

Republican leader, and I are supporting this legislation. That should say a lot to the American people. As every Senator knows, the funding bill we approve must first have passed the House of Representatives, and it did that. Breaking up the legislation the House sent us is not a viable option at this juncture. We need to complete our work on the House-passed resolution as soon as possible. We have an agreement in place to vote on this measure no later than 5:30 p.m. this evening. With the cooperation of Senators, we could vote even earlier today.

There is one final unanimous consent request.

#### AUTHORIZATION TO APPOINT ESCORT COMMITTEE

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort His Excellency Petro Poroshenko into the House Chamber for the joint meeting today.

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

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

#### TRIBUTE TO JERRY LINNELL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it frequently happens when we head into a recess that we have to say a reluctant farewell to some member of the Senate family. So before I yield the floor, I wish to say a word of thanks to Jerry Linnell, who has been a fixture here for more than 3 decades as an official reporter of debates and for the past 15 years as a somewhat hidden fixture up on the fourth floor as the chief reporter.

It is a tough job having to listen to the rest of us drone on every day, and as chief reporter Jerry has had the unenviable task of reviewing every single word we have said.

In his trademark suspenders, Jerry is a friendly and unmistakable presence up on the fourth floor, guiding his team through their daily rounds and maintaining a level of professionalism and integrity that has always been a key characteristic of the office.

It is a proud group. Back in the 1930s Senator Huey Long is said to have donated his own personal Bible to the office so they would have a handy reference when he quoted from it. It quickly became a tradition for new reporters to sign it when they were hired and then once they left.

In a sign of how dedicated these reporters are, only 35 names have been entered in the Bible over the past 80 years. So it is a very venerable fraternity, one that has its roots in article I of the Constitution. We thank Jerry for his many, many years of dedicated, honorable service.

I know Jerry and his wife Jane look forward to spending more time with their many children and grandchildren. After listening to us for all those years, I think he deserves it.

You have done your time. You have done it well. The entire Senate family thanks you. Jerry, all the best.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### JOINT MEETING OF THE TWO HOUSES—ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair in order to attend a joint meeting of Congress.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 9:39 a.m. recessed subject to the call of the Chair, and the Senate, preceded by the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Mike Stenger, the Secretary of the Senate, Nancy Erickson, and the Vice President of the United States, JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear an address delivered by His Excellency Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine.

(The address delivered by the President of Ukraine to the joint meeting of the two Houses of Congress is printed in the proceedings of the House of Representatives in today's RECORD.)

Whereupon, at 11:11 a.m., the Senate, having returned to its Chamber, reassembled and was called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BOOKER).

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 1 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Texas.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 2779

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I rise today to ask that Republicans and Democrats in the Senate to come together and unanimously pass legislation to address the threat of American citizens fighting for ISIS and bringing our statutory system into the 21st century to protect the national security interests of our Nation.

As the American people are now painfully aware, the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, has emerged as the new face of the radical terrorist threat that has bedeviled the West in recent decades. This virulent jihadist group—so extreme they got kicked out of Al Qaeda, which I will note is not easy to do—is rampaging across Syria and Iraq in a campaign of oppression and genocide, including the relentless targeting and murder of Christians, of Jews, of Muslim minority sects, Yazidis—indeed, any who do not share their radical Sunni theology.

While other terrorist organizations have been content with a parasitic relationship with state sponsors of terrorism—notably Syria and Iran—ISIS has a new agenda, which is to establish its own state or caliphate. They now control a territory about the size of Indiana with oilfields they can exploit on the black market to the tune of some \$1.5 million a day. Their ranks have grown in the last 3 months alone from roughly 10,000 to now more than 30,000.

Unlike some regional jihadists, ISIS also represents a direct and growing threat to our citizens here at home, and increasingly to our homeland itself. Just this week there were news reports of an online posting urging individual jihadists in the United States to attack targets such as Times Square, the Las Vegas strip, and even locations in my home State of Texas, with homemade pipe bombs. This is not the first time we have heard such threats, but we have to take them seriously. ISIS has made no secret that its goal is not simply to establish a caliphate in the Middle East; its desire is to impose Sharia law on the Muslim population and to exterminate any religious minorities, and that desire is not confined by geography. When the leader of ISIS, Abu al-Baghdadi, was released from a detention camp in Iraq in 2009, he reportedly remarked to Army COL Kenneth King, "See you in New York." This danger, this evil intends to come home to America.

ISIS has in recent weeks graphically demonstrated their eagerness to murder American civilians by beheading two journalists, gruesomely demonstrating on the world stage their hatred for America. This is not a situation where if we simply leave ISIS alone, they will leave us alone. This is a case where America's national security interests demand a serious response, which should be both to attack ISIS directly and take them out in its claimed caliphate, as well as to defend against the attacks ISIS is planning to execute here at home.

The Obama administration's approach to this crisis has unfortunately lacked a clear focus on that issue. It doesn't help that ISIS is surrounded by regional chaos borne out of a Syrian civil war, and ISIS has exploited the inherent political weakness in Iraq. However, while both the crisis in Syria and the upheaval in Baghdad are unfortunate, concerning situations, we cannot allow resolving them to become preconditions to any military action we might need to take against ISIS.

All too often, the Obama administration proposals threaten to become embroiled in the midst of these political crises. For example, they have made training and equipping the Free Syrian Army a cornerstone of their plan to fight ISIS. But just this week, the leader of the Free Syrian Army reportedly announced he would not participate in the fight against ISIS unless we pledged to join in his fight against Syrian dictator Bashir al-Assad.