Sandra L. Kennedy, Retail Industry Leaders Association, Arlington, Virginia; and Tiffany O. Jones, iSIGHT Partners, Inc., Chantilly, Virginia.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 161, to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana;

S. 1074, to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Easter Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe; and

S. 1219, to authorize the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians Water Rights Settlement, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

INDIAN AFFAIRS BILLS

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 1474, to encourage the State of Alaska to enter into intergovernmental agreements with Indian tribes in the State relating to the enforcement of certain State laws by Indian tribes, to improve the quality of life in rural Alaska, to reduce alcohol and drug abuse, S. 1570, to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to authorize advance appropriations for the Indian Health Service by providing 2-fiscal-year budget authority, S. 1574, to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, S. 1622, to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and S. 2160, to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to require background checks before foster care placements are ordered in tribal court proceedings, after receiving testimony from former Senator Byron L. Dorgan, Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute, Washington, D.C.; Kevin Washburn, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs; Lillian Sparks Robinson, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services; Natasha Singh, Tribal Court Judge, Stevens Village, Alaska; Margaret Zientek, 447 Tribal Work Group, Shawnee, Oklahoma; and Leander Russell McDonald, Spirit Lake Tribe, Fort Totten, North Dakota.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 18 public bills, H.R. 4365–4382; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 535–536 were introduced. **Pages H2853–54**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H2854–55**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1425, to amend the Marine Debris Act to better address severe marine debris events, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–398, Pt. 1) and

H.R. 1491, to authorize the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to provide certain funds to eligible entities for activities undertaken to address the marine debris impacts of the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–399, Pt. 1). **Page H2853**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Thompson (PA) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H2805**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:41 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H2809**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend Dr. Bryan Smith, First Baptist Church Roanoke, Roanoke, Virginia. **Page H2809**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a yea-and-nay vote of 262 yeas to 157 nays with 2 answering ''present'', Roll No. 154. **Pages H2820–21**

Save American Workers Act of 2014: The House began consideration of H.R. 2575, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 30-hour threshold for classification as a full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and replace it with 40 hours. Consideration of the measure is expected to resume tomorrow, April 3rd. **Pages H2813–21**

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. **Page H2821**

H. Res. 530, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 236 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 153, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 229 yeas to 194 nays, Roll No. 152. **Pages H2819–21**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2891, H2819–20 and H2820–21. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—FOREST SERVICE FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies held a hearing on United States Forest Service FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Tom Tidwell, Chief, United States Forest Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—USDA MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies held a hearing on USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Ed Avalos, Under Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Programs; Kevin Shea, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Anne Alonzo, Administrator, Agriculture Marketing Service; Larry Mitchell, Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; Michael Young, Budget Officer.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEA AND STATE RESEARCH ON DRUG ABUSE IN AMERICA FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies held a hearing on DEA and State Research on Drug Abuse in America FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Michele M. Leonhart, Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration; and Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on Department of Energy FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Ernest Moniz, Secretary, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on U.S. Customs and Border Protection FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from R. Gil Kerlikowske, Commissioner, United States Customs and Border Protection.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing on Department of Labor FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Thomas E. Perez, Secretary, Department of Labor.

APPROPRIATIONS—UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, and Related Program held a hearing on the United Nations and International Organizations FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Samantha Power, United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM FY 2015 BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on Defense Health Program FY 2015 Budget. Testimony was heard from Jonathan Woodson Assistant Secretary of Defense, Health Affairs; Lieutenant General Patricia D. Horoho, Surgeon General, United States Army; Vice Admiral Matthew L. Nathan, Surgeon General United States Navy; and Lieutenant General Thomas W. Travis, Surgeon General, United States Air Force.

APPROPRIATIONS—PUBLIC HOUSING

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a hearing on oversight of Public Housing. Testimony was heard from Shaun Donovan, Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUESTS FROM U.S. FORCES KOREA AND U.S. STRATEGIC COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing on The Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Requests from U.S. Forces Korea and U.S. Strategic Command. Testimony was heard from Admiral Cecil D. Haney, USN, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command; and General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, Commander, U.S. Forces Korea.

GROUND FORCE MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 Ground Force Modernization Programs. Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General James O. Barclay III, USA, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, G8, Department of the Army; Tom Dee, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Expeditionary Programs and Logistics Management, Department of the Navy; Lieutenant General Glenn M. Walters, USA, Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources, Department of the Navy; and Major General Michael E. Williamson, USA, Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics and Technology), Department of the Army.

