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House of Representatives

FAREWELL ADDRESS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I have had the privilege of serving in public office for 30 years, 22 of which have been in the United States Congress. I have met many wonderful people, cast some tough votes, and made some difficult decisions. It has been an honor, a challenge, a great responsibility, and I have enjoyed it immensely.

For this I thank the Lord, my family, my extended family, staff, supporters, constituents, and friends. I am thankful tonight that some of them are in the gallery: my wife, Libby; son, Jim; daughter, Ann; son, John; Betsy and Trey. I also have some staffers who stayed up late to be here: Chris, Mary, Alexandra, Brianna, and Natalie. I thank them for hanging in here with me.

Madam Speaker, in the words of the great philosopher Thomas Carlyle, who in his masterpiece ''Sartor Resartus'' said this:

Sic vos non vobis. Thus we labor, but not for ourselves.

That is what I have tried to do as a Member of Congress, and tried to make a difference doing it.

I have often wondered what it would be like to cast my last vote. Today I have done that, and I wonder no longer.

In a minute, I will walk off the floor for the last time as a Member of Congress. I look forward to the next chapter in my life and the great things that lie ahead for our beloved country.

Once more, I thank God, my family, my staff, friends, and constituents. It truly has been an honor of a lifetime.

And now I end with this, that statement that thousands of Members before me have used:

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

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman.*

Madam Speaker, I have had the privilege of serving in public office for 30 years, 22 of which have been in the United States Congress. I have met many wonderful people, cast some tough votes, and made some difficult decisions. It has been an honor, a challenge, a great responsibility, and I have enjoyed it immensely. For this I thank the Lord, my family, extended family, staff, supporters, constituents, and friends.

The job of serving in Congress is misunderstood, maligned, and widely criticized but public service is a noble calling if one remembers the key words ''public'' and ''servant'' he will be appreciated. ''Public'' meaning you are accessible, you are seen, approachable, and available. ''Servant'' meaning you have not forgotten for whom you work and have not forgotten your job is to help those who you represent. In the words of the great philosopher Thomas Carlyle stated in his masterpiece Sartor Resartus, ''sic vos non vobis.'' Thus we labor but not for ourselves.

Members of Congress have a lifestyle of airports, car rides, motel rooms, cell phones, laptops, and logistical houses of cards. Separation from family is routine. One cannot serve without a supportive spouse and family structure as well as a hardworking and dedicated staff. All must join together as a team. I have had great family support from Libby, Betsy and Trey, John, Ann, and Jim. My parents and all our staff has been there throughout my tenure.

I have often described congressional service as a three part job.

First there is Washington, D.C. work—committee hearings, legislation, debates, voting, interest groups, constituents, and dozens of others seeking your ear, favor, vote, attention, and attendance. The time passes quickly in the frenzy of the U.S. Capitol.

Second there are the home state demands. Primarily casework—fixing the problems people have with federal agencies. Helping the people who have been spun off of life's merry-go-round. For them we are their advocate—sometimes the first choice and sometimes that of last resort. Here again I have been blessed with a patient and sympathetic staff team as we work through thousands of VA claims, Social Security issues, passport emergencies, and all sorts of things from a goat in the post office to a nuclear bomb off the shores of Tybee Island.

Another part of home state work is plant tours, school visits, civic club speeches. From the coastal beaches to the Vidalia onion fields, the military bases to the Okefenokee Swamp, we have enjoyed our visits to the 41 Southeast Georgia counties that have been a part of Georgia's First Congressional District during my time in office.

Finally, the third part of serving in Congress is good old American politics. The campaign trail has elements of the above plus much, much more. No one is elected accidentally or reluctantly. To earn the right to represent 710,000 people, one must fully engage, shake all the hands, eat all the barbecue, and be sure your opponent has not made you look too bad on TV! It is spirited, emotional, and not for everyone, yet each year thousands of citizens run for office at the federal, state, and local level. I salute each of them for stepping forward and trying to make a difference.

During my time in Congress, I have seen many changes. The rise and demise of the fax machine, the daily delivery of ice, the arrival of email and the Internet. When digital photography replaced traditional film and drastically reduced the cost of photographs, visual recording of events—both still shots and video—exploded. I was elected when cell phones were rare. I leave with virtually every staffer having a smart phone which can do the functions of what rooms full of computers could not accomplish years ago.

I have participated in a number of high visibility, tough votes from impeachment to the use of force in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Contract with America, Obamacare, censuing, bailouts, and many cliff-hanger appropriations bills like the one we've debated today.

I served in Congress on September 11, 2001, when the world changed. I joined the masses as we exited the buildings, not realizing who the enemy was or the extent of the attacks. In our first chaotic briefing, we were told that 5 planes were involved and the fifth had crashed in Kentucky. Later that day when we returned to the Capitol steps to sing ''God Bless America,'' I have never known a more unified moment as an American citizen.

In the sensitivities that followed, we evacuated two other times for false alarms and once left our offices for weeks because of an anthrax attack. Today we are much safer because of the invaluable training that takes place at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Brunswick.

We have been able to move legislation of great importance to Georgia and the nation. From the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project, the pond building program for our farmers, the Sidney Lanier Bridge, expanding access to Cumberland Island National Seashore, the fifth runway at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta Airport and the Southeast Poultry Lab in Athens to better training, equipment, and facilities for our troops, expanding E-Verify, getting planes back in the air after September 11th, welfare reform and making Congress, agriculture, nutrition, health, education, and labor programs more efficient, we made a difference across a number of fronts.

At home, we sent the best and brightest to the military academies, attended rosebud plantings at Fort Stewart for soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice, opened four VA clinics, bolstered the research and education at colleges and universities all across Georgia, helped communities adversely impacted by shifts in our military's footprint, and expedited assistance for areas ravaged by wildfires and floods.

Through it all, we have stuck to the principles on which I launched my first campaign: limited government, personal responsibility, the right to life, and an unabiding belief in the American Dream. I maintained a 100-percent pro-small business and 100-percent pro-life voting record, an A+ from the NRA, the support of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and a 96-percent lifetime rating with the American Conservative Union.

To my successor, Buddy Carter, and the 114th Congress, I have lots of advice but will do my utmost to not give it unless asked! However, I promise to be around for Mr. Carter the way former First District Congressmen Lindsay Thomas and Bo Ginn have been there for me.

Until I do retire I do have some unsolicited advice:

1. Remember we are a republic not a democracy. You are not sent to Washington to be a weather vane of popular opinion. You are expected to learn all about an issue. You must consider all arguments and consequences when formulating your decision to support or oppose.

Don't ever confuse your knowledge of an issue as being superior to your constituents' knowledge of life and experience. You must never tire of hearing his perspective.

2. Always be accessible for there is truly wisdom on the street ''Pressing the flesh'' is not just being in parades, it's talking and listening to people. Do not let any well-intended friend, staffer, or volunteer get between you and a constituent who wants to take you to task. Hear him out.

3. Engage with Members of Congress from all parties, philosophies, and geographic regions. Never pass up an opportunity to work with anyone who wants to make the world and America a better place. I did not always agree with my Ranking Members but we always had the highest degree of respect. I thank JIM MORAN, SAM FARR, and ROSA DELAURO.

4. Respect the institution. Anyone can go back home, feign indignation and with a sigh denounce Congress. Yet as a Member, you can either be part of the problem or part of the solution. Choose wisely.

5. Be active—attend committee meetings, read testimonies and ask questions. Speak and participate on the House floor. Do one minute speeches, special orders, and preside in the chair if you're given the privilege. Run for leadership and caucus positions. Return press calls and say yes to interviews. If you're a Democrat, go on with Sean Hannity. If you're a Republican, don't be afraid to spar with Chris Matthews or Bill Maher. Whoever you are, return Stephen Colbert's call. These will give you a full experience and make you a stronger Member.

6. It's in America's interest for you to know what is happening in the world. Visit our troops in the faraway and hostile countries in which they are preserving our freedom.

7. Control your time and schedule. Your first priority is family. That includes birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, and much more. Don't ever let your ambition get in the way of a school play.

8. Keep your mind in order and also your body and spirit. There are many Bible studies in Washington. Join one even before you get your committee assignments! Join the gym. The fellowship alone is worth it. Should you play on one of the sports teams, you can raise thousands upon thousands for charity. I would not trade my experiences on the baseball and football teams for anything I've done in Congress.

To sum it up, I will say this: as a teenager, I wanted a motorcycle. As I was trying to talk my parents into it a man gave me some good advice. He said motorcycles are all safer when you respect the bike. On the other hand, if you decide you are better than the bike, that's when you will have a wreck. To new Members of Congress, I say simply ''those who fare the worst are those who think they are better than their constituents.''

Let me conclude by thanking everyone who has been on the team with me. We had a great run, some wonderful experiences, some fun moments and helped a lot of people along the way.

Serving in Congress had always been a dream of mine. When I was in elementary

school, my older sister Barbara was in junior high. Junior high was big time, almost grown up stuff. We were sitting at our kitchen table one night she pulled about two pieces of paper and said 'let's write down the names of everyone you know. You can't list mom or dad, Betty or Jean. They can't be family.' She won the contest but it was a life changing exercise. I became interested in knowing people and making friends. That along with my mother's activism in the Clarke County Republican Party started this journey. I first ran for class president in the 7th grade. I lost to Susan Sims but the hook was set.

I've often wondered what it would be like to cast my last vote. Today I've done that. I wonder no longer. In a minute, I will walk off the floor for the last time as a Member of Congress. I look forward to the next chapter of my life and the great things that lie ahead for our beloved country. Once more, I thank God, my family, my staff, friends and constituents. It has been the honor of a lifetime.

So now I end with the statement that thousands of Members before me have used: Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRATULATING BILL LOCKYER ON HIS RETIREMENT

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

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize California State Treasurer Bill Lockyer, who will be retiring in January after over 45 years of service.

Bill is an Oakland native and longtime resident of Hayward, California, in the 15th Congressional District. He served as California State treasurer for the past 8 years, and prior to that he served as California's attorney general, which I appreciated as a former prosecutor, especially the work he did on behalf of sexual assault victims. He also served 25 years in the State legislature and 4 years as Senate pro tem. He is known as a strong policymaker and a well-respected leader.

As treasurer, he served under two Governors and effectively managed California's budget through the recession. He kept the economy growing through tough economic times, while maintaining key investments and expanding California's 529 college savings program and expanding investments in renewable energy.

His leadership will be missed, but he leaves an incredible legacy for others to follow. Again, I want to thank Bill Lockyer for his remarkable career of public service and wish him; his wife, Nadia; and their children the best as he moves on to his next step in public service.

FAREWELL ADDRESS

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

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Madam Speaker, over the last 2 years, I have had an opportunity that is rare. I was given the task of representing my community in the House of Representatives. During that time, it has been a privilege to see our democracy in action up close. It has been an honor to serve with all of you.

In this, my last message on the floor of Congress, I want to remind all of you that we are here to serve the people, not special interests. If I have made any impact on any of you, I hope it is this: the job of a Member of Congress is to protect our rights, not take them away.

I want to thank each and every Member of the House of Representatives for their support and their work. I would like to ask them to strive valiantly and dare greatly, and offer this last this small piece of advice: Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night.

FAREWELL ADDRESS

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise on this particular occasion to thank my family, my friends, my colleagues, and the voters of the Sixth Congressional District of Massachusetts for giving me the unbelievably wonderful opportunity to represent that district here in this venerable body, the House of Representatives.

I have been privileged to witness history and to participate in its making. My focus has always been on social justice and opportunity for all. I know that we have worked assiduously to try to make that happen every day that I have served here.

I am also appreciative of the fantastic staff who have worked with me over the years, who have done so much to make sure that the work we did reflected those values, and worked every day to make sure the constituents of the Sixth District were well served.

I also want to say that the delegation from Massachusetts deserves particular recognition on that. I am always appreciative of their support. And having served with the unbelievable legend, Senator Edward Kennedy, for years was a particular privilege.

Madam Speaker, from making college more affordable and accessible to making sure that people had the opportunity in the workforce to get the skills they needed to perform and have a job that paid them well enough to support their family, to making sure we had oversight in foreign affairs and to making sure when people are contracting on contingent operations that they take care not to have waste, fraud, and abuse in the work that is done; from watching the taxpayers' dollars to making sure that people in this country got a fair shake and that somebody stood up not just for the banks and not just for the large corporations but for every single family in this country, making sure that their government worked for them, I have been proved, I have been honored, I have been privileged, and I thank, again, my constituents, my family, my friends, and all of my colleagues here in the House.

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3329) to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. CHANGES REQUIRED TO SMALL BANK HOLDING COMPANY POLICY STATEMENT ON ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL AND MANAGERIAL FACTORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Before the end of the 6-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (hereafter in this Act referred to as the ''Board'') shall publish in the Federal Register proposed revisions to the Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement on Assessment of Financial and Managerial Factors (12 C.F.R. part 225 appendix C) that provide that the policy shall apply to bank holding companies and savings and loan holding companies which have pro forma consolidated assets of less than $1,000,000,000 and that—

(1) are not engaged in significant nonbanking activities either directly or through a nonbank subsidiary;

(2) do not conduct significant off-balance sheet activities (including securitization and asset management or administration) either directly or through a nonbank subsidiary; and

(3) do not have a material amount of debt or equity securities outstanding (other than trust preferred securities) that are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(b) EXCLUSIONS.—The Board may exclude any bank holding company or savings and loan holding company, regardless of asset size, from the policy statement under subsection (a) if the Board determines that such action is warranted for supervisory purposes.

SEC. 2. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (C) of section 171(b)(5) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5371(b)(5)) is amended to read as follows:

''(C) any bank holding company or savings and loan holding company having less than $1,000,000,000 in total consolidated assets that complies with the requirements of the Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement on Assessment of Financial and Managerial Factors of the Board of Governors (12 C.F.R. part 225 appendix C), as the requirements of such Policy Statement are amended pursuant to section 1 of an Act entitled 'To enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities,

boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes'.''.

(b) TRANSITION PERIOD.—Any small bank holding company that was excepted from the provisions of section 171 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act pursuant to subparagraph (C) of section 171(b)(5) (as such subparagraph was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act), and any small savings and loan holding company that would have been excepted from the provisions of section 171 pursuant to subparagraph (C) (as such subparagraph was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act) if it had been a small bank holding company, shall be excepted from the provisions of section 171 until the effective date of the Small Bank Holding Company Policy Statement issued by the Board as required by section 1 of this Act.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

For the purposes of this Act:

(a) BANK HOLDING COMPANY.—The term ''bank holding company'' has the same meaning as in section 2 of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 (12 U.S.C. 1841).

(b) SAVINGS AND LOAN HOLDING COMPANY.—The term ''savings and loan holding company'' has the same meaning as in section 10(a) of the Home Owners' Loan Act (12 U.S.C. 1467a(a)).

Ms. WAGNER (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING ARNE AND ESTHER LARSEN

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor my constituents Arne and Esther Larsen of Hebron, Nebraska, who will celebrate their 80th wedding anniversary on December 23 of this year. Fifty years of marriage is referred to as the golden anniversary, and 60 years as the diamond anniversary. However, there is no such reference for an 80-year anniversary because this accomplishment is so rare and unique.

Much has changed since 1934. A stamp cost 3 cents, and Franklin Roosevelt was in his first term as President when Arne and Esther were married. In all this time, the Larsens' marriage has endured, a testament to their love, faith, and commitment to each other.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Arne and Esther Larsen on this remarkable occasion and congratulate them on 80 years of marriage.

FUNDING THE NATION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, it has been a long day, and I believe the American people have seen the best of what America is in the vigorous debate and review of the future of this Nation. Yes, there were some positive aspects to the appropriations bill—the $5 billion in funding for Ebola treatment and the $2.2 billion for the rural development account which will help my constituents in Jacinto City, helping them rebuild a burned-down police station, which I hope to work on, and yes, the $18.1 billion for NASA, $363.7 million more than in 2014.

But I believe that out of good conscience, I would not want to stand in support of again going backwards in allowing banks to be engaged in derivatives and having American taxpayers pay for their actions. I believe in opportunities and banks and investment, but not the derivative work that causes them to be able to have the taxpayers pay for their mistakes.

Finally, I believe there is too much money in campaigns and politics; and now in this bill that will be signed by the President, $300,000 will be allowed to be given by one individual as opposed to the $97,000. Get money out of politics. Let's get back to legislating for the people, and we can all join together united for good legislation.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT KOEHNEN

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight in sadness to acknowledge the loss of a dear friend from Ord Bend, California, Robert Koehnen.

Bob is a guy who loved life and loved sharing it with his family and his friends. He could be happiest out in one of his orchards or at his apiary forming new queen bees in their little queen cages, or on the back of a Harley-Davidson or under the hood of a Dodge or Ford hot rod. He loved sharing that with everybody.

He was a humble man, but he was a real innovator, with harvesting equipment, orchard practices, and beekeeping practices that really put him at the cutting edge, even the humble man he was. You could see how humble he was in some of the things he said. One of the funny ones was that he didn't want to have a big birthday or big event on a weekend because, as he would say it, ''I don't want to screw up a guy's weekend.'' Indeed, in that humility, his family held his memorial service yesterday, on Wednesday at noon, maybe so it wouldn't screw up a guy's weekend.

Bob was a great man, a pillar of the community, a pillar in agriculture. He will be severely missed by his wife, Yvonne; his sons, Kalin and Kamron; brother, Bill; sister, Cleone; and a whole bunch of family and a whole bunch of friends who call him family, call him a dear friend.

God bless him.

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THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE SERVING IN CONGRESS

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

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, there are two kinds of people serving here in Congress—those who are here to serve the interests of the American people, and those who are here to serve the interests of the big banks and Wall Street speculators.