AIR FORCE PROJECTION FORCES AVIATION PROGRAMS AND CAPABILITIES RELATED TO THE 2015 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing on Air Force Projection Forces Aviation Programs and Capabilities related to the 2015 President's Budget Request. Testimony was heard from Major General James J. Jones, USAF, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, United States Air Force; William A. LaPlante, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Department of the Air Force; and Major General John F. Thompson, USAF, Air Force Program Executive Officer for Tankers, Tanker Directorate, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, United States Air Force.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee began a markup on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget For Fiscal Year 2015.

KEEPING COLLEGE WITHIN REACH: MEETING THE NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY STUDENTS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Keeping College within Reach: Meeting the Needs of Contemporary Students''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FISCAL YEAR 2015 EPA BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power; and Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy held a joint hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2015 EPA Budget''. Testimony was heard from Gina McCarthy, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency.

ENSURING THE SECURITY, STABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND FREEDOM OF THE GLOBAL INTERNET

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Communications and Technology held a hearing entitled ''Ensuring the Security, Stability, Resilience, and Freedom of the Global Internet''. Testimony was heard from Larry Strickling, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of Commerce.

ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION WITHIN THE CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Allegations of Discrimination and Retaliation within the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau''. Testimony was heard from Angela Martin, Senior Enforcement Attorney, Consumer Financial Services and General Government Protection Bureau; and public witnesses.

THE CRUDE TRUTH: EVALUATING U.S. ENERGY TRADE POLICY

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''The Crude Truth: Evaluating U.S. Energy Trade Policy''. Testimony was heard from Senator Murkowski; and public witnesses.

TAKING DOWN THE CARTELS: EXAMINING UNITED STATES-MEXICO COOPERATION

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Taking Down the Cartels: Examining United States-Mexico Cooperation''. Testimony was heard from James Dinkins, Executive Associate Director, Homeland Security Investigations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security; John D. Feeley, Principal Deputy, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Department of State; Alan D. Bersin, Assistant Secretary of International Affairs, and Chief Diplomatic Officer, Department of Homeland Security; and a public witness.

THE NATIONAL ZOO OF TODAY AND TOMORROW; AND MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The National Zoo of Today and Tomorrow—An Innovative Center Focused on

the Care and Conservation of the World's Species; and markup on H.R. 863, the ''Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum Act of 2013''. Testimony was heard from Dennis Kelly, Director, Smithsonian Institution, National Zoological Park; Steven Monfort, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Smithsonian Institution; and a public witness. The bill, H.R. 863, was ordered reported, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 4292, the ''Foreign Cultural Exchange Jurisdictional Immunity Clarification Act''; and H.R. 4323, to reauthorize programs authorized under the Debbie Smith Act of 2004, and for other purposes. H.R. 4292 and H.R. 4323 were ordered reported, without amendment.

PRESERVATION AND REUSE OF COPYRIGHTED WORKS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet held a hearing entitled ''Preservation and Reuse of Copyrighted Works''. Testimony was heard from Gregory Lukow, Chief, Packard Campus for Audio Visual Conservation, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

UNDERCOVER STOREFRONT OPERATIONS: CONTINUED OVERSIGHT OF ATF'S RECKLESS INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Undercover Storefront Operations: Continued Oversight of ATF's Reckless Investigative Techniques''. Testimony was heard from B. Todd Jones, Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

BITCOIN: EXAMINING THE BENEFITS AND RISKS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Bitcoin: Examining the Benefits and Risks for Small Business''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET: ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES FOR THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled ''The President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Administration Priorities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers''. Testimony was heard from Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army—Civil Works; and Lieutenant General Thomas P. Bostick, Chief of Engineers, United States Army Corps of Engineers.

EXAMINING ISSUES FOR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REAUTHORIZATION

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Railroad, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials held a hearing entitled ''Examining Issues for Hazardous Materials Reauthorization''. Testimony was heard from Cynthia Quarterman, Administrator, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration; and public witnesses.

VA AND HUMAN TISSUE: IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED FOR VETERANS SAFETY

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''VA and Human Tissue: Improvements Needed for Veterans Safety''. Testimony was heard from Philip Matkovsky, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Administrative Operations, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Marcia Crosse, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and a public witness.