The big banks that forced the American people to bail them out in 2008 are even bigger today than they were before. This bill that passed today sets the American taxpayer up to bail them out yet again.

The passage of this bill brings us ever closer to the precipice of an economic disaster that will make the 2008 meltdown seem like a picnic.

FAREWELL

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

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, in good times and bad, one constant remains here on Capitol Hill. The Congress of the United States continues to attract some of the brightest minds and most eager spirits our country's colleges and universities can produce. They are our staff.

I want to acknowledge and express my deep gratitude to my staff members, especially Kent Keyser, my former chief of staff and now senior policy adviser, and Jim Zoia, my chief counsel, both of whom have been by my side every step of the way. They are outstanding and dedicated individuals who deserve the highest praise for their selfless sacrifice and service in behalf of the people of southern West Virginia. Through the years, many too numerous to mention have served on my staff and then have moved on, putting the lessons they learned serving on my staff to work for our State and Nation.

In addition to Kent and Jim, those serving on my Washington staff include: David McMaster, chief of staff; Kate Denman, deputy chief of staff; Diane Luensmann, communications director; Andy Mollohan and Rachel Meyer, legislative assistants; Carol Wallace, projects director; Josh Sutherland, legislative correspondent; and Megan Price, staff assistant.

In my West Virginia offices: Kelly Dyke, my district director; and Debrina Workman, Debbie Stevens, Teri Booth, and Kim McMillion represent over a century of service and experience to their fellow West Virginians. They are joined by Greg Crist, my district representative, and Larone Alexander, who serves on my staff through the House Wounded Warrior Program.

Those working on my Transportation and Infrastructure Committee staff

I have traveled the Middle East extensively during my close to four decades in this body, including with President Clinton in that historic December 1988 codel to the Middle East when he became the first U.S. President to step foot on Palestinian soil. I have met with kings, queens, emirs, presidents, prime ministers, militia chiefs, warlords, you name it, in this region, many times even when not in sync with our official U.S. policy. I have long advocated for Palestinian justice, human rights, dignity, and relief.

Madam Speaker, I do leave this body with a great sense of pride and a great sense of accomplishment in what we have been able to do together for the people of West Virginia.

I do appreciate my colleagues taking a moment to reflect with me on what truly has been a remarkable personal journey, a distinct honor, and a true privilege to serve the people. From elevator operator, mail carrier, assistant to the Democratic Whip Robert Byrd in the Democratic cloakroom in the other body through those Watergate years, all through my 38 years in this august body, it has been both exciting and frustrating, full of fast-paced days and long, drawn-out nights, such as we have just been through this evening. It has been full of sometimes tears, sometimes laughter, and, indeed, it has been an experience that I have truly appreciated and have loved every minute of it.

I want to say in conclusion that I thank, first and foremost, of course, God. I thank my family for their support. This very day, as I speak, is a 10th anniversary of my dear wife, Melinda, and I, and we celebrate this anniversary knowing that it has been a great ride in this institution. My late father stood behind me all the way. My 89-year-old mother, now living in my hometown of Beckley, and my brother Ed and my sisters Vickie and Tanya have always been there for me. My three children, Rebecca and her husband, Michael; Nick III and Laura; and Suzanne Nicole have always been behind my career. And all three of my grandchildren, Madison Kaylee, Nick Joe IV, and Ellianna, that is what it is all about, as we all know in this body, making this place a better place for our children and our grandchildren to live in.

My heartfelt thanks go out to the good people in West Virginia. I have been most proud to fight for our courageous coal miners, and I am very happy to see just this week that those war notices issued by the coal companies earlier this year will, fortunately, not be honored in most cases, and, fortunately, these coal miners will be able to keep holding their jobs.

I have been deeply proud to fight for our courageous coal miners. I have been deeply humble to serve and stand up for our American heroes, our veterans. West Virginia is a proud and patriotic State. I thank our working men and women, the backbone of our country, and our seniors who strengthen this Nation day after day with their continuing contributions. And may God bless our educators, our teachers who positively shape the future of our youth throughout eternity.

Madam Speaker, in concluding this chapter of my life, I offer my special heartfelt thanks to you, each of you in this body, my colleagues, for all the experiences, for representing the immense diversity of our country, and for a lifetime of lessons through the many trials and tribulations that you have shared and taught me. I truly have had the high honor of serving with dedicated public servants and their staffs who will ensure this country remains forever the best in the world.

Thank you and God bless this House of Representatives, and God bless our country.

UKRAINE FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT OF 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5859) to impose sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, to provide additional assistance to Ukraine, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, reserving the right to object, although I don't intend to object, this is a very important measure. We need to send this measure to the President's desk, and we need to do so tonight. I am delighted that we are doing so.

It is clear that Russia is not only fomenting separatism in Ukraine, it is actively supporting the uprising and sending troops to back it up. This is an invasion, plain and simple.

I am concerned that the Kremlin's designs don't stop with Ukraine. Putin is already putting substantial pressure on our NATO allies and our European friends. We must not bow to his aggression.

If we don't act now, where will we be in 6 months? Where will we be in 2 years? Where will we be in a decade?

Since the Cold War, a vision has emerged of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. That reality is within reach. Putin's aggression puts that future in dire jeopardy. We cannot let that hope die.

We need to let President Putin know loudly and clearly we will not stand for his blatant disregard of international law, we will not abandon our friends, and, as the United States, we remain the world's champion of freedom, democracy, and the dignity of all people.

Madam Speaker, I would like to commend the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for sending the House this bill so that we can stand as one in the face of Russia's aggression. In the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman ROYCE and I, as ranking member, have worked together to say that we will not stand for Putin's aggression.

I think this is a very, very important thing to do, very important bill to pass.

With that, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, reserving the right to object, though I don't intend to object, I would like to stand this evening and say, as cochair of the Ukranian Caucus, along with my dear colleagues, JIM GERLACH of Pennsylvania, and the ranking member of the full committee, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL of New York, I stand in strong support of H.R. 5859, a measure that allows America to shine the hope of liberty to the distant land of Ukraine, a measure that we hope to send to the President's desk very soon, and we need to move it tonight.

It is clear that Russia is actively fomenting upheaval and propagandizing in the West about its illegal invasion. It is an invasion, plain and simple, of a sovereign nation. The Kremlin's designs don't stop with Ukraine, and we see substantial pressure being placed on our NATO allies and other European friends. Liberty cannot bow to Putin's aggression.

Six months ago, when Russia invaded Ukraine, 4,000 more Ukrainian lives were existing and have been taken. Just according to the U.N. 1,000 additional lives have been lost since the cease-fire that was negotiated in September, and approximately 13 lives per day are being lost.

Since the cold war, a vision has emerged of a Europe whole, free, and at peace, and that reality is within reach. Putin's reckless aggression cannot stand. The United States cannot let the hope of liberty die, surely, in a land where its people have historically suffered more than any other place on Earth. The ravages of World War II still sting their memory and ours, and motivate our actions here tonight.

By approving H.R. 5859, America sends a clear signal to the world that we are the standard bearer of liberty at home and abroad. I am very pleased to join my colleagues this evening.

I thank the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for sending the House this bill.

With that, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5859

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. Statement of policy regarding Ukraine.
Sec. 4. Sanctions relating to the defense and energy sectors of the Russian Federation.
Sec. 5. Sanctions on Russian and other foreign financial institutions.
Sec. 6. Increased military assistance for the Government of Ukraine.
Sec. 7. Expanded nonmilitary assistance for Ukraine.
Sec. 8. Expanded broadcasting in countries of the former Soviet Union.
Sec. 9. Support for Russian democracy and civil society organizations.
Sec. 10. Report on non-compliance by the Russian Federation of its obligations under the INF Treaty.
Sec. 11. Rule of construction.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ACCOUNT; CORRESPONDENT ACCOUNT; PAYABLE-THROUGH ACCOUNT.—The terms ''account'', ''correspondent account'', and ''payable-through account'' have the meanings given those terms in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code.

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(3) DEFENSE ARTICLE; DEFENSE SERVICE; TRAINING.—The terms ''defense article'', ''defense service'', and ''training'' have the meanings given those terms in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794).

(4) FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term ''financial institution'' means a financial institution specified in subparagraph (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), (I), (J), (M), or (Y) of section 5312(a)(2) of title 31, United States Code.

(5) FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term ''foreign financial institution'' has the meaning given that term in section 561.308 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling).

(6) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term ''foreign person'' means any individual or entity that is not a United States citizen, a permanent resident alien, or an entity organized under the laws of the United States or any jurisdiction within the United States.

(7) KNOWINGLY.—The term ''knowingly'', with respect to conduct, a circumstance, or a result, means that a person has actual knowledge, or should have known, of the conduct, the circumstance, or the result.

(8) RUSSIAN PERSON.—The term ''Russian person'' means—

(A) an individual who is a citizen or national of the Russian Federation; or

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the Russian Federation.

(9) SPECIAL RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL PROJECT.—The term ''special Russian crude oil project'' means a project intended to extract crude oil from—

(A) the exclusive economic zone of the Russian Federation in waters more than 500 feet deep;

(B) Russian Arctic offshore locations; or

(C) shale formations located in the Russian Federation.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING UKRAINE.

It is the policy of the United States to further assist the Government of Ukraine in restoring its sovereignty and territorial integrity to deter the Government of the Russian Federation from further destabilizing and invading Ukraine and other independent countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. That policy shall be carried into effect, among other things, through a comprehensive effort, in coordination with allies and partners of the United States where appropriate, that includes economic sanctions, diplomacy, assistance for the people of Ukraine, and the provision of military capabilities to the Government of Ukraine that will enhance the ability of that Government to defend itself and to restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of unlawful actions by the Government of the Russian Federation.

SEC. 4. SANCTIONS RELATING TO THE DEFENSE AND ENERGY SECTORS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) SANCTIONS RELATING TO THE DEFENSE SECTOR.—

(1) ROSOBORONEXPORT.—Except as provided in subsection (d), not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall impose 3 or more of the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to Rosoboronexport.

(2) RUSSIAN PRODUCERS, TRANSFERORS, OR BROKERS OF DEFENSE ARTICLES.—Except as provided in subsection (d), on and after the date that is 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall impose 3 or more of the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to a foreign person the President determines—

(A) is an entity—

(i) owned or controlled by the Government of the Russian Federation or owned or controlled by nationals of the Russian Federation; and

(ii) that—

(I) knowingly manufactures or sells defense articles transferred into Syria or into the territory of a specified country without the consent of the internationally recognized government of that country;

(II) transfers defense articles into Syria or into the territory of a specified country without the consent of the internationally recognized government of that country; or

(III) brokers or otherwise assists in the transfer of defense articles into Syria or into the territory of a specified country without the consent of the internationally recognized government of that country; or

(B) knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, assists, sponsors, or provides financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, an entity described in subparagraph (A) with respect to an activity described in clause (ii) of that subparagraph.

(3) SPECIFIED COUNTRY DEFINED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In this subsection, the term ''specified country'' means—

(i) Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova; and

(ii) any other country designated by the President as a country of significant concern for purposes of this subsection, such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Central Asia republics.

(B) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—The President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees in writing not later than 15 days before—

(i) designating a country as a country of significant concern under subparagraph (A)(ii); or

(ii) terminating a designation under that subparagraph, including the termination of any such designation pursuant to subsection (h).

(b) SANCTIONS RELATED TO THE ENERGY SECTOR.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL PROJECTS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), on and after the date that is 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President may impose 3 or more of the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to a foreign person if the President determines that the foreign person knowingly makes a significant investment in a special Russian crude oil project.

(2) AUTHORIZATION FOR EXTENSION OF LICENSING LIMITATIONS ON CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.—The President, through the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce or the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury, as appropriate, may impose additional licensing requirements for or other restrictions on the export or reexport of items for use in the energy sector of the Russian Federation, including equipment used for tertiary oil recovery.

(3) CONTINGENT SANCTION RELATING TO GAZPROM.—If the President determines that Gazprom is withholding significant natural gas supplies from member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or further withholds significant natural gas supplies from countries such as Ukraine, Georgia, or Moldova, the President shall, not later than 45 days after making that determination, impose the sanction described in subsection (c)(7) and at least one additional sanction described in subsection (c) with respect to Gazprom.

(c) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions the President may impose with respect to a foreign person under subsection (a) or (b) are the following:

(1) EXPORT-IMPORT BANK ASSISTANCE.—The President may direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States not to approve the issuance of any guarantee, insurance, extension of credit, or participation in the extension of credit in connection with the export of any goods or services to the foreign person.

(2) PROCUREMENT SANCTION.—The President may prohibit the head of any executive agency (as defined in section 133 of title 41, United States Code) from entering into any contract for the procurement of any goods or services from the foreign person.

(3) ARMS EXPORT PROHIBITION.—The President may prohibit the exportation or provision by sale, lease or loan, grant, or other means, directly or indirectly, of any defense article or defense service to the foreign person and the issuance of any license or other approval to the foreign person under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778).

(4) DUAL-USE EXPORT PROHIBITION.—The President may prohibit the issuance of any license and suspend any license for the transfer to the foreign person of any item the export of which is controlled under the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2401 et seq.) (as in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)) or the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(5) PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS.—The President may, pursuant to such regulations as the President may prescribe, prohibit any person from—

(A) acquiring, holding, withholding, using, transferring, withdrawing, transporting, or exporting any property that is subject to the

(b) SANCTIONS RELATED TO THE ENERGY SECTOR.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL RUSSIAN CRUDE OIL PROJECTS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), on and after the date that is 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President may impose 3 or more of the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to a foreign person if the President determines that the foreign person knowingly makes a significant investment in a special Russian crude oil project.

(2) AUTHORIZATION FOR EXTENSION OF LICENSING LIMITATIONS ON CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.—The President, through the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce or the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury, as appropriate, may impose additional licensing requirements for or other restrictions on the export or reexport of items for use in the energy sector of the Russian Federation, including equipment used for tertiary oil recovery.

(3) CONTINGENT SANCTION RELATING TO GAZPROM.—If the President determines that Gazprom is withholding significant natural gas supplies from member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or further withholds significant natural gas supplies from countries such as Ukraine, Georgia, or Moldova, the President shall, not later than 45 days after making that determination, impose the sanction described in subsection (c)(7) and at least one additional sanction described in subsection (c) with respect to Gazprom.

(c) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions the President may impose with respect to a foreign person under subsection (a) or (b) are the following:

(1) EXPORT-IMPORT BANK ASSISTANCE.—The President may direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States not to approve the issuance of any guarantee, insurance, extension of credit, or participation in the extension of credit in connection with the export of any goods or services to the foreign person.

(2) PROCUREMENT SANCTION.—The President may prohibit the head of any executive agency (as defined in section 133 of title 41, United States Code) from entering into any contract for the procurement of any goods or services from the foreign person.

(3) ARMS EXPORT PROHIBITION.—The President may prohibit the exportation or provision by sale, lease or loan, grant, or other means, directly or indirectly, of any defense article or defense service to the foreign person and the issuance of any license or other approval to the foreign person under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778).

(4) DUAL-USE EXPORT PROHIBITION.—The President may prohibit the issuance of any license and suspend any license for the transfer to the foreign person of any item the export of which is controlled under the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2401 et seq.) (as in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)) or the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(5) PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS.—The President may, pursuant to such regulations as the President may prescribe, prohibit any person from—

(A) acquiring, holding, withholding, using, transferring, withdrawing, transporting, or exporting any property that is subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and with respect to which the foreign person has any interest;

(B) dealing in or exercising any right, power, or privilege with respect to such property; or

(C) conducting any transaction involving such property.

(6) BANKING TRANSACTIONS.—The President may, pursuant to such regulations as the President may prescribe, prohibit any transfers of credit or payments between financial institutions or by, through, or to any financial institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and involve any interest of the foreign person.

(7) PROHIBITION ON INVESTMENT IN EQUITY OR DEBT OF SANCTIONED PERSON.—The President may, pursuant to such regulations as the President may prescribe, prohibit any United States person from transacting in, providing financing for, or otherwise dealing in—

(A) debt—

(i) of longer than 30 days' maturity of a foreign person with respect to which sanctions are imposed under subsection (a) or of longer than 90 days' maturity of a foreign person with respect to which sanctions are imposed under subsection (b); and

(ii) issued on or after the date on which such sanctions are imposed with respect to the foreign person; or

(B) equity of the foreign person issued on or after that date.

(8) EXCLUSION FROM THE UNITED STATES AND REVOCATION OF VISA OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.—In the case of a foreign person who is an individual, the President may direct the Secretary of State to deny a visa to, and the Secretary of Homeland Security to exclude from the United States, the foreign person, subject to regulatory exceptions to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations.

(9) SANCTIONS ON PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.—In the case of a foreign person that is an entity, the President may impose on the principal executive officer or officers of the foreign person, or on individuals performing similar functions and with similar authorities as such officer or officers, any of the sanctions described in this subsection applicable to individuals.

(d) EXCEPTIONS.—

(1) IMPORTATION OF GOODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The authority to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under subsection (c)(5) shall not include the authority to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(B) GOOD DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ''good'' has the meaning given that term in section 16 of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2415) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.)).

(2) ADDITIONAL EXCEPTIONS.—The President shall not be required to apply or maintain the sanctions under subsection (a) or (b)—

(A) in the case of procurement of defense articles or defense services under existing contracts, subcontracts, or other business agreements, including ancillary or incidental contracts for goods, or for services or funding (including necessary financial services) associated with such goods, as necessary to give effect to such contracts, subcontracts, or other business agreements, and the exercise of options for production quantities to satisfy requirements essential to the national security of the United States—

(i) if the President determines in writing that—

(I) the foreign person to which the sanctions would otherwise be applied is a sole source supplier of the defense articles or services;

(II) the defense articles or services are essential;

(III) alternative sources are not readily or reasonably available; and

(IV) the national interests of the United States would be adversely affected by the application or maintenance of such sanctions; or

(ii) if the President determines in writing that—

(I) such articles or services are essential to the national security under defense coproduction agreements; and

(II) the national interests of the United States would be adversely affected by the application or maintenance of such sanctions;

(B) in the case of procurement, to eligible products, as defined in section 308(4) of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2518(4)), of any foreign country or instrumentality designated under section 301(b)(1) of that Act (19 U.S.C. 2511(b)(1));

(C) to products, technology, or services provided under contracts, subcontracts, or other business agreements (including ancillary or incidental contracts for goods, or for services or funding (including necessary financial services) associated with such goods, as necessary to give effect to such contracts, subcontracts, or other business agreements) entered into before the date on which the President publishes in the Federal Register the name of the foreign person with respect to which the sanctions are to be imposed;

(D) to—

(i) spare parts that are essential to United States products or production;

(ii) component parts, but not finished products, essential to United States products or production; or

(iii) routine servicing and maintenance of United States products, to the extent that alternative sources are not readily or reasonably available;

(E) to information and technology essential to United States products or production; or

(F) to food, medicine, medical devices, or agricultural commodities (as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8511)).

(e) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under subsection (a) or (b) with respect to a foreign person if the President—

(A) determines that the waiver is in the national security interest of the United States; and

(B) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the determination and the reasons for the determination.

(2) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required by paragraph (1)(B) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(f) TRANSACTION-SPECIFIC NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under subsection (a) or (b) with respect to a specific transaction if the President—

(A) determines that the transaction is in the national security interest of the United States; and

(B) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a detailed report on the determination and the specific reasons for the determination that a waiver with respect to the transaction is necessary and appropriate.

(2) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required by paragraph (1)(B) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(g) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, or conspires to violate, or causes a violation of, subsection (a) or (b) of this section, or an order or regulation prescribed under either such subsection, to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

(h) TERMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section, and sanctions imposed under this section, shall terminate on the date on which the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees a certification that the Government of the Russian Federation has ceased ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, supporting, or financing, significant acts intended to undermine the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine, including through an agreement between the appropriate parties.

(2) APPLICABILITY WITH RESPECT TO SYRIA.—The termination date under paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to the provisions of subsection (a) relating to the transfer of defense articles into Syria or sanctions imposed pursuant to such provisions.

SEC. 5. SANCTIONS ON RUSSIAN AND OTHER FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) FACILITATION OF CERTAIN DEFENSE- AND ENERGY-RELATED TRANSACTIONS.—The President may impose the sanction described in subsection (c) with respect to a foreign financial institution that the President determines knowingly engages, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, in significant transactions involving activities described in subparagraph (A)(ii) or (B) of section 4(a)(2) or paragraph (1) or (3) of section 4(b) for persons with respect to which sanctions are imposed under section 4.

(b) FACILITATION OF FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS ON BEHALF OF SPECIALLY DESIGNATED NATIONALS.—The President may impose the sanction described in subsection (c) with respect to a foreign financial institution if the President determines that the foreign financial institution has, on or after the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, knowingly facilitated a significant financial transaction on behalf of any Russian person included on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Department of the Treasury, pursuant to—

(1) this Act;

(2) Executive Order 13660 (79 Fed. Reg. 13,493), 13661 (79 Fed. Reg. 15,535), or 13662 (79 Fed. Reg. 16,169); or

(3) any other executive order addressing the crisis in Ukraine.

(c) SANCTION DESCRIBED.—The sanction described in this subsection is, with respect to a foreign financial institution, a prohibition on the opening, and a prohibition or the imposition of strict conditions on the maintaining, in the United States of a correspondent account or a payable-through account by the foreign financial institution.

(d) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under this section with respect to a foreign financial institution if the President—

(1) determines that the waiver is in the national security interest of the United States; and

(2) submits to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the determination and the reasons for the determination.

(e) IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.—

(1) IMPLEMENTATION.—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to a person that violates, attempts to violate, or conspires to violate, or causes a violation of, subsection (a) or (b) of this section, or an order or regulation prescribed under either such subsection, to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

(f) TERMINATION.—This section, and sanctions imposed under this section, shall terminate on the date on which the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees the certification described in section 4(h).

SEC. 6. INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF UKRAINE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to provide defense articles, defense services, and training to the Government of Ukraine for the purpose of countering offensive weapons and reestablishing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, including anti-tank and anti-armor weapons, crew weapons and ammunition, counter-artillery radars to identify and target artillery batteries, fire control, range finder, and optical and guidance and control equipment, tactical troop-operated surveillance drones, and secure command and communications equipment, pursuant to the provisions of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.), the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.), and other relevant provisions of law.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a report detailing the anticipated defense articles, defense services, and training to be provided pursuant to this section and a timeline for the provision of such defense articles, defense services, and training, to—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State $100,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2016, and $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2017 to carry out activities under this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) shall remain available for obligation and expenditure through the end of fiscal year 2018.

(d) AUTHORITY FOR THE USE OF FUNDS.—The funds made available pursuant to subsection (c) for provision of defense articles, defense services, and training may be used to procure such articles, services, and training from the United States Government or other appropriate sources.

(e) PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Government of Ukraine should take all appropriate steps to protect civilians.

SEC. 7. EXPANDED NONMILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR UKRAINE.

(a) ASSISTANCE TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN UKRAINE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a plan, including actions by the United States Government, other governments, and international organizations, to meet the need for protection of and assistance for internally displaced persons in Ukraine, to—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by paragraph (1) should include, as appropriate, activities in support of—

(A) helping to establish a functional and adequately resourced central registration system in Ukraine that can ensure coordination of efforts to provide assistance to internally displaced persons in different regions;

(B) encouraging adoption of legislation in Ukraine that protects internally displaced persons from discrimination based on their status and provides simplified procedures for obtaining the new residency registration or other official documentation that is a prerequisite to receiving appropriate social payments under the laws of Ukraine, such as pensions and disability, child, and unemployment benefits; and

(C) helping to ensure that information is available to internally displaced persons about—

(i) government agencies and independent groups that can provide assistance to such persons in various regions; and

(ii) evacuation assistance available to persons seeking to flee armed conflict areas.

(3) ASSISTANCE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The President shall instruct the United States permanent representative or executive director, as the case may be, to the relevant United Nations voluntary agencies, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and other appropriate international organizations, to use the voice and vote of the United States to support appropriate assistance for internally displaced persons in Ukraine.

(b) ASSISTANCE TO THE DEFENSE SECTOR OF UKRAINE.—The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense should assist entities in the defense sector of Ukraine to reorient exports away from customers in the Russian Federation and to find appropriate alternative markets for those entities in the defense sector of Ukraine that have already significantly reduced exports to and cooperation with entities in the defense sector of the Russian Federation.

(c) ASSISTANCE TO ADDRESS THE ENERGY CRISIS IN UKRAINE.—

(1) EMERGENCY ENERGY ASSISTANCE.—

(A) PLAN REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, in collaboration with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, shall work with officials of the Government of Ukraine to develop a short-term emergency

energy assistance plan designed to help Ukraine address the potentially severe short-term heating fuel and electricity shortages facing Ukraine in 2014 and 2015.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The plan required by subparagraph (A) should include strategies to address heating fuel and electricity shortages in Ukraine, including, as appropriate—

(i) the acquisition of short-term, emergency fuel supplies;

(ii) the repair or replacement of infrastructure that could impede the transmission of electricity or transportation of fuel;

(iii) the prioritization of the transportation of fuel supplies to the areas where such supplies are needed most;

(iv) streamlining emergency communications throughout national, regional, and local governments to manage the potential energy crisis resulting from heating fuel and electricity shortages;

(v) forming a crisis management team within the Government of Ukraine to specifically address the potential crisis, including ensuring coordination of the team's efforts with the efforts of outside governmental and nongovernmental entities providing assistance to address the potential crisis; and

(vi) developing a public outreach strategy to facilitate preparation by the population and communication with the population in the event of a crisis.

(C) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of State, the Secretary of Energy, and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized to provide assistance in support of, and to invest in short-term solutions for, enabling Ukraine to secure the energy safety of the people of Ukraine during 2014 and 2015, including through—

(i) procurement and transport of emergency fuel supplies, including reverse pipeline flows from Europe;

(ii) provision of technical assistance for crisis planning, crisis response, and public outreach;

(iii) repair of infrastructure to enable the transport of fuel supplies;

(iv) repair of power generating or power transmission equipment or facilities;

(v) procurement and installation of compressors or other appropriate equipment to enhance short-term natural gas production;

(vi) procurement of mobile electricity generation units;

(vii) conversion of natural gas heating facilities to run on other fuels, including alternative energy sources; and

(viii) provision of emergency weatherization and winterization materials and supplies.

(2) REDUCTION OF UKRAINE'S RELIANCE ON ENERGY IMPORTS.—

(A) PLANS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State, in collaboration with the Secretary of Energy and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall work with officials of the Government of Ukraine to develop medium- and long-term plans to increase energy production and efficiency to increase energy security by helping Ukraine reduce its dependence on natural gas imported from the Russian Federation.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The medium- and long-term plans required by subparagraph (A) should include strategies, as appropriate, to—

(i) improve corporate governance and unbundling of state-owned oil and gas sector firms;

(ii) increase production from natural gas fields and from other sources, including renewable energy;

(iii) license new oil and gas blocks transparently and competitively;

(iv) modernize oil and gas upstream infrastructure; and

(v) improve energy efficiency.

(C) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the Secretary of Energy should, during fiscal years 2015 through 2018, work with other donors, including multilateral agencies and nongovernmental organizations, to prioritize, to the extent practicable and as appropriate, the provision of assistance from such donors to help Ukraine to improve energy efficiency, increase energy supplies produced in Ukraine, and reduce reliance on energy imports from the Russian Federation, including natural gas.

(D) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated $50,000,000 in the aggregate for fiscal years 2016 through 2018 to carry out activities under this paragraph.

(3) SUPPORT FROM THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION.—The Overseas Private Investment Corporation shall—

(A) prioritize, to the extent practicable, support for investments to help increase energy efficiency, develop domestic oil and natural gas reserves, improve and repair electricity infrastructure, and develop renewable and other sources of energy in Ukraine; and

(B) implement procedures for expedited review and, as appropriate, approval, of applications by eligible investors (as defined in section 238 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2198)) for loans, loan guarantees, and insurance for such investments.

(4) SUPPORT BY THE WORLD BANK GROUP AND THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT.—The President shall, to the extent practicable and as appropriate, direct the United States Executive Directors of the World Bank Group and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States to encourage the World Bank Group and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other international financial institutions—

(A) to invest in, and increase their efforts to promote investment in, projects to improve energy efficiency, improve and repair electricity infrastructure, develop domestic oil and natural gas reserves, and develop renewable and other sources of energy in Ukraine; and

(B) to stimulate private investment in such projects.

(d) ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN UKRAINE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development shall, directly or through nongovernmental or international organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the National Endowment for Democracy, and related organizations—

(A) strengthen the organizational and operational capacity of democratic civil society in Ukraine;

(B) support the efforts of independent media outlets to broadcast, distribute, and share information in all regions of Ukraine;

(C) counter corruption and improve transparency and accountability of institutions that are part of the Government of Ukraine; and

(D) provide support for democratic organizing and election monitoring in Ukraine.

(2) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a strategy to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State $20,000,000 for fiscal year 2016 to carry out this subsection.

(4) TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS.—Any assistance provided pursuant to this subsection shall be conducted in as transparent of a manner as possible, consistent with the nature and goals of this subsection. The President shall provide a briefing on the activities funded by this subsection at the request of the committees specified in paragraph (2).

SEC. 8. EXPANDED BROADCASTING IN COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors shall submit to Congress a plan, including a cost estimate, for immediately and substantially increasing, and maintaining through fiscal year 2017, the quantity of Russian-language broadcasting into the countries of the former Soviet Union funded by the United States in order to counter Russian Federation propaganda.

(b) PRIORITIZATION OF BROADCASTING INTO UKRAINE, GEORGIA, AND MOLDOVA.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall prioritize broadcasting into Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova by the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

(c) ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES.—In developing the plan required by subsection (a), the Chairman shall consider—

(1) near-term increases in Russian-language broadcasting for countries of the former Soviet Union (other than the countries specified in subsection (b)), including Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; and

(2) increases in broadcasting in other critical languages, including Ukrainian and Romanian languages.

(d) BROADCASTING DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''broadcasting'' means the distribution of media content via radio broadcasting, television broadcasting, and Internet-based platforms, among other platforms.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Broadcasting Board of Governors $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2018 to carry out activities under this section.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) shall supplement and not supplant other amounts made available for activities described in this section.

SEC. 9. SUPPORT FOR RUSSIAN DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall, directly or through nongovernmental or international organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the National Endowment for Democracy, and related organizations—

(1) improve democratic governance, transparency, accountability, rule of law, and anti-corruption efforts in the Russian Federation;

(2) strengthen democratic institutions and political and civil society organizations in the Russian Federation;

(3) expand uncensored Internet access in the Russian Federation; and

(4) expand free and unfettered access to independent media of all kinds in the Russian Federation, including through increasing United States Government-supported broadcasting activities, and assist with the

protection of journalists and civil society activists who have been targeted for free speech activities.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of State $20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2018 to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a).

(c) STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit a strategy to carry out the activities set forth in subsection (a) to—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(d) TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS.—Any assistance provided pursuant to this section shall be conducted in as transparent of a manner as possible, consistent with the nature and goals of this section. The President shall provide a briefing on the activities funded by this section at the request of the committees specified in subsection (c).

SEC. 10. REPORT ON NON-COMPLIANCE BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION OF ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE INF TREATY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Russian Federation is in violation of its obligations under the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, signed at Washington December 8, 1987, and entered into force June 1, 1988 (commonly referred to as the ''Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty'' or ''INF Treaty'').

(2) This behavior poses a threat to the United States, its deployed forces, and its allies.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President should hold the Russian Federation accountable for being in violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty; and

(2) the President should demand the Russian Federation completely and verifiably eliminate the military systems that constitute the violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 90 days thereafter, the President shall submit to the committees specified in subsection (d) a report that includes the following elements:

(A) A description of the status of the President's efforts, in cooperation with United States allies, to hold the Russian Federation accountable for being in violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty and obtain the complete and verifiable elimination of its military systems that constitute the violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty.

(B) The President's assessment as to whether it remains in the national security interests of the United States to remain a party to the INF Treaty, and other related treaties and agreements, while the Russian Federation is in violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty.

(C) Notification of any deployment by the Russian Federation of a ground launched ballistic or cruise missile system with a range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers.

(D) A plan developed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), to verify that the Russian Federation has fully and completely dismantled any ground launched cruise missiles or ballistic missiles with a range of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, including details on facilities that inspectors need access to, people inspectors need to talk with, how often inspectors need the accesses for, and how much the verification regime would cost.

(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(d) COMMITTEES SPECIFIED.—The committees specified in this subsection are—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 11. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act or an amendment made by this Act shall be construed as an authorization for the use of military force.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL

REVISIONS TO THE AGGREGATES AND ALLOCATIONS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET RESOLUTION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, December 11, 2014.

MR. RYAN OF WISCONSIN. Mr. Speaker, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 revised the statutory spending limits for fiscal year 2015 base discretionary appropriations in the amount of $521,272 million for defense programs and $492,356 million for non-defense programs. The levels of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2015 for the House were published in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2014. These levels set the base discretionary 302(a) allocation to the Committee on Appropriations at $1,013,628 million, which is the sum of the fiscal year 2015 defense and non-defense base discretionary spending limits in statute. Section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (BBEDCA) allows for adjustments to the base discretionary spending limits for certain purposes including overseas contingencies, disaster relief, and program integrity initiatives. On June 17, 2014, I issued an adjustment to the aggregates and allocations of the House concurrent resolution on the budget in the amount of $6,438 million in additional budget authority to accommodate disaster relief funding contained in H.R. 4903, the Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015.

H.R. 83, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, contains $1,484 million in budget authority for program integrity initiatives, which is within the allowable limits for this purpose as established in section 251(b)(2)(B) and (C) of BBEDCA. Program integrity funding provides for agency activities to increase efficiency and reduce fraud in federal programs. CBO estimates such funding reduces mandatory spending by more than the amount of discretionary funding provided. Accordingly, I am submitting this adjustment to the fiscal year 2015 House concurrent resolution on the budget for an additional $1,484 million in budget authority to accommodate the program integrity funding included in H.R. 83. After making this adjustment, H.R. 83 is within the fiscal year 2015 statutory spending limits established by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and within the 302(a) allocation established by the fiscal year 2015 House concurrent resolution on the budget.

Pursuant to section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, I hereby submit for printing in the Congressional Record revisions to the aggregates and allocations set forth in the Statement of Committee Allocations, Aggregates, and Other Budgetary Levels for Fiscal Year 2015 published in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2014, as adjusted, pursuant to the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, Public Law 113–67. These revisions are provided for bills, joint resolutions, and amendments thereto or conference reports thereon, considered by the House subsequent to this filing, as applicable. For fiscal year 2015, aggregate levels of budget authority and outlays and the allocation to the Committee on Appropriations, included in the levels of the budget resolution found in the Statement published in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2014, are revised. Associated tables are attached.

The provisions of H. Con. Res. 25 (113th Congress) have been deemed to be in force by section 115 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. This revision represents an adjustment for purposes of enforcing sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. For the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, these revised aggregates and allocations are to be considered as aggregates and allocations included in the concurrent resolution on the budget, pursuant to the Statement published in the Congressional Record on April 29, 2014, as adjusted.