FEDERAL MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING PROGRAM

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing on the Federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BENGHAZI TALKING POINTS AND MICHAEL J. MORELL'S ROLE IN SHAPING THE ADMINISTRATION'S NARRATIVE

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative''. Testimony was heard from Michael Morell, Former Acting Director and Deputy Director, CIA.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D336)*

H.R. 4302, to amend the Social Security Act to extend Medicare payments to physicians and other provisions of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Signed on April 1, 2014. (Public Law 113–93)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Food and Drug Administration., 10 a.m., SD–138.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: business meeting to consider S. 491, to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to modify provisions relating to grants, S. 1961, to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, S. 224, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to establish a grant program to support the restoration of San Francisco Bay, S. 2080, to conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation, S. 2042, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, S. 1934, to direct the Administrator of General Services to convey the Clifford P. Hansen Federal Courthouse back to Teton County, Wyoming, S. 2055, to allow for the collection of certain user fees by non-Federal entities, Corps Study Resolution: Point Judith, Rhode Island, and GSA Resolutions, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled, ''Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act'', an original bill entitled, ''The Tax Technical Corrections Act of 2014'', and subcommittee assignments, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, to hold hearings to examine evaluating United States policy on Taiwan on the 35th anniversary of the ''Taiwan Relations Act'' (TRA), 10 a.m., SD–419.

Full Committee, to receive a closed briefing on Russia, 2 p.m., SVC–217.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 1720, to promote transparency in patent ownership and make other improvements to the patent system, and the nominations of Cheryl Ann Krause, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Richard Franklin Boulware II, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada, Salvador Mendoza, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, Staci Michelle Yandle, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, Leon Rodriguez, of Maryland, to be Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, and Damon Paul Martinez, of New Mexico, to be United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico, Department of Justice, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters; to be immediately followed by a closed business meeting to consider pending calendar business, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing to Review the State of the Rural Economy, 9:30 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs and Related Agencies, markup on Military Construction and Veterans' Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for FY 2015, 11 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, markup on Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill FY 2015, 1 p.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, hearing on National Park Service FY 2015 Budget, 9:30 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies, hearing on USDA Food Safety FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on Missile Defense Agency, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol. This is a closed hearing.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Small Business Administration FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration FY 2015 Budget, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, hearing on Oversight of Department of Transportation Modes, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve FY 2015 Budget, 1:30 p.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, hearing on United States Fish and Wildlife Service FY 2015 Budget, 1:30 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration FY 2015 Budget, 2 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing on the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing on Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for National Security Space Activities, 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2015 Department of Energy Budget'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, hearing on H.R. 3717, the ''Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2013'', 10:30 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Full Committee markup on the following legislation: H.R. 3548, the ''Improving Trauma Care Act of 2013''; H.R. 4080, the ''Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act''; H.R. 1281, the ''Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013''; and H.R. 1528, the ''Veterinary Medicine Mobility Act of 2013'', 4 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Women's Education: Promoting Development, Countering Radicalism''; and markup on H.R. 3583, the ''Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies, markup on H.R. 4007, the ''Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program Authorization and Accountability Act of 2014'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, hearing entitled ''Assessing Terrorism in the Caucasus and the Threat to the Homeland'', 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law, hearing on legislation regarding the Standard Merger and Acquisition Reviews Through Equal Rules Act of 2014, 1 p.m., 2237 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security; and Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, joint hearing entitled ''Overturning 30 Years of Precedent: Is the Administration Ignoring the Dangers of Training Libyan Pilots and Nuclear Scientists?'', 2:30 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Department of the Interior, Spending and the President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Proposal'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 69, the ''Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2013''; H.R. 2646, the ''REFI Pacific Act''; and legislation regarding the Pirate Fishing Elimination Act, 2 p.m., 1334 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing entitled ''Implementing the Cobell Settlement: Missed Opportunities and Lessons Learned'', 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on National Security, hearing entitled ''Afghanistan: Identifying and Addressing Wasteful U.S. Government Spending'', 10 a.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Economic Growth, Job Creation and Regulatory Affairs; and Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlements, joint hearing entitled ''Examining ObamaCare's Problem-Filled State Exchanges'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on the following legislation: H.R. 1871, the ''Baseline Reform Act of 2013; H.R. 1872, the ''Budget and Accounting Transparency Act of 2014''; and H.R. 1874, the ''Pro-Growth Budgeting Act of 2013'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, hearing entitled ''Disaster Mitigation: Reducing Costs and Saving Lives'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Full Committee, business meeting to consider a resolution to assign Congressman David W. Jolly to HVAC Subcommittees; and hearing entitled ''Trials in Transparency II: Is VA Responding to Congressional Requests in a Timely Manner?'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, hearing on President Obama's Trade Policy Agenda with U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, 9:30 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities'', 10 a.m., 304–HVC. This is a closed hearing.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, April 3

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 3979, Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act, and that all time during adjournment count post-cloture on Reid (for Reed) Amendment No. 2874.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, April 3

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Complete consideration of H.R. 2575—Save American Workers Act of 2014.

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