Sincerely,
PAUL D. RYAN OF WISCONSIN,
Chairman.

Attachment.

BUDGET AGGREGATES

[On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars]

	Fiscal Year	
	2015	2015–2024
Current Aggregates:		
Budget Authority	3,031,744	[1]
Outlays	3,026,369	[1]
Revenues	2,535,978	31,202,135
Adjustment for H.R. 83, the Consolidated and Further Appropriations Act, 2015:		
Budget Authority	1,484	[1]
Outlays	1,277	[1]
Revenues	0	0
Revised Aggregates:		
Budget Authority	3,033,228	[1]
Outlays	3,027,646	[1]
Revenues	2,535,978	31,206,399

ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

[In millions of dollars]

	2015
Base Discretionary Action:	
BA	1,020,066
OT	1,142,784
Adjustment for Program Integrity:	
BA	1,484
OT	1,277
Global War on Terrorism:	
BA	85,357
OT	39,981
Total Discretionary Action:	
BA	1,106,907
OT	1,184,042
Current Law Mandatory:	
BA	868,410
OT	861,637

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1067. An act to make revisions in title 36, United States Code, as necessary to keep the title current and make technical corrections and improvements.

H.R. 1204. An act to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to establish an Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1281. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of the title XI of such Act.

H.R. 1447. An act to encourage States to report to the Attorney General certain information regarding the deaths of individuals in the custody of law enforcement agencies, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2719. An act to require the Transportation Security Administration to implement best practices and improve transparency with regard to technology acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2952. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to assess the cybersecurity workforce of the Department of Homeland Security and develop a comprehensive workforce strategy, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3044. An act to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi.

H.R. 3374. An act to provide for the use of savings promotion raffle products by financial institutions to encourage savings, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3468. An act to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to extend insurance coverage to amounts held in a member account on behalf of another person, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4007. An act to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program.

H.R. 4193. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4199. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the ''Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center''.

H.R. 4681. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4926. An act to designate a segment of Interstate Route 35 in the State of Minnesota as the ''James L. Oberstar Memorial Highway''.

H.R. 5705. An act to modify certain provisions relating to the Propane Education and Research Council.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1000. An act to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to prepare a crosscut budget for restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and for other purposes.

S. 1683. An act to provide for the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign recipients, and for other purposes.

S. 1691. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the security of the United States border and to provide for reforms and rates of pay for border patrol agents.

S. 2142. An Act to impose targeted sanctions on persons responsible for violations of human rights of antigovernment protesters in Venezuela, to strengthen civil society in Venezuela, and for other purposes.

S. 2270. An act to clarify the application of certain leverage and risk-based requirements under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

S. 2444. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

S. 2519. An act to codify an existing operations center for cybersecurity.

S. 2521. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, to provide for reform to Federal information security.

S. 2651. An act to repeal certain mandates of the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General.

S. 2759. An act to release the City of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport.

BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 10, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills and joint resolution:

H.R. 5030. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13500 SW 250 Street in Princeton, Florida, as the ''Corporal Christian A. Guzman Rivera Post Office Building.''

H.R. 2678. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10360 Southwest 186th Street in Miami, Florida, as the ''Larcenia J. Bullard Post Office Building.''

H.R. 3534. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 113 West Michigan Avenue in Jackson, Michigan, as the ''Officer James Bonneau Memorial Post Office.''

H.R. 4939. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2551 Galena Avenue in Simi Valley, California, as the ''Neil Havens Post Office''

H.R. 2112. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 787 State Route 17M in Monroe, New York, as the ''National Clandestine Service of the Central Intelligence Agency NCS Officer Gregg David Wenzel Memorial Post Office.''

H.R. 2223. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 220 Elm Avenue in Munising, Michigan, as the ''Elizabeth L. Kinnunen Post Office Building.''

H.R. 78. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4110 Almeda Road in Houston, Texas, as the ''George Thomas 'Mickey' Leland Post Office Building.''

H.R. 1707. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 302 East Green Street in Champaign, Illinois, as the ''James R. Burgess Jr. Post Office Building.''

H.R. 5739. To amend the Social Security Act to provide for the termination of social security benefits for individuals who participated in Nazi persecution, and for other purposes.

H.J. Res. 105. Conferring honorary citizenship of the United States on Bernardo de Galvez y Madrid, Viscount of Galveston and Count of Galvez.

H.R. 2366. To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of World War I.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

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Senate

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

TRIBUTES TO MARY LANDRIEU

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I will just say a couple words before I turn it over to the Chair and to my colleague from West Virginia.

When I think of MARY LANDRIEU, I think of the most tenacious person in the Senate standing here, holding court, fighting for her cause, fighting for her values, fighting for her State. I think particularly of the hard work she did on flood insurance, on this issue that was so critical to the State of Louisiana and very important to my State of Oregon and to our other States but particularly Louisiana. She was determined. Every time I was on the floor, she would say: JEFF, have you done this and JEFF, have you done that. She would grab someone else, and she would say: And now we have to do this. That is how legislation gets done.

Senator LANDRIEU really drives things through the Senate. It is one thing to be here and express your ideas in kind of a social manner—well, wouldn't this be nice or wouldn't that be nice; it is another to stand here and say: I am going to make this happen because it is important to my constituents and important to our Nation. I have seen MARY LANDRIEU do that on issue after issue, and certainly for all who came in with my class 6 years ago, it has been a wonderful education on how to make maximum use and effectiveness from this privilege of serving in the Senate.

Thank you for everything you have done, MARY LANDRIEU. It is an honor to serve with you, and we are going to miss you greatly.

NOTICE

If the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2014, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, will be published on Wednesday, December 31, 2014, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT–59 or S–123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Tuesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Wednesday, December 31, 2014, and will be delivered on Monday, January 5, 2015.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong__record.pdf, and submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at "Record@Sec.Senate.gov".

Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed statement, and formatted according to the instructions for the Extensions of Remarks template at https://housenet.house.gov/legislative/research-and-reference/transcripts-and-records/electronic-congressional-record-inserts. The Official Reporters will transmit to GPO the template formatted electronic file only after receipt of, and authentication with, the hard copy, and signed manuscript. Deliver statements to the Official Reporters in Room HT–59.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman.*

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. All of us came here at one time or another, and the first impression you have is how they kind of ingratiate you and bring you into the

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

Printed on recycled paper.

fold. I am often asked—I am sure most of our colleagues are asked the same question—whom do you consider your best and closest friend and whom do you associate with and whom do you feel comfortable with? In any category, without a doubt, it is always MARY LANDRIEU. We come from a similar background—rural States. We come from the same culture—hard-working people who basically don't ask for an awful lot and give a lot more back. Both of us come from large Catholic families, and we have an awful lot in common. We and our spouses have bonded, and we have done things together. That was the way I heard the place used to work, that you build relationships and there is camaraderie and you share dinners at people's homes. It is such a different atmosphere when that happens because you really do forge a bond that is so much missing in this body.

Let me say one other thing. The great losers in this whole election process we just had were the great people of Louisiana. They lost a champion. They lost a fighter. That is what Senator MERKLEY said. There is nobody who said: I think you ought to be careful about that because I think MARY is interested. We knew there could be problems.

With that being said, the best thing to do is to go talk to MARY on this subject or issue, and we would work through it. How do we compromise and bring everybody together? And MARY would say: We will work through it.

Coming from an energy State and MARY having an energy State and the two of us being Democrats, on our side sometimes our individual caucus is not as large as we would like for it to be—let's put it that way—but we talk an awful lot about how we are moving an energy policy. As MARY said, we need it all in this country. We should be totally energy independent. We shouldn't be looking to other countries and buying their products and giving them the resources to be used against us, and we don't have to do that. We can do it in a sensible and balanced way with the economy and the environment. MARY has always had the economy and environment first and foremost. That type of balance is hard to find, and it is definitely hard to find in Washington.

So I just want her to know that there is nobody who is going to miss MARY LANDRIEU more than I, being in this body, going shoulder to shoulder with her and trying to bring an even keel to this whole process.

MARY, I feel for the people of Louisiana. I truly do. I am hoping somebody can come along and have the same spirit and fight that you have, but no one is going to be able to replace you and what you have been able to do and what you have been able to make us aware of.

My little State was involved in helping Katrina, helping the State of Louisiana. The State of West Virginia came immediately. When that happened, we were so proud to be part of that, and we now have a lot of people from Louisiana living in West Virginia today because of that effort.

There has been a wonderful relationship and a wonderful friendship, but more importantly, there has been a wonderful person who has graced the Halls in this tremendous body for 18 years who will not be replaced in this Senate and this body. Again, the people of Louisiana should be extremely proud to have someone who is a fighter, who gave every drop she had of public service for her State and never forgot where she come from. So with that, that is a tremendous tribute in itself.

I say to my dear friend, thank you for your service on behalf of the great State of Louisiana. Thank you for all the important work you have done for our country. God bless you, and I love you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, you can see that MARY LANDRIEU has a lot of friends on both sides of the aisle, and that is because MARY has stood up and been a mentor to so many of us. She taught us how to fight for our own States because that is what she has done every day for Louisiana.

I was thinking about our States earlier. MARY mentioned in her talk about how Minnesota is at the top of the Mississippi and Louisiana is at the bottom and how hard we fought for river issues and barges and locks and dams. We will actually have success at the end of the year with the ABLE Act, which is really important for other reasons, but we are going to finally start the funding for lock and dam improvements, and that kind of work would not have happened without MARY and the work and support she has provided with the RIVER Act. So a river doesn't divide us, it unites us, and MARY is a uniter and brings people together on so many issues.

She said before that she was going to put some things on the RECORD about adoption, but I thought I would take the opportunity to fill people in.

First of all, MARY established the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. If you have not gone to some of the events where she literally brings the angels—people who have adopted children in the most dire circumstances—to Washington to celebrate these adoptions and talk about the policy changes that need to be made.

Anyone who has adopted one of the foster kids or brought them into an office and adopted them—the reason you can do that is because MARY LANDRIEU started that program so that foster children, who otherwise would not have the connections and wherewithal to be able to get a job for the summer, spring, or fall in Washington, DC, would be able to work, and then she has all of these kids to her house every single year.

MARY doesn't just fight for adopted kids at home, she fights for them all over the world. I would hate to be the bureaucrat in Guatemala when MARY LANDRIEU shows up to fight them off. I see her staff, and some of them were probably with her on that trip. I think she knew the name of every child who was waiting to be adopted in Guatemala.

How can we forget the meeting with the Russians when they started to use these poor little children as pawns in a political game? MARY stood up to them. As a result, as many of us know, she has now been banned from the country of Russia. I don't think everybody knows that the reason she was banned was because she was fighting for these kids who were waiting to be adopted. Many of the parents are in my State, and they actually have siblings and they are trying to adopt the other sibling. That is a very sad story and MARY stood up for them. In the words of her dad, Putin didn't like it, and so MARY was banned. I guess that is not where she is going on vacation after we are done here.

The other thing about MARY I will never forget—how kind and sweet and fun she is for her friends in the Senate—is the time when we had a bet on the Saints-Vikings game in the playoffs. We bet some food from our States. If anybody remembers that amazing playoff game, the Vikings lost, and I had to wear a Drew Brees jersey and walk over to MARY's office with a pot of gumbo, which is really hard to make. When I got to her office, all of her New Orleans press was there, and when she tried that gumbo, she said, this is Minnesota gumbo. This gumbo just needs something special. She got out an enormous bottle of hot sauce from her desk drawer—as only a Louisiana Senator would have—and dumped it in my Minnesota gumbo. That is the spice that MARY has added to all of our lives.

What we have learned from her we will never forget. As I said, she is a role model for so many of us on how to fight for our States.

We see it in the eyes of those little adopted children and the great success we are starting to see on the coast because of all the recovery you brought to your State. We know you will never be forgotten and we want you to keep fighting.

Thank you, MARY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I can't leave the floor without speaking to MARY. MARY has been such an incredible inspiration to me. I have been in the Senate now for 13 months, and I have had a number of conversations with her, but the best way to teach somebody is to show somebody.

Senator LANDRIEU is prodigiously persuasive, tirelessly tenacious, doggedly determined. Just to watch Senator LANDRIEU is to watch what every American should hope for in a Senator—someone who is unyielding in their work and service to them.

If you look at the myriad of interests in the State of Louisiana, I was amazed by what I saw firsthand. MARY stood up and fought for the people who were loud and ornery but still had a good cause as well as the people who were voiceless and humble. MARY stood up for them. MARY stood up for people in her community who were from every different background and from every different race. MARY stood up to them in a way that is a model to my State.

I heard my senior Senator mention you by name about how essential you were when my State had its back against the wall and crushed by a superstorm. When there were battles to get my State's funding, and MARY had no skin in that game, my senior Senator mentioned you as a champion for New Jersey and that is what blows me away about you.

I yearn for a government that has moral courage, more than we have now, people who will risk popularity for purpose and will risk substance for some kind of celebrity. Senator LANDRIEU has done things against her political interests, but that were for the people. That is why I have a great deal of reverence for you and why I travel down to your State.

Now the Senator knows this because I must have said it hundreds of times when I was down in Louisiana, that that is my ancestral State. I will end by saying this: My grandaddy was born in Monroe. He was born poor. As my family likes to say, he was so poor he couldn't afford to be poor, he was po, P-O. He was born to a single mama. He was born Black at a time of immense segregation, when people who walked the hallways of power couldn't give a damn about him. He taught me love for your State, and more importantly, the urgency to stand up and fight for those people that most folks won't fight for.

I am telling you right now, my grandaddy died during my first big election, but if he knew you, he would be so proud of your service.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. BEGICH. I wish to echo all the comments people said today, but I have to be honest. When I was elected, I was scared of MARY. People said very politely that you should check with MARY to see if she has an issue with something. I was terrified of what people told me she would do if I was not on her side.

If you remember, when I came in, we doubled the oil and gas caucus in the Democratic caucus by me just joining, and so we had an immediate connection, which was unique in itself. Our connection was not just that, but also, as MARY mentioned, her mentor, Lindy Boggs, and our family knows the Boggses very well.

I can still remember a call I got when I won my mayor's race in 2003 from this woman in Louisiana. My staff came in and said some woman from Louisiana is calling, and we don't know who she is, but she wants to talk to you, and so I said, OK. I took the phone call, and it was Lindy Boggs. You know how she would start a conversation with ''Hi, darlin', I just want to check in with you and see how you are doing, and congratulations.'' Then she said, ''One moment, someone is at my door.'' She came back and said, ''The exterminator is here,'' and that is classic Lindy Boggs.

What was so real about her—and I can see it in MARY's style—and that is she is real. The work MARY has done—and I didn't know it until I came to the Senate—for foster kids and adoption is remarkable. AMY KLOBUCHAR went into great detail about that, and it shows that it is not always about the policy and fights on the floor here, but there is so much that individuals do outside this Chamber. What MARY has done outside of the Chamber is to use this position to make a difference for young people, and that is powerful. As MARY has said, we fight over policies and issues, but every one of those young people has been touched in some way. I guarantee—and I am sure you have seen it over the years where someone might come up to you and say, I don't know if you remember me, and then they tell you the story of how you met them when they were a foster kid and just getting adopted or when you were at one of the ceremonies or one of the events they were at. Those are the things I will remember about you.

The tenacity that people talked about—there is no question about it. I was glad when I got on the Appropriations Committee because I thought, finally, I will be on there with someone who will chew it up with me, and I just had to hang on to your coattails when you were fighting on issues.

When we sat in on those leadership meetings on Tuesday morning, I was always thankful when you came in. You were right across from me. I don't know if they all figured it out—maybe, again, as I said, it is a little bit of confession—we had our signals, or maybe eye contact, and then we went to work. You were really incredible.

When you were in caucus—and many people don't see those, except as Members—you were always passionate about what was important to Louisiana. You never forgot what was important to Louisiana.

People made the comment that you are tenacious. I would say that any time something did move in the Congress, you were a part of it in some way. When we were trying to figure out how to fix the health care bill, you were right there. You didn't hesitate. You knew it was a hot potato, but it was also something that we knew we had to make better, not just for people but for decades to come. You were not afraid of that even though you said you knew it could cost you your election because you knew generationally it would have an impact.

It wasn't about the moment, it was about 10, 15, 20 years, you could look back and say you helped make that happen, and you did, every time you tried to move in and push an item or idea. Even though we will not be serving here, you will have an impact.

I could tell, as we were shaking hands here, it was amazing to watch you, you never stop. You were already talking to each person about the work they need to be doing. When I shook your hand, you were talking about fisheries. I am like, MARY, just relax. But you are already working it, and that is what is so unique about you. You will not be in this body, but you will be in this body because of the way you do your work. It is not about being in this office, it is about caring about Louisiana, and as I said, I saw it just in this last moment here. It is unbelievable. You will never give up on the people of Louisiana because you care so deeply.

It has been an honor to know you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. I wish to make some remarks about the Senator from Louisiana. I had the pleasure of serving as ranking member of the Homeland Security Appropriations Committee, and MARY LANDRIEU was the chairman. I wasn't sure about what to expect when I joined that committee. I knew of MARY's passion and her persuasion, which is given in a gentle but effective way. She reaches out. I thought, she is going to convince me out of just about everything. I will not be able to hold my own with her, but she was so gracious in terms of working together with me as we worked through some very tough issues.

She was a knowledgeable and effective leader. She couldn't ask enough questions, couldn't gain enough information, making wise decisions, given the limitations that we had relative to appropriations and given the process that, unfortunately, was not the way the Appropriations Committee should go forward. Nevertheless, working together on that and on a whole number of issues turned out to be a very pleasant experience because of the nature of the leader of the committee and their willingness to work together.

You get to learn something about someone when you spend 3 days trekking along the southern border on the immigration issue. We climbed into tunnels, driving along fences, talking to Border Patrol agents, looking at the enormous channels that exist relative to that border and our Border Patrol people and immigration control people. Both of us were right there in blue jeans and tennis shoes in hot weather, and learning firsthand the challenges this country faces relative to dealing with immigration.

Her passion for children and her State has been talked about. I think the word that best describes MARY is passion. She has passion for the engagement in anything that she engages

in and doing it in a way that is relentless and reaches results. I think it is a great tribute to her character and to the kind of person she is.

One thing we will not be able to do is meet together somewhere in Russia. I have been banned from Russia and MARY has been banned from Russia. I was banned because I took significant exception to the Russian takeover of Crimea and its activities in Ukraine. I was surprised by that. MARY was banned for an unnecessary reason, and that was trying to help Russian children who were trying to find adoptive parents. Obviously she was successful, and obviously she was as relentless there as she was on all the other issues because Russia saw that as a threat. Here is someone reaching out for all the right reasons and doing something for all the right reasons—passion for children and finding them a home.

I wish MARY the very best going forward in her next chapter of life. I can testify to you from personal experience that there is life after Congress, and it can be a pleasant life. Knowing you, you will be engaged in something very significant—whether for your State or your country. Your life of service, and your family's life of service, is well recognized. So I wish the Senator from Louisiana the very best as she goes forward. It has been a pleasure working with her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I wish to follow the comments of my friend, the Senator from Indiana, although I do think the RECORD should be corrected. I would say to my colleague I have also dealt with the Senator from Louisiana a number of times on a number of issues, and I have thought of lots of words to describe her style, but ''gentle'' would not be one to come to mind.

I know this is a day to pay tribute, so I wish to echo some of the comments of the Senator from Indiana.

I first met part of the Landrieu family when I had a chance to meet MARY's dad when he was serving as the Secretary of HUD and I was a young staff person. MARY talks a lot about her family. Her family was kind enough to host me a variety of times when I was in Louisiana. She has a great family, a great tradition.

So many folks have spoken about specific issues regarding MARY's service in the Senate. I am not going to talk about her focus on issues and the relentlessness she brings, but I wish to acknowledge her generosity and heart and spirit. She and Frank would always open their home for whatever cause. Again, I heard the comments about her enormous heart and commitment for adoption. I think about so many events that we go to, but those Angels of Adoption events at her house touched all of us in a way that is not often the case. I also can acknowledge now that she has a great love for the Commonwealth of Virginia and has spent some time there due to her love of horses and her daughter's riding and her own riding. As has been mentioned by so many—and I know from our own conversations—this is not somebody who wants to look backward but is clearly already looking forward. I know life holds for you and Frank a number of extraordinarily exciting additional chapters. I hope I have the opportunity to be a part of those chapters and to be subject to that gentle persuasion on whatever issue comes to mind as you go forward.

I know I speak for so many of our colleagues when I say we all have a lot of unique characteristics, but with MARY LANDRIEU they broke the mold.

I yield the floor to my good friend the Senator from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, one of the truly nice things about serving in the Senate is the people we meet. Myrna and I consider Frank and MARY to be our friends. She is an incredible person and has given incredible service. I am sorry the people of Louisiana could not see MARY in our caucuses as she fought on different issues for the people of Louisiana and what she did as an advocate on behalf of people who otherwise would not have had their voices heard. She did it in a very effective way.

I heard some of the conversations about what happened with Katrina and the people of New Orleans. MARY LANDRIEU brought us down to Louisiana for us to see firsthand. It was incredible for me, not to just see the physical devastation, but thanks to MARY LANDRIEU, we saw the people. We saw the spirit in the people, but we saw people who needed help. It is that type of emotional involvement that MARY gives to every cause she believes in.

So I want the Senator from Louisiana to know how much I deeply respect your model of public service and the people you stood up for.

Senator LANDRIEU spoke about the adoption issue. She got into it because she has such a big family. I think I got into it because of her. She is pretty persuasive. We all feel better because of that. Senator LANDRIEU is the one who really led us in those efforts. What an incredible legacy.

I want to speak a minute about small business issues. Senator LANDRIEU chaired that committee during a particularly important time. I want to relate a couple of stories to my colleagues. There are many times I was in the Democratic caucus and we would be talking about an issue and Senator LANDRIEU would stand and say, Well, how about small businesses? Under her leadership we brought some major initiatives to the floor to help small businesses because of MARY LANDRIEU and her ability to put together a commonsense package. She understood small businesses are the growth engine of America. That is how jobs are created and that is where innovation takes place. I can tell my colleagues—I worked with her. I know what we got done. I know how we took on our own governmental agencies to make sure they did right for small businesses and how we fought the bundling. Contract officers love to take small contracts and make them into big ones because it is less headache for them but less opportunity for small businesses. MARY LANDRIEU stopped that practice and put a spotlight on it. It was an incredible experience for me because it showed me that each of us can make a difference.

I knew what I was trying to do. One of the issues I got involved with was to raise the surety bond issues and I didn't see much chance of getting it done and MARY gave me the opportunity to get it done. She coached me on how to get it done, and that is now a permanent law of the land.

She made us all relevant on the committee, individually and collectively. We have a great legacy to help small businesses in this country, thanks to the leadership of Senator LANDRIEU.

To the people of Louisiana, they could not have had a stronger advocate, a stronger friend, a person who accomplished more for that State during some extremely challenging times. To the people of this country and the work MARY LANDRIEU did on the Appropriations Committee for our national security and standing up for and protecting and defending our own country, the record of Senator LANDRIEU is incredible. To those who are voiceless but had MARY LANDRIEU to speak for them, the disadvantaged; to small businesses—and the list goes on and on and on—this is one incredible legislator. She is a model to many of us. I thank her so much for her service and her commitment to public life. It will always be an inspiration to me, the fact that I was given the honor to serve with you in the Senate of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise to add my words of admiration for this great person, for this great legislator. Just to tell a brief story, it was back in 2006, in a lameduck session just like this. The Democrats had won and were about to take over the Senate. The Democrats had just won and were about to take over the House—a different passage in time. But throughout all of 2006, even in the minority, MARY LANDRIEU was moving a bill to open up a vast new area in the Gulf of Mexico for drilling for oil and natural gas.

I was over in the House. I was from Massachusetts. I did not want this bill to pass. I wanted to actually save it for 2007 when the Democrats were in control. We could pass it in an energy bill by the end of 2007, which would have included this provision. MARY passed it through the Senate—bipartisan, as usual. If we look up bipartisan, if we Google it, MARY's picture actually comes up.

Over in the House, because of all of her momentum, I lost and that bill passed. Again, tens of thousands of new jobs fell to Louisiana through MARY LANDRIEU.

It was about a week later when I was out shopping and here comes MARY right toward me with her daughter in her riding outfit.

MARY said: I want to introduce you to Congressman MARKEY.

I said to her daughter: Well, you have to add a few additional words because your mother just defeated me quite badly just last week and passed a big bill for Louisiana, for whom your mother always calls her people, the people of Louisiana.

There isn't anybody who understands better the spirit of legislating, about protecting your home State and respecting those who are maybe not in agreement with you but are not your enemy but somebody whom you try to work with.

After the BP spill in the Gulf of Mexico I was the lead Democrat in the House on the Natural Resources Committee with jurisdiction over that, and MARY again was outraged that such damage could be done to her fishermen, to her tourism industry, to her people in Louisiana. She worked hard to make sure billions of dollars would ultimately go back into the gulf to ensure that her fishermen, her tourism industry, and her people were protected.

Then, after having served in the House for 37 years, I arrived in the Senate with a great concern that a bill I had been working on in Massachusetts, which was the dramatic rise in the insurance rates for homeowners and businesses right along the coastline of Massachusetts, and I had to introduce legislation not only to work on the issue, but when I arrived in the Senate, MARY LANDRIEU was already here, already working on that bill, all ready to protect her homeowners, her small business people from outrageous increases in insurance rates that would have basically made their homes unaffordable.

Throughout my career, all I can tell my colleagues is one constant is this great, legendary legislator, somebody who embodies all the best of what this institution stands for. I just want to let her know how proud I have been to be able to serve with her here and how proud I am to be able to tell a story of the time when she just beat me flat-out because that is just how she plays. She plays it for her State every time, and no waiting if it is Louisiana. I know all the people of Louisiana know that about her.

So congratulations on your great career.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, as I start my comments on the land title legislation before us, I would be remiss if I did not mention the incredible work our chair MARY LANDRIEU has done on this legislation. As we just heard from the tribute to her service over the last few minutes, as the Presiding Officer said in his comments, if you Google ''bipartisan,'' there will be a picture of MARY LANDRIEU. I think this title sort of embodies that. We owe great gratitude to Chairman LANDRIEU and to Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for the incredible negotiation and work they have put into this package.

We stand on the cusp of passing one of the most significant pieces of public land legislation since the omnibus bill of 2009. I stand here to speak on behalf of this well-balanced package which is absolutely critical for jobs across the Western United States and particularly from the perspective of my home State of New Mexico.

I want to say that absolutely none of this would be possible were it not for the years of effort and support from the local communities that helped to craft this legislation. Thanks to their work, New Mexico's critical public land-based economic engine will continue to grow and the energy, tourism, and sporting and recreation sectors. New wilderness and National Park Service units will continue to make New Mexico an unmatched destination for world travelers as well as to the local families who have known for centuries that New Mexico truly is the land of enchantment.

I wish to start by talking a little bit about a place that is located in the Carson National Forest in northern New Mexico.

This is a picture of Lobo Peak, which is part of this area called Columbine Hondo. Lobo Peak is 12,000 feet and change. It is quite a spectacular view—the kind of view most people associate with Montana or Colorado or Wyoming. The Sangre de Cristo mountains in northern New Mexico are unmatched or could match any of those mountain ranges in States found farther north in the Rockies.

Columbine Hondo has been managed as a wilderness study area since 1980. It is an area that is cherished by all who know it and is a key attraction for the local tourism and outdoor recreation economy.

When I was a young outfitter guide and the executive director of the Cottonwood Gulch Foundation, Columbine Hondo was one of the spectacular destinations where our students backpacked and slept under the stars and learned to navigate in the backcountry. This area has some of the best elk, mule deer, and bighorn sheep habitat in New Mexico. People come from across the Nation to experience a true wilderness elk hunt in its aspen and fir forests.

Fishermen will tell you that it is home to some of the last, best habitat for our native Rio Grande cutthroat trout, which is, coincidentally, New Mexico's State fish as well.

Columbine Hondo is home to the headwaters of the Red River and the Rio Hondo. There is nothing more precious in a State such as New Mexico than our water. Those are major tributaries of the Rio Grande. The snowmelt from Lobo Peak, seen here, and from Gold Hill provide critical irrigation water to local acequia associations that carry on centuries-old agricultural traditions.

For millennia now, these mountains, rivers, and wildlife have supported New Mexico's traditional communities. The first evidence of human habitation here stretches back 11,000 years. Nearby Taos Pueblo has been continuously inhabited for more than 1,000 years. Spanish settlers first came to the area in the 16th century. Hispanic families have relied on these mountains and their bounty for their way of life ever since.

Today Columbine Hondo is a central attraction to visitors to Taos County, where outdoor recreation and tourism drive the local economy and contribute to a 68,000-job-strong public land recreation industry in our State.

In addition to finally designating Columbine Hondo as a full-fledged wilderness area, this package would also expand the Wheeler Peak Wilderness by approximately 650 additional acres while modifying a boundary in order to create a loop trail accessible by mountain bikes along the Lost Lake Trail from Taos Ski Valley, to the East Fork Trail, to Red River.

This proposal has broad community support, including Taos Pueblo, many local government leaders, hunters, fishermen, business owners, land grant heirs, ranchers, acequia parcientes, conservationists, mountain bikers, veterans, and literally the list could go on and on.

In October, on my birthday—I could not have asked for a better birthday gift—I was able to join the Columbine Hondo Wilderness Coalition as well as regional stakeholders and local elected officials for a hike into the area to highlight the conservation and water initiatives they support. Local residents discussed why they support permanently protecting Columbine Hondo and what the area means to them and their livelihoods and their lives.

Esther Garcia, an acequia commissioner and the former mayor of Questa, expressed her support well when she said:

> Columbine Hondo is very important to all of us. To preserve this beautiful wilderness area, we preserve our hunting, our pinon picking, our herb gathering.

I thank all of the residents of Taos County who have worked hard for decades—literally decades—to make this wilderness area a reality.

Also included in this public land package is a provision to transition the

Valles Caldera National Preserve in New Mexico to new management to increase public access. This proposal was developed after extensive input from local residents, sportsmen, business owners, elected officials, and is supported by a number of local chambers of commerce. Together they decided that a national preserve, managed by the Park Service, with a mandate for hunting and fishing to remain central to the management of the area, was the best way to ensure expanded public access while preserving the incredible landscape for future generations.

As you can see from this photo, Valles Caldera is often called New Mexico's Yellowstone for a reason. It is literally an area that was created as a collapsed supervolcano, where cinder cones rise up out of the high-elevation grassland and where the cinder cones and the mountains that encircle this collapsed crater are covered in Douglas-fir and fir and aspen forests. It is a spectacular landscape. The Caldera is home to crystal-clear trout streams and some of the best elk habitat in the country.

Since this area was transitioned to public ownership, the preserve has been managed by a board of trustees charged with generating enough revenue from user fees and other sources to make the preserve financially self-sustaining—literally the same model used for the Presidio in San Francisco, but, as you can see, this is not San Francisco. This management regime has led to drastically limited public access, with relatively high entrance and permit fees, blocking many New Mexicans and other Americans out of this public land. By shifting to Park Service management, we can open the Valles Caldera to the public while conserving the incredible, really one-of-a-kind unique resources that are found here.

As someone who has been lucky enough to draw an elk tag in the Caldera, expanding hunting opportunities for the public is one of the primary reasons I am supporting this proposal. The preserve model ensures that hunting and fishing remain a central activity for the public to enjoy. National Park Service management will help balance expanded public access with conserving both the natural and the incredible cultural resources that are found in this area.

Park Service management will also help bring more visitors and will raise the national profile of the preserve for visitors from outside New Mexico. The increase in visitors at the preserve is expected to bring more than 200 jobs and $8 million in wages to the local communities in the region. That is great news for places such as Los Alamos, Espanola, and Jemez Springs.

We have seen elsewhere how protecting public lands spurs economic development. According to Headwaters Economics, rural counties with protected Federal lands such as national parks and preserves saw a 345-percent increase in jobs over the last four decades, whereas rural counties without commensurate protected public lands saw job increases of only 83 percent in the same period.

I thank the local communities and all the elected officials who have worked so hard for decades to make this proposal possible. I thank Senator TOM UDALL and former Senator Jeff Bingaman for their leadership on this issue.

We all literally stand on the shoulders of giants in this community effort, as it was Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico who helped pass the Wilderness Act and who first proposed National Park Service management of the Valles Caldera in the early 1960s.

Additionally, as the son of a Navy sailor who literally saw the last of the aboveground atom bomb explosions and the first of the hydrogen bomb explosions firsthand, I am especially pleased to see that the Manhattan Project National Historical Park Act, which was introduced by Senator MARIA CANTWELL, is also included in this title. It will establish three different educational sites—one in Los Alamos, NM, one at Oak Ridge in Tennessee, and one at Hanford in Washington. Los Alamos, NM, has made incredible contributions to our Nation's nuclear history. These parks will conserve historic sites and artifacts that played a key role in the dawn of the nuclear era, while telling the story of the creation of the world's first atomic bomb and exploring its consequences for our society and our world.

Finally, I would like to mention the provision in this package that will benefit New Mexico's energy economy. It is one that I know Senator LANDRIEU was very supportive and excited about. It is a bill that I cosponsored, but it was authored by my colleague Senator TOM UDALL, who championed this effort to ensure that the Bureau of Land Management has the staff it needs to streamline the oil and gas drilling permit process, while at the same time strengthening the review system that helps them meet important environmental and safety standards.

Thousands of jobs and a sizable portion of our State's economy are supported in New Mexico by the oil and gas industry. Increasing cooperation among Federal agencies and business is an important way to boost job creation, while at the same time expanding domestic energy production.

Like other Americans who value our shared lands as assets to be utilized, to be enjoyed, and to be passed along to future generations, these are all things worth fighting for. I am committed to carry on my State's rich conservation history, and this legislation makes an enormous contribution to that ever-evolving story.

I yield the floor to my colleague the Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. I thank the Senator from New Mexico for his comments on the land portion of the national defense authorization. I very much appreciate the work he has done and his hard work fighting for the people of New Mexico since his time in the Senate.

We thank you very much for your leadership, Senator HEINRICH.

Mr. President, 1 million people live in the great State of Montana. We are home to farmers, ranchers, working families, small business owners, and to bold sports men and women who explore until they are too exhausted to take another step.

Our lands are famous worldwide, from Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park to wild and scenic rivers such as the North Fork of the Flathead River. We attract the best explorers, the best hunters and anglers, and all those who simply want to get away from it all.

But our outdoors just aren't for out-of-staters. Montanans deeply value our land. Many Montanans remember their first hunting trip. Many recall where they landed their first trout. I remember riding horses with my father in the Bear Paw Mountains.

Montanans come with a lot of opinions, but one issue that unites us is taking care of our public lands and keeping our public lands in public hands. We want to make sure our kids and grandkids can hike in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, that they can catch their first fish in the clean waters of the Madison River, and that our outdoor traditions remain strong for generations to come.

As a Senator from Montana, it is my responsibility to make sure we preserve these treasured places, that we responsibly use our lands to advance the interests of our State and of our country. That is why I am proud to support the Montana lands bills that will probably be voted on tomorrow.

These bills are a product of years of negotiations. Ranchers and conservationists started working on the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act before I became Senator. These bills are a product of compromise led by folks on the ground—the folks who live and breathe Montana's outdoors every day—and these bills are a product of Montana's congressional delegation working together to move Montana forward.

We all know Congress fails to agree on much these days. Gridlock and roadblocks are common. Few people are willing to compromise, but when you give a little, you get a lot. That is how Montana's lands bills became a part of this legislation.

These bills have been vetted on the ground by Montana ranchers such as Dusty Crary, Karl Rappold, and many others. They have been approved by committees and negotiated for many years. They not only deliver on our promises to Montana's ranchers but also to the outdoors men and women, business owners, and Native American tribes. They are Montana-made bills.

Take the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act for example. This bill protects public access along the Rocky Mountain Front for hunters, anglers,

outdoors men and women. The Front is a special place in Montana lore. It is where the Rocky Mountains shoot straight out from the plains into the sky. It is a breathtaking, magnificent sight.

It is an ecosystem like none other in the lower 48 States. The heritage act designates 208,000 Front acres as a conservation management area, adds another 67,000 acres to the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and supports a noxious weed management plan.

At the same time, it allows for continued grazing access for Montana ranchers, follows BLM recommendations on approximately 14,000 acres of wilderness study areas, and requires new assessments of oil and gas potential in two others.

Some will question the details of this bill and others in the package, but Montanans know how to responsibly manage our lands. We know what irresponsible development looks like.

More than 100 years ago mining corporations pillaged our lands in their search for copper, silver, and other minerals. Not only did they turn our mountains inside out and pollute our waters, they ignored workers' rights and bought influence over Montana's elected leaders.

In response, Montana passed legislation to limit corporate influence in elections in 1912. We followed that in the 1970s with one of the most progressive State constitutions to date, enshrining protections for a clean and healthy environment into law.

A fellow by the name of Max Baucus got his first taste of politics during that Constitutional Convention, the same Max Baucus who worked on and introduced the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act in 2011. Passing this land bill helps fulfill Max's legacy in Montana and honors the hard work of his staff and the bill's many supporters.

Before Max introduced this bill, he received a letter from a rancher along the Front. Ben Pierce was his name. Ben told Max he wanted to see the Front remain a place with both well-managed working ranches and vibrant wildlife values.

Ben supported the bill because he knew that preserving the ranching culture was critical to Montana's economy and our way of life, but he also supported the bill because he knows we must preserve Montana's most special places.

That is because Montana's outdoor treasures are not only symbols of our heritage, they are also incredible economic drivers. Montana's outdoor economy, thanks to places such as Glacier and Yellowstone, creates or sustains some 64,000 jobs and contributes nearly $6 billion to the State's economy every year. That is impressive in a State of just 1 million people.

From outdoor stores to park cafes, Montana's economy thrives when Montana's outdoors are preserved and accessible. Preservation and access are also the cornerstones of the North Fork Protection Act, another legacy of Senator Baucus. The bill permanently protects the American side of the North Fork of the Flathead River watershed by barring future mining or drilling.

The land is adjacent to Glacier National Park. It is bound by snow-capped mountains, ringed by awe-inspiring valleys, and bisected by beautiful blue-green waters that are home to some of the Nation's best white-water rafting.

Its Canadian cousin across the border is already protected. Thanks to this bill, the American side of the watershed will be protected from oil and gas development forever.

Preserving the North Fork is not only good for the wildlife or the hiker who enjoys it, it is also good for our economy and our nearby communities.

That is why this bipartisan bill is supported by the local chamber of commerce and by the mayor of nearby Whitefish, who said this bill's passage ''means permanent protection of our community's water supply,'' and we all know how important water is.

These two measures are not the only bills that will benefit Montana in this lands package.

My Cabin Fee Act provides economic certainty for folks who have seen their fees skyrocket on Forest Service cabins. Many of these cabins pass from generation to generation, and this bill makes sure family cabins can be enjoyed by those who cherish them.

This package also does right by our Native American friends. The Northern Cheyenne Lands Act restores the tribe's mineral rights to 5,000 acres within its boundaries, strengthening the tribe's control over its lands, resources, and trust funds.

It corrects an error that was made by the Federal Government more than 100 years ago. That, in and of itself, makes it a worthy endeavor.

But there are other areas where we can work together. Just as these bills are Montana-made solutions, we can—and I believe we will—come together over Montana-made solutions to better manage our forests.

For decades folks in Montana have argued over our lands, battled over access, and we have fought over resource development. We have sued and countersued over logging, but in Montana we haven't had a new wilderness designation in 31 years. Why? Because we haven't been able to compromise, but now we have. It means progress for Montana.

This agreement is bipartisan, and I was proud to work with Senator WALSH and Senator-elect DAINES to bring it to reality. I hope we can find more ways to compromise over lands issues and other legislation moving forward because, after all, it is the future that matters most. Whether this body is debating immigration reform or an education system, how to rebuild infrastructure, we must always look to the future.

We want the best for ourselves and for our communities. We want to leave this world in better shape than we inherited it, and we want to pass down our treasured lands and outdoor traditions to our kids and our grandkids wherever they may live. Places such as the Rocky Mountain Front and the North Fork are living legacies to Montana's greatness.

There are many reasons to preserve these places, but the best I have heard comes from Gene Sentz, who hails from Choteau, MT. Gene wrote a book about the Rocky Mountain Front. In it he quoted another Montanan who said: ''Some places on Earth should be left alone, even if solid gold lies beneath it them.''

I couldn't agree more. Montana is home to sky-touching mountains and beautiful plains that roll on as far as the eye can see. It is home to many hard-working men and women and to Native Americans with deep connections to the land.

But it is the last best place because we are all of these things and because we are willing to work together to preserve and strengthen them.

I am very proud of this historic agreement, and today I am particularly proud to be a Montanan.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VIETNAM VETERANS

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I was struck by the last two great speakers, Senator HEINRICH and Senator TESTER, showing us amazing pictures of the beauty of the Western part of our wonderful country. I thought, well, those are really beautiful pictures—not quite as beautiful as North Dakota, but we will acknowledge that these are areas that will open your soul, open your eyes, and make it possible for you to see the beauty that is this great country and the resilience of the people who settled in the areas of the West.

It made me think—and I think, more importantly, understand—that all of what we are in this country is only possible because men and women, for centuries, have stepped up to serve our country and to serve our country in the Armed Forces.

I rise to talk about an issue that hasn't gotten a lot of attention in this country, this quiet thing that is going on in the VFW halls, the AMVETS, the DAVs, and the American Legion halls in my State.

I am talking about not only that kind of sacrifice but recognizing and moving to a special recognition this year. So I want to talk about North Dakotans because we are all extraordinarily proud of our States, but we

know in North Dakota that North Dakotans have always answered the call to serve, in particular, my friends within the Native American community, who have answered that call to service in record numbers.

I have made it a priority during my time in the Senate to meet as many of my State veterans as I can. I want to hear their stories and I want to learn about the challenges of their everyday lives and what we need to do to fulfill our obligation and our sacred trust to live up to the commitments we made, as they lived up to the commitments they made to serve our country and to protect our freedoms on the battlefields around the world.

Through these trips I have met a lot of wonderful veterans—World War II veterans and their proud stories of their service in the Pacific and Europe. I have met Korean war veterans with memories of what is often referred to as the forgotten war. It may be forgotten by others, but it is not forgotten by me or the people in my great State of North Dakota.

Then there are our newest veterans, with new challenges, from the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the overall war against terror. These young veterans, men and women, face difficult challenges, and I think many different challenges than perhaps their counterparts from previous service relationships. But I think they are helping change the way our Nation sees our veterans.

All of these veterans, without a doubt, deserve a place of honor in our society. All of them served and deserve our thanks for their service and their sacrifice. Together, they have protected our freedoms and allowed our Nation to flourish. But today—today—I want to talk and focus on America's Vietnam veterans—North Dakota's Vietnam veterans.

We are in the midst—and I am not sure a lot of people know this—of a remembrance of the 50-year anniversary of the Vietnam war. On May 25, 2012, President Obama issued a proclamation. I have the proclamation here. This proclamation was issued to honor our Vietnam vets—those brave servicemen who gave their lives—and their families. It is to honor all the veterans' service, but particularly to recognize those who lost their lives. I want to quote from this proclamation:

> As a grateful Nation, we honor more than 58,000 patriots—their names etched in black granite—

That monument is not too far from this symbol of American democracy, our Nation's Capitol.

> —who sacrificed all they had and all they would ever know. We draw inspiration from the heroes who suffered unspeakably as prisoners of war, yet who returned home with their heads held high. We pledge to keep faith with those who were wounded and still carry the scars of war, seen and unseen.

This special period of honoring our Vietnam veterans runs through 2025, since our involvement in the war stretched through 1975. That is the period which we are going to recognize as the 50-year commemoration and anniversary as this period continues.

It remains important to talk about the Vietnam war and its veterans as much as possible. The Vietnam war represents a difficult time in our Nation's history. By taking time to thank our Vietnam vets and honor their service, our Nation makes another great attempt to bind up the unhealed wounds left behind.

In North Dakota, there have already been a number of veterans events related to the 50th anniversary of Vietnam. I am sure such events are happening in many other States. In fact, there is a Web site—if you want to check it out—where you can look at what is happening in every State across the Union honoring Vietnam veterans in ceremonies being prepared and mainly driven by veterans groups. Hopefully—and one of the purposes in coming here is to urge my colleagues to participate in those events—to participate as they do every day in saying thank you to our Iraqi war vets and our Afghanistan war vets—participate in any event that you can to say thank you to our Vietnam veterans and to the families of those people in your State who lost their loved ones in service to their country.

For myself, I plan to host an event to honor all Vietnam veterans throughout North Dakota next year. Through this effort I hope to help make our Nation remember and never forget the needs of our Vietnam veterans. The Congress needs to make policy decisions so the VA can meet the needs of the next generation of veterans, but we can't forget the unique needs of our Vietnam era veterans.

I have spent hours talking to Vietnam veterans who tell me repeatedly: When I got out of the service, the last thing I wanted to do was go to the VA. And there are a lot of reasons for that. In the 1970s, the VA wasn't a place where people thought they could go for quality health care, where they thought they could go for help. They wanted to forget that part of their service. So a lot of those unseen wounds of servicemen from the Vietnam war went unhealed, and it manifests itself in a high rate of homelessness, a high rate of poverty, a high rate of substance abuse, and a high rate of despair.

We are seeing now that our Vietnam veterans—in both those who have lived incredibly fruitful lives and are now aging into the system—coming back to our VAs across the country, coming back to our community-based outreach clinics, coming back to our VA hospitals, and for the first time asking for access to service. They are finding they do not always see the level of service they are entitled to.

I recently worked to restore and provide the appropriate paperwork so a Vietnam veteran who had clearly earned a Purple Heart actually received the benefits of a recipient of the Purple Heart in the VA. All of these issues will now begin to work their way through the VA. They will continue to work their way through our veterans service organizations.

It is time, I think, to take a pause, as the President did in this proclamation. And to understand the basis of this, it was required by a bill similar to the one we are debating today—NDAA—to begin this commemoration. It was a mandate from this Congress—not this particular Congress, but from the U.S. Congress—to begin to have this ceremony.

I was struck by the fact that when our veterans have lost their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, most of us have pictures in our offices. We have a poster or some kind of commemoration in our office of that sacrifice. Yet we have never seen that kind of commemoration or that kind of depiction for our Vietnam veterans. So along with the AMVETS in the great city of Bismarck, which has done tons of research in collecting pictures and collecting images of the 198 veterans, the 198 servicemen from North Dakota who lost their lives in Vietnam, I thought it an appropriate commemoration for my office to have something that we walk by every day and, therefore, say to the families of all these young men who are on this poster that every day we honor their sacrifice, we honor your loss, and we honor the fact that we will never know what these 198 young men could have been had they survived this war. We don't know if they could have been standing here giving a speech instead of me. We don't know if they would have been mayors of our small towns or the industrial leaders who invented a product as lucrative and as innovative as the Bobcat, which originated in North Dakota. It was invented in North Dakota and it is manufactured in North Dakota. We will never know.

But one thing we do know—the one thing we do know—about all of these men is they lost their lives and sacrificed to the greatest extent that one can sacrifice in honor and service of this country, and they deserve to have this period of remembrance. They deserve to have a recognition, and their families deserve to have the United States of America pause—pause for a period of time to say thank you—thank you from a grateful nation.

So posters like this will be in every one of my offices across North Dakota and certainly here in the Nation's Capitol. I know for States such as that of the Presiding Officer's State of Massachusetts, just looking at the numbers, it is probably not possible to have a photographic image of every Vietnam veteran or every person who served in Vietnam and who, unfortunately, lost their life, but it is possible to have their name. It is possible to have a place of remembrance where they can be honored during this time period mandated by this body and approved

and proclaimed by the President of the United States. It is possible to have a place of honor and remembrance.

So I intend, over the next year, to come and talk a little bit about the lives of each one of these young men, to talk about the challenges of Vietnam veterans, to talk about what it is we need to do today to make up for past sins of this country in not recognizing this service. I challenge the other Members of this body to do the same thing during this period of remembrance and recognition and honor, and to think about not just the past but to think about the future; think about the amazing sacrifice of 198 North Dakotans who gave their lives in service to our State and in service to our country and for the betterment of all humankind.

With that, Mr. President, the challenge is issued.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

JUSTICE AGAINST SPONSORS OF TERRORISM ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 560, S. 1535.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1535) to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 1535

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) International terrorism is a serious and deadly problem that threatens the vital interests of the United States.

(2) The Constitution confers upon Congress the power to punish crimes against the law of nations and therefore Congress may by law impose penalties on those who provide material support to foreign organizations engaged in terrorist activity, and allow for victims of international terrorism to recover damages from those who have harmed them.

(3) International terrorism affects the interstate and foreign commerce of the United States by harming international trade and market stability, and limiting international travel by United States citizens as well as foreign visitors to the United States.

(4) Some foreign terrorist organizations, acting through affiliated groups or individuals, raise significant funds outside of the United States for conduct directed and targeted at the United States.

(5) It is necessary to recognize the substantive causes of action for aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 (22 U.S.C. 5201 et seq.).

(6) The decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in Halberstam v. Welch, 705 F.2d 472 (D.C. Cir. 1983), which has been widely recognized as the leading case regarding Federal civil aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability, including by the Supreme Court of the United States, provides the proper legal framework for how such liability should function in the context of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 (22 U.S.C. 5201 et seq.).

(7) The United Nations Security Council declared in Resolution 1373, adopted on September 28, 2001, that all countries have an affirmative obligation to ''[r]efrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts,'' and to ''[e]nsure that any person who participates in the financing, planning, preparation or perpetration of terrorist acts or in supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice''.

(8) Consistent with these declarations, no country has the discretion to engage knowingly in the financing or sponsorship of terrorism, whether directly or indirectly.

(9) Persons, entities, or countries that knowingly or recklessly contribute material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to persons or organizations that pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism that threaten the security of nationals of the United States or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, necessarily direct their conduct at the United States, and should reasonably anticipate being brought to court in the United States to answer for such activities.

(10) The United States has a vital interest in providing persons and entities injured as a result of terrorist attacks committed within the United States with full access to the court system in order to pursue civil claims against persons, entities, or countries that have knowingly or recklessly provided material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to the persons or organizations responsible for their injuries.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide civil litigants with the broadest possible basis, consistent with the Constitution of the United States, to seek relief against persons, entities, and foreign countries, wherever acting and wherever they may be found, that have provided material support, directly or indirectly, to foreign organizations or persons that engage in terrorist activities against the United States.

SEC. 3. FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.

Section 1605(a) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (5) to read as follows:

''(5) not otherwise encompassed in paragraph (2), in which money damages are sought against a foreign state arising out of physical injury or death, or damage to or loss of property, occurring in the United States and caused by the tortious act or omission of that foreign state or of any official or employee of that foreign state while acting within the scope of the office or employment of the official or employee (regardless of where the underlying tortious act or omission occurs), including any statutory or common law tort claim arising out of an act of extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, hostage taking, terrorism, or the provision of material support or resources for such an act, or any claim for contribution or indemnity relating to a claim arising out of such an act, except this paragraph shall not apply to—

''(A) any claim based upon the exercise or performance of, or the failure to exercise or perform, a discretionary function, regardless of whether the discretion is abused; or

''(B) any claim arising out of malicious prosecution, abuse of process, libel, slander, misrepresentation, deceit, interference with contract rights, or any claim for emotional distress or derivative injury suffered as a result of an event or injury to another person that occurs outside of the United States; or''; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of subsection (a)(5)—

''(1) the terms 'aircraft sabotage', 'extrajudicial killing', 'hostage taking', and 'material support or resources' have the meanings given those terms in section 1605A(h); and

''(2) the term 'terrorism' means international terrorism and domestic terrorism, as those terms are defined in section 2331 of title 18.''.

SEC. 4. AIDING AND ABETTING LIABILITY FOR CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2333 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) LIABILITY.—In an action under subsection (a) for an injury arising from an act of international terrorism committed, planned, or authorized by an organization that had been designated as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189), as of the date on which such act of international terrorism was committed, planned, or authorized, or that was so designated as a result of such act of international terrorism, liability may be asserted as to any person or entity that aided, abetted, or conspired with the person who committed such an act of international terrorism.

''(e) NON-APPLICABILITY OF LAW OF PRECLUSION.—Any civil action or claim that seeks recovery under this chapter for conduct that was the basis of a civil action or claim previously dismissed for lack of subject matter jurisdiction for failure to meet the requirements for an exception under section 1605(a) of title 28 is not subject to dismissal under the law of preclusion.''.

(b) EFFECT ON FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITIES ACT.—Nothing in the amendments made by this section affects immunity of a foreign state, as that term is defined in section 1603 of title 28, United States Code, from jurisdiction under other law.

SEC. 5. PERSONAL JURISDICTION FOR CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

Section 2334 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''(e) PERSONAL JURISDICTION.—The district courts shall have personal jurisdiction, to the maximum extent permissible under the 5th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, over any person who commits or aids and abets an act of international terrorism or otherwise sponsors such act or the person who committed such act, for acts of international terrorism in which any national of the United States suffers injury in his or her person, property, or business by reason of such an act in violation of section 2333.''.

SEC. 6. LIABILITY FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

Section 2337 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 2337. Suits against Government officials

''No action may be maintained under section 2333 against—

''(1) the United States;

''(2) an agency of the United States; or

''(3) an officer or employee of the United States or any agency of the United States acting within the official capacity of the officer or employee or under color of legal authority.''.

SEC. 7. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder

of this Act and the amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendments to any other person not similarly situated or to other circumstances, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply to any civil action—

(1) pending on, or commenced on or after, the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) arising out of an injury to a person, property, or business on or after September 11, 2001.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute be considered; that a Schumer amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the committee substitute, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 4096) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) International terrorism is a serious and deadly problem that threatens the vital interests of the United States.

(2) The Constitution confers upon Congress the power to punish crimes against the law of nations and therefore Congress may by law impose penalties on those who provide material support to foreign organizations engaged in terrorist activity, and allow for victims of international terrorism to recover damages from those who have harmed them.

(3) International terrorism affects the interstate and foreign commerce of the United States by harming international trade and market stability, and limiting international travel by United States citizens as well as foreign visitors to the United States.

(4) Some foreign terrorist organizations, acting through affiliated groups or individuals, raise significant funds outside of the United States for conduct directed and targeted at the United States.

(5) It is necessary to recognize the substantive causes of action for aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 (22 U.S.C. 5201 et seq.).

(6) The decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in Halberstam v. Welch, 705 F.2d 472 (D.C. Cir. 1983), which has been widely recognized as the leading case regarding Federal civil aiding and abetting and conspiracy liability, including by the Supreme Court of the United States, provides the proper legal framework for how such liability should function in the context of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987 (22 U.S.C. 5201 et seq.).

(7) The United Nations Security Council declared in Resolution 1373, adopted on September 28, 2001, that all countries have an affirmative obligation to ''[r]efrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts,'' and to ''[e]nsure that any person who participates in the financing, planning, preparation or perpetration of terrorist acts or in supporting terrorist acts is brought to justice''.

(8) Consistent with these declarations, no country has the discretion to engage knowingly in the financing or sponsorship of terrorism, whether directly or indirectly.

(9) Persons, entities, or countries that knowingly or recklessly contribute material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to persons or organizations that pose a significant risk of committing acts of terrorism that threaten the security of nationals of the United States or the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, necessarily direct their conduct at the United States, and should reasonably anticipate being brought to court in the United States to answer for such activities.

(10) The United States has a vital interest in providing persons and entities injured as a result of terrorist attacks committed within the United States with full access to the court system in order to pursue civil claims against persons, entities, or countries that have knowingly or recklessly provided material support or resources, directly or indirectly, to the persons or organizations responsible for their injuries.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide civil litigants with the broadest possible basis, consistent with the Constitution of the United States, to seek relief against persons, entities, and foreign countries, wherever acting and wherever they may be found, that have provided material support, directly or indirectly, to foreign organizations or persons that engage in terrorist activities against the United States.

SEC. 3. FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.

Section 1605(a) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by amending paragraph (5) to read as follows:

''(5) not otherwise encompassed in paragraph (2), in which money damages are sought against a foreign state arising out of physical injury or death, or damage to or loss of property, occurring in the United States and caused by the tortious act or omission of that foreign state or of any official or employee of that foreign state while acting within the scope of the office or employment of the official or employee (regardless of where the underlying tortious act or omission occurs), including any statutory or common law tort claim arising out of an act of extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, hostage taking, terrorism, or the provision of material support or resources for such an act, or any claim for contribution or indemnity relating to a claim arising out of such an act, except this paragraph shall not apply to—

''(A) any claim based upon the exercise or performance of, or the failure to exercise or perform, a discretionary function, regardless of whether the discretion is abused; or

''(B) any claim arising out of malicious prosecution, abuse of process, libel, slander, misrepresentation, deceit, interference with contract rights, or any claim for emotional distress or derivative injury suffered as a result of an event or injury to another person that occurs outside of the United States; or''; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of subsection (a)(5)—

''(1) the terms 'aircraft sabotage', 'extrajudicial killing', 'hostage taking', and 'material support or resources' have the meanings given those terms in section 1605A(h); and

''(2) the term 'terrorism' means international terrorism and domestic terrorism, as those terms are defined in section 2331 of title 18.''.

SEC. 4. AIDING AND ABETTING LIABILITY FOR CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2333 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) LIABILITY.—In an action under subsection (a) for an injury arising from an act of international terrorism committed, planned, or authorized by an organization that had been designated as a foreign terrorist organization under section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189), as of the date on which such act of international terrorism was committed, planned, or authorized, or that was so designated as a result of such act of international terrorism, liability may be asserted as to any person who aided, abetted, or conspired with the person who committed such an act of international terrorism.''.

(b) EFFECT ON FOREIGN SOVEREIGN IMMUNITIES ACT.—Nothing in the amendments made by this section affects immunity of a foreign state, as that term is defined in section 1603 of title 28, United States Code, from jurisdiction under other law.

SEC. 5. PERSONAL JURISDICTION FOR CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

Section 2334 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''(e) PERSONAL JURISDICTION.—The district courts shall have personal jurisdiction, to the maximum extent permissible under the 5th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, over any person who commits or aids and abets an act of international terrorism or otherwise sponsors such act or the person who committed such act, for acts of international terrorism in which any national of the United States suffers injury in his or her person, property, or business by reason of such an act in violation of section 2333.''.

SEC. 6. LIABILITY FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN CIVIL ACTIONS REGARDING TERRORIST ACTS.

Section 2337 of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 2337. Suits against Government officials

''No action may be maintained under section 2333 against—

''(1) the United States;

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''(3) an officer or employee of the United States or any agency of the United States acting within the official capacity of the officer or employee or under color of legal authority.''.

SEC. 7. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be invalid, the remainder of this Act and the amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendments to any other person not similarly situated or to other circumstances, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply to any civil action—

(1) pending on, or commenced on or after, the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) arising out of an injury to a person, property, or business on or after September 11, 2001.

The committee-reported amend in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1535), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise today on a very important bipartisan bill that has just been approved by this body unanimously, the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, or JASTA.

I thank my cosponsor and partner in this and many other issues, I am happy to say, Senator CORNYN, the Senator from Texas; and I thank Chairman LEAHY, our chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Under his leadership, it has twice been passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I feel so strongly about this bill because it would allow the victims of 9/11 to pursue some small measure of justice by giving them a legal avenue to hold foreign sponsors of terrorism accountable for their actions. This bill, quite simply, does right by the 9/11 victims.

We New Yorkers can never forget the terrible day 13 years ago when terrorists attacked our city and murdered more than 2,700 of our friends, neighbors, and relatives. We were shocked and our hearts were broken. The whole Nation mourned with us.

But I am proud to say that New York—and America—came back stronger after that horrific attack. I am also proud to say that Congress and Presidents Bush and Obama have been there to help New York heal, but never forget.

From the first days after 9/11, it has always been the families of those we lost who have been at the vanguard of advocacy. The families have accomplished so much along the way in terms of remembrance, and justice and change in national security policies. I so salute them, not only those who worked with me on this legislation but all the families who have worked on so many bills.

When something so evil and so terrible befalls you—when you lose a loved one through an abject act of evil, such as was committed on 9/11/2001—the natural reaction is to curse the dark, to say: Why me? Why was this so unjust? But the Bible tells us that it is the great part of humanity, almost saint-like, to light a candle, to try and rectify the injustice that you can never undo for the loved one you lost but might undo for others.

These families—and I know them well. I have cried with them, worked with them, and struggled with them—have all lit candles. They are amazing. They are saint-like. And there are so many families and loved ones who have stepped up and petitioned for help after 9/11. As I said, it would be easy for them to sit and curse the dark, but they have instead chosen to light that candle and shine a way forward—not back. The bill I hope the Senate will pass today helps victims of terrorism seek justice, one of our most cherished American values.

Let me tell you about Ms. Terry Strada, who is seeking justice for her husband Tom. Tom lost his life in the north tower on September 11. Terry didn't just lose a husband, she lost a father to a young son of 7, a daughter of 4, and a newborn baby boy. She lost a loving father and her best friend.

But Terry Strada is strong. She is a profile in courage, and she seeks what we all would be compelled to seek if we suffered such loss at the hands of hate and evil. She seeks justice.

Terry and her three children have championed this bill for over a decade now. I thank them and all the other families for their tireless advocacy and patience.

Of course, no amount of compensation will ever repair the broken hearts of a family who lost a loved one to mindless hate. But right now these families are being denied the ability to hold accountable foreign sponsors of terrorism because of a major loophole in our legal system.

The courts in New York have dismissed the 9/11 victims' claims against certain foreign entities alleged to have helped fund the 9/11 attacks. The courts are following what I believe is a nonsensical reading of the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act. But for the sake of these families, I want to make clear, without a shadow of a doubt, that every entity, including foreign states, will be held accountable if they are found to be sponsors of heinous acts such as 9/11.

Our bipartisan legislation that Senator CORNYN and I are so proud to support closes that loophole and amends the Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act to allow victims and their families to sue foreign states and financial partners of terrorism.

Terrorists need an unfathomable amount of hate in them—but they also need a great deal of money and material support—to carry out attacks such as what occurred on 9/11. And, unfortunately, some countries provide that lifeblood with no legal repercussions.

For countries to aid the evil of terrorism and walk away scot-free while families suffer silently every day with the loss of loved ones is wrong, it is unfair, and it is unjust. It adds insult to an unimaginable injury to these families.

JASTA, our bill, hopefully to become law soon, will finally help the victims of 9/11 pursue justice by allowing them to sue countries that fund terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. The Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act has been amended, and amended again, in its relatively short life, in order to continue to strike the proper balance between our interests abroad and the rights of our citizens to obtain redress when they are a victim of wrongdoing, no matter who the perpetrator is.

Specifically, our bill brings the Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act closer to that balance by ensuring that victims of terror inside the United States receive the same protections of victims of terror outside the United States; that liability clearly exists for aiders and abettors of terrorism; and that foreign states that commit terrorist acts can be held accountable under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Cognizant of that ideal balance I just mentioned, we have extended legal protections for victims and expanded liability in a very focused way.

In response to concerns from the business community as well as Members of Congress, we have made substantial changes to the bill so that those who are liable under the changes to the Foreign Sovereign Immunity Act are only the really bad actors.

We have worked hard so this bipartisan bill enhances the original aim of the Foreign Service Immunity Act: to create a uniform and predictable means for protecting the immunity of sovereign states with limited exceptions that are consistent with our own national, as well as international, norms.

JASTA is a long overdue fix—a responsible fix—to a law that has extended too large a shield to foreign actors who finance and enable terrorism on a massive scale. The victims of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks have suffered such pain—physical pain and heartache—but they will not be denied justice.

The Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act will take measured steps toward making sure these bad actors are held accountable and that victims can pursue justice where justice is to be had. I look forward to working with my colleagues to see that it becomes law.

I know Senator CORNYN will want to say a few words, but first I wish to enter into a colloquy with my friend from Texas because it is important to underscore one point: The purpose of the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act is to hold foreign sponsors of terrorism that target the United States accountable in Federal courts.

One thing that has come up in our discussions of this bill is whether the bill's provisions would extend civil liability under the Anti-Terrorism Act to situations where someone has been forced to make payments or provide aid to a foreign terrorist organization under genuine duress or, for example, as ransom payments for the release of someone taken hostage. This type of conduct is outside the scope of traditional aiding and abetting liability, and our bill does not seek to change that.

I recognize Senator CORNYN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I thank the senior Senator from New York, my friend, Senator SCHUMER, for working on this bipartisan legislation. It is a good example of the kinds of things we can do working together. Even though he and I come from different parts of the country and different political parties, he has been a good partner on a number of things that we have worked on together, and I am hoping we are setting in place some good habits that will continue on in the next Congress.

I agree with Senator SCHUMER that JASTA is a good example of the kind of good work we can do together to solve problems facing our Nation. This bill passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee without opposition because of the careful work we were able to do to ensure the bill accomplished its goals while addressing concerns about unintended consequences.

So I appreciate our work together and look forward to continuing both for the duration of the 113th Congress and the 114th Congress.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank Senator CORNYN for his good work.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

DODD-FRANK

Mr. SCHATZ. The House is now considering the funding bill for fiscal year 2015, and the risks of not passing it are extremely high. But tucked into this must-pass bill is yet another attempt by Republicans in the House of Representatives to gut Dodd-Frank. What is really scary about this is that this is just the beginning. We can expect much more of this in the 114th Congress.

Dodd-Frank was designed to reduce the systemic risks that large banks posed to our financial system. It was meant to prevent another taxpayer bailout of these massive institutions that were and continue to be too big to fail. By chipping away at Dodd-Frank we are once again letting special interests prevail over the safety of the financial system and protection for consumers.

There were many roots of the financial crisis, but economists agree that the unregulated and pervasive trading of derivatives was a major contributing factor. We permitted financial institutions to gamble and regulators looked the other way. When these financial institutions made bad bets and nearly took down the financial system, we had to bail them out on the taxpayers' dime. Working families who are struggling in a slow economic recovery are still paying the price.

So one of the goals of Dodd-Frank was to get the banks to go back to doing the normal business of banks—to collect deposits and extend credit. That means no longer allowing banks to leverage FDIC-insured deposits and their access to the Federal Reserve for speculative trade. In part, Dodd-Frank accomplished this through the swap push-out rule. The swap push-out rule, which is section 716 of Dodd-Frank, makes federally insured institutions move their swap trades into a separate uninsured entity that does not have access to the Federal Reserve discount window or other fed assistance. These trades are incredibly complex and risky, and there is no public policy justification for the government to effectively subsidize them.

Before we even passed section 716, the biggest financial institutions were able to water it down. They wanted exemptions for swaps for ''hedging purposes'' which could be interpreted to mean a wide range of activity. But that was not enough. Now they want to do away with section 716 by making the exemptions so broad that the rule becomes meaningless.

Let's be very clear. This change primarily benefits the five biggest financial firms in the country. They account for well over 90 percent of swap transactions. These activities net them over $4 billion in profits. Before the crisis, swaps brought in over $7 billion. One of these firms actually wrote the language in the House bill. These financial institutions and their lobbyists know what they are doing, and they are doing just fine. They know that when something as important as funding of the government is on the line, they can convince Republicans to slip their priorities into a must-pass bill at the last hour. But again, this is just the beginning. Make no mistake about it. This portends much worse things when it comes to the Republicans taking over the majority in the Senate and the 114th Congress.

This is a big problem because we have been down this path before. We know where it leads. We let risk build in our financial system before, and the fallout was disastrous for our economy and the well-being of working families. It is on us to hold back against special interests. We have a responsibility to protect the public from this attempt to roll back Dodd-Frank. We cannot take our eye off the ball. We have to continue to guard against systemic risks in our financial system, and we have to put a stop to the practice of holding the government hostage over the pet issues of special interest groups.

The House is in a recess subject to the call of the Chair, and they are trying to round up votes for the omnibus spending bill which contains this provision. But they have another option. They can strip this provision. If they find that they don't have sufficient votes, they don't have to pass a 3-month continuing resolution. They can simply remove this provision from the omnibus bill which was negotiated in good faith with both parties in both chambers. Remove this provision, and I have no doubt we will have a resounding bipartisan supermajority in both Chambers. We should remove section 716, and pass the omnibus properly.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. I really appreciate the words of Senator SCHATZ, which are spot-on. People are so frustrated right now with Congress, and it does not take a Ph.D. in political science to figure out why common Americans of all backgrounds are frustrated with Congress. It is because people are frustrated with business as usual here in the Senate and the House. In this case, as Senator SCHATZ points to, here we are at the end of the 113th Congress facing a $1 trillion spending bill—a bill with funding that is critical to our national defense. It is critical to the health and well-being of Americans. It is critical to the strength of our community.

I know the sincerity and passion with which Senate and House negotiators have been working to get this done. They have been focusing on making sure the American public has those critical services that we need. I give tribute to many of the leadership in this body for working on it. Senate leaders should get credit, also—BARBARA MIKULSKI for holding the line on so many critical priorities, for putting in this trillion dollar spending plan some very important items that should arouse the gratitude of many people. They also stood up against, fought, and prevented from getting into this some very extreme proposals. But to the many people watching this unfold in New Jersey, in Hawaii, and across this country, what they are also seeing, unfortunately, is a bill passed with policies pushed by very connected special interests—special interests with armies of high paid lobbyists looking out for their own protection. There are special interests with armies of high-paid lobbyists looking out for their own protections and looking to roll back commonsense protections for people who cannot hire those high-priced lobbyists or make donations to political candidates and elected officials.

This omnibus—this CRromnibus, as it is called—is a jagged, bitter pill for anyone to swallow.

I will start with the provision that Senator SCHATZ mentioned, the provision that is rolling back aspects of Dodd-Frank. Risky transactions involving asset-backed derivatives were at the heart of a 2008 fiscal crisis. Economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas estimated that the financial crisis cost the United States between $6 and $14 trillion. This amounts to $50,000 to $120,000 for every U.S. household or the equivalent of 40 to 90 percent of 1 year's economic output. It was cataclysmic.

I don't need economists to describe the pain that Americans felt. I saw it myself. I felt it as a mayor of a big city in America—Newark, NJ—New Jersey's largest city. When the Nation goes through a recession, rural and urban areas, vulnerable populations, people living at the margins go through a cataclysmic depression. Many Americans,

even today, remain unemployed or underemployed and are still struggling to make ends meet because of the risky behaviors we saw within the financial industry.

Now, Dodd-Frank—this Wall Street protection act—was passed to enhance consumer protection and increase safeguards against risky activities so we, as a country, do not go through this again. Dodd-Frank is not perfect. I am the first to admit there are ways to change it and improve it and implement its provisions, frankly, that still have yet to be fully implemented.

Changes to financial regulations should be done through a much more transparent process and in the public eye. We should openly debate these issues on the floor of the House and the Senate. It should not be done like this was, behind closed doors and definitely through what they call a must-pass omnibus bill. This is wrong.

Here we are in the last moments on an omnibus spending bill with a provision which goes to the heart of protecting American taxpayers from the risky, reckless schemes that helped to launch the crisis in the first place.

This provision is literally called the Prohibition Against the Federal Government Bailouts of Swap Entities, which ensures taxpayer dollars will not be used for the more risky Wall Street speculation and gambling. It looks to make sure that Americans are on the hook for the risky gambling of a few people seeking to make extraordinary gains.

I am outraged. I am frustrated that we are not on the floor debating this, and, instead, are having this put into a bill that everyone says must pass.

There are arguments on both sides that we should be having. If the provisions of Dodd-Frank come up, we should discuss them. The public should see it and know about it.

I will not condemn the entire financial services industry, and, indeed, we need in this country a robust network of financial institutions that support the vibrant economic activity in the United States. However, we must ensure that the necessary and important protections that shield taxpayers and our economy from the failures of 2008 remain in place.

I rebuke the slick and secretive ways that this has been done, and I will echo the concerns of people all over New Jersey that this kind of business as usual must end.

But there are other concerns that should be out in the public eye. Take, for example, truck safety. There is this ''hours of service'' language which protects America's highways, but now the language that protects us has been changed and altered in this bill. It was inserted through the appropriations process. This language suspends the administration's rules designed to prevent driver fatigue.

I will read from the rule that is now being suspended under the omnibus. It states:

> Only drivers who drive nights and work more than 60 or 70 hours in a week will be impacted. . . . Drivers who will be impacted by this provision work heavy and irregular schedules that include some nighttime driving. . . . The limitation reduces maximum time during which a driver may drive up to an average of 70 hours in 7 days, a decrease from the 82-hour average allowed under the 2003 rule . . . Working long daily and weekly hours on a continuing basis is associated with chronic fatigue, a high risk of crashes, and a number of serious chronic health conditions.

These right here are commonsense rules put in place to protect Americans who are driving to and from work with their families or to church to protect them against these heavy, irregular vehicles barrelling down the highway that might now have an overfatigued driver.

These regulations were put in place to try to limit those drivers from straining human endurance, but now they are being suspended within this omnibus bill.

These rules are based on years of sound scientific study, and I am outraged that despite the efforts of my colleagues and the safety community, the provisions to suspend these safety rules were included in this omnibus bill.

Each year nearly 4,000 Americans are killed in truck accidents, and over 100,000 Americans are injured on our highways in truck accidents. These drivers who drive trucks are hard-working men and women, and they have, unfortunately, been pushed to tread on the limits of human endurance.

The number of fatalities caused by truck accidents has risen 16 percent since 2009, and the number of people injured in these crashes has increased 40 percent. At a time when accidents are on such a savage rise, we are in no position to be crippling existing safety measures designed to keep our roads safe. For the sake of our Nation's security and the untold anguish and loss that comes from these highway accidents, this provision should be taken out of the bill.

There is more in this omnibus, and I feel compelled to mention another objectionable thing. The very idea of taxation without representation and self-determination is at the core of our democratic ideals as a nation. Yet, despite this, Washington, DC, with a population larger than two of our States, sees the constant undermining of this very principle. I believe it is an offense to Americans of all States, to Americans in the District of Columbia, and to all those who believe in our cherished ideals that this is done so.

When the District of Columbia votes, just as in Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Alaska, to change marijuana laws—when Washington, DC, is grappling with the devastating impact of the drug war and sees the pain and the challenges and the struggles involved therein, when the people of the District come together and decide to try a different way forward—should we not honor their results? Should we not respect their self-determination as is going on in other States? This provision in this omnibus, undermining the democratic will of the District of Columbia—these great Americans—should be taken out.

My list of concerns in this bill could go on. I could continue. We should be having a discussion and debate on issues of this magnitude.

Take, for example, the rules on pensions that will slash benefits for thousands of retirees. Make no mistake. We need to address the state of multi-employer pension plans, and we need to discuss the tough choices that have to be made, but this is not the way to do it—not business as usual with no discussion and no debate.

This bill also includes provisions that roll back protections for wildlife and endangered species. This is not how we should do this—business as usual with no discussion and no debate it.

There are provisions that keep the USDA from addressing an array of fraudulent, deceptive, anticompetitive, and retaliatory practices which will now undermine important protections for farmers against unfair practices. This is not the way to do it—business as usual, no discussion, no debate.

When people wonder how Washington does things in such a manner that is skewed in favor of the connected, skewed in favor of high-priced lobbyists, and skewed in favor special interests, when they see how the common good and common sense gets undermined, this is how it happens. This is how it happens.

I have been in this body for a little over 12 months, and the way we are doing this is offensive. The American people deserve better. We should do better.

I object to so much being put in this that deserves to be on this floor, discussed and debated in the light of the public. This is no way to run the globe's greatest democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY MCKELLOGG SWAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking my State Department foreign policy fellow, Kelly McKellogg Swain, for her exemplary service to the Senate and to wish her well as she returns to the State Department as her fellowship in my office comes to an end.

I think the Presiding Officer would agree with me that, the fellows program we have here in the Senate is so valuable. We get people who are real experts in their areas from the State Department who serve in our office and can advise us and work with us and give us the expertise we need in order to make the right policy.

I think it also helps the State Department because they will have an individual on their staff who will have a better working understanding as to

how the Senate operates so that the Senate and the State Department can work closer together on the foreign policy considerations of our country. That has certainly been my experience during this past year with Kelly.

Kelly has been an incredibly valuable member of my staff, advising us on so many important issues that we have to deal with, and she has really stepped in to be a valuable member of my staff.

The uncertain working hours has placed a strain on her family, and I thank her very much for being willing to entertain these long hours.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank her husband Brian and son Finley for sharing her with the Senate.

Kelly has been a key member of my foreign policy and national security team over the last year. Before she joined my office, she was the Deputy Director in the Office of Public Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

She brought her expertise in matters pertaining to East Asia and the Pacific, and her expertise and counsel has been critical to me. Over the last 2 years, I have chaired the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

This has been a particularly busy year, as President Obama has moved forward on his policy to rebalance Asia, recognizing that Asia is critically important to the United States for our security interests, our economic interests, and our environmental interests. Kelly has been an extremely important part of our team, working on the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee in carrying out that responsibility during this past year.

Kelly's hard work enabled us to hold five subcommittee hearings ranging from ''Economic Engagement in the Asia Pacific'' to ''Combating Force Labor and Modern Day Slavery in East Asia and the Pacific.'' In addition to developing and executing my subcommittee agenda, she ensured that I was up-to-date on the latest regional developments and more than adequately prepared for office visits with foreign officials on my trips to the region. So she gave me the expertise I needed.

During this past year, we have had significant challenges in East Asia. We have had maritime security issues involving China and Vietnam. We have had the current crisis in Hong Kong. We have had North Korea and the problems it has created. We have had the relationship between two of our close allies that have been strained—Japan and the Republic of Korea. In each of these instances, Kelly gave me the type of help I needed so the Senate was properly exercising its functions on foreign policy.

Kelly's outstanding work does not stop there. When my permanent foreign policy adviser went on maternity leave this summer, Kelly stepped into that role. Within the first few weeks of her expanded role, Malaysian Air flight 17 was shot down in Ukraine, Israel and Hamas went to war, and militants for the Islamic State in Iraq and ISIL terrorist groups were expanding their siege over Iraq and Syria. All that happened when my staff person went on maternity leave, and Kelly stepped right in and took on the responsibilities and helped our office meet our responsibilities. This summer was a particularly busy and challenging time around the world, and not surprisingly Kelly rose to the occasion.

This fall I had a chance to get to know Kelly even better when I went to the United Nations General Assembly in my capacity as the United Nations delegate. I represented the Senate along with Senator JOHNSON at the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Kelly not only accompanied me for the trip and prepared me for all of my high-level meetings, but she also became a trusted adviser. As I told my colleagues just a little while ago, as I walked through the halls of the United Nations, my ego was a little bit affected because more people knew Kelly than knew me, but that was all right. She was incredibly important to me in carrying out my responsibilities in the U.S. delegation to the United Nations. While Kelly came to the Senate with a background in East Asia and Pacific matters, she has demonstrated to me and to the Senate, too, that her foreign policy extends far beyond that region.

My staff and I will miss Kelly's calm demeanor, sense of humor, and extraordinary work ethic. She has been a tremendous asset not just to my office but to the Foreign Relations Committee and the entire Senate. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Kelly for her long service to our Nation. We are fortunate to have such people devote their life to public service. It has been incredibly helpful to us in the Senate and I know she is going to go back to the State Department and continue to serve her country. I thank her.

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

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

NOMINATION OF CAROLYN COLVIN

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I wish to take a few minutes to speak about the nomination of Carolyn Colvin to be the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

In recent weeks a number of disturbing facts have come to light about Ms. Colvin and her tenure as the Acting Social Security Commissioner. These revelations, coupled with the fact that there is an ongoing investigation of the conduct of people in her immediate office, raise serious questions about whether she is qualified to serve in this position.

Let me make one thing clear. My doubts about Ms. Colvin's nomination have nothing to do with partisanship. I, along with 20 of my colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee, voted to report her nomination out of the committee in September. At that time I believed she had the necessary qualifications for the job and saw no reason to oppose her nomination. I have to say I liked her personally, but as I said, since that time, new facts have come to light that are extremely disconcerting.

Just days before Ms. Colvin appeared before the Finance Committee, we became aware of allegations concerning potential waste and mismanagement at the SSA, as well as allegations regarding the possible coverup of that waste and mismanagement. Several sources, including the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and individual whistleblowers reported that SSA had, over a 6-year period, burned through $300 million in a failed attempt to develop and implement the Disability Case Processing System or DCPS.

These sources derived their information from a report issued in June by a private contractor commissioned by SSA. This report was subsequently provided to Congress by SSA whistleblowers.

According to the report, mismanagement and poor planning at the SSA stalled the development of the DCPS. This, in turn, resulted in the substantial waste of taxpayer dollars.

Once again, the amount was, I am informed, roughly $300 million. These allegations were just breaking when Ms. Colvin appeared before the Finance Committee, but I did mention them during the hearing.

Needless to say, as we have learned more details about the failure surrounding the DCPS, the picture has only gotten even cloudier. At a minimum, these allegations call into question the quality of SSA's overall management and the leadership skills of those managing the agency. It certainly calls into question their commitment to preventing waste and preserving SSA's already scarce resources.

Sadly, it gets worse. On July 23, 2014, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform sent a letter to Ms. Colvin that raised even more issues about the failures of SSA, partially under Ms. Colvin's leadership as Acting Commissioner, including possible actions by agency officials designed to intentionally mislead Congress and the IG's office about the deficiencies and the development of the DCPS. Indeed, the allegation is that Congress may have been intentionally misled so as to facilitate approval of Ms. Colvin's nomination to be the next Social Security Administration Commissioner.

Subsequently, on November 18, 2014, a press release from the House Ways

and Means Subcommittee on Social Security indicated that the ''results of a criminal investigation regarding the implementation of DCPS is still pending.''

In addition, whistleblowers have informed the Senate Finance Committee that the ongoing IG investigation has centered on high-level officials at the SSA, including members of Ms. Colvin's immediate office, and that alleged criminal conduct may extend to irregularities in the award of contracts for the DCPS project. This is a serious problem. I do not know how the Senate can with good conscience vote to confirm anyone with this type of ongoing investigation going on around their immediate office. It may very well turn out that Ms. Colvin did nothing wrong, but we need to know for sure.

This is a very important position. That is why I, along with all of the Republican members of the Senate Finance Committee, sent a letter to Ms. Colvin last week asking for more details about the DCPS and her office's conduct. She has since responded claiming that she is not responsible for any mismanagement of the DCPS project and that she committed no criminal conduct. As I said, that may very well be the case. I hope it is. But the specter of an ongoing investigation still hangs over her nomination; therefore, I do not believe the Senate should proceed toward confirming her until this matter is resolved. I want to be fair to her, but this is an important problem that needs to be resolved.

I want to make one thing clear: This is about more than just mismanagement of funds or bureaucratic incompetence; this is about an ongoing investigation of people in Ms. Colvin's direct office for contract issues and allegations that they purposefully misled Congress in order to move her nomination through.

Once again, this is not partisan. I supported Ms. Colvin's nomination in committee and continue to believe she has the right credentials and experience for this important job. Of course, if these allegations prove to be true, my assessment of her qualifications will most certainly change.

Put simply, with this investigation—which may very well have a criminal element to it—still ongoing, I cannot support moving forward on Carolyn Colvin's nomination. I hope this matter can be resolved quickly and cleanly, but until such time, I plan to vote against confirming her as the next Social Security Commissioner unless we resolve these matters beforehand.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RURAL HEALTH CARE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I have visited hospitals many times in our State. In fact, there are 128 community hospitals in Kansas, and I have visited each and every one of them once and, in many instances, two or three times. In fact, last weekend while I was home in Kansas, I visited my hometown hospital, Mercy, in Manhattan, KS.

It is a very useful exercise. I would encourage my colleagues to spend time with health care providers. In the case of hospitals, it gives you the opportunity to visit with hospital administrators, the CEOs, the opportunity to visit with the nurses, patients, with physicians, and get a feel for what is going on in the delivery of health care in your State. I certainly know how valuable that is to me.

One of the interests I have in serving in Congress is a belief that the way we live our lives at home in Kansas is something very special, and it is something that is worth trying to make certain is around for many years to come—in fact, for generations to come.

One of my early conclusions, in looking at public policy and looking at the future of the communities of Kansas and the people who live there, is the access to health care, to affordable health care, is critical. It is a component in which many communities will not continue to exist if there is not access to hospital care, a physician, a hometown pharmacy—all the things that make up the opportunity for someone to be cared for in every aspect of their lives related to their health. I know this from my own circumstance, my hometown of Plainville with a population of about 2,000.

My parents called Plainville home into their nineties. My parents are no longer living, but I know well before the time in which they passed, my sister and I would have had a conversation with my parents talking about: Mom, Dad, I am sorry, but you need to move, and you need to move where you can have adequate health care. You need to move where there is a good hospital and a set of physicians who will care for you.

But because that exists in my hometown and continues to exist in my hometown, those kinds of conversations are not necessary. Wherever the place that you are telling your parents they have to move to access health care—wherever that place is—and it may be a very desirable place, but it is not home. My parents would have lived someplace in which they had not lived all of their lives, would not have been surrounded by the people they know and who knew them—particularly as they lived, my dad, until the age of 98. They would not have had the people who checked in on them, made sure they were doing OK each and every day, gave them the opportunity to continue to live at home, the people who would have given them a hug and a pat, and the pharmacist who said to my dad: Ray, you probably need to have your blood pressure taken. Those are very special things about many places many of us come from.

In the absence of those kinds of opportunities for health care, our communities—certainly across my State and across the country—especially in rural America begin to disappear, the point being that in the absence of access to health care, the ability to keep a community together to encourage senior citizens to remain at home in their hometowns and for us to be able to recruit and encourage young families to move to our communities is not going to happen, is not going to be available, unless we have access to health care.

In the discussions I have with those health care providers, the doctors, the nurses, the CEOs, the administrators of the hospital—including the patients—they continued to remind me that what is going on in our Nation's Capitol, in Congress, and certainly in the administration, are barriers, are burdens to the chances of that hospital and those health care providers continuing to be in business.

Every visit involves the raising of concerns to me. Often it is: What you are doing about this, Senator MORAN? What are you doing to reduce the Federal regulatory burden that our hospital faces? Are you working to make certain we are able to provide the health care our local residents need?

Last month I introduced legislation that was bipartisan, a resolution that unanimously passed the Senate. It recognized the importance of access to hospitals and other health care providers, particularly in rural areas of our country. It indicated how special they were and how important they were to the success and survival of the communities in our country.

The point I would make about that resolution is it passed unanimously. While the importance of rural providers is overwhelmingly acknowledged, as evidenced by the unanimous passage of that resolution, the Affordable Care Act and unnecessarily burdensome Federal regulations fail to demonstrate that we follow through on that understanding of the importance of hometown health care.

Among the regulatory concerns I hear about in those hospital visits, serious flaws with what is called RAC, the Medicare Recovery Audit Contractor Program, is it is causing many problems for hospitals and providers across Kansas.

Our hospitals and health care providers have been required to divert significant resources away from caring for patients, their mission to appeal incorrect audit decisions that are almost always ultimately overturned through an appeals process. This broken RAC Program places a tremendous burden on the providers, and it has created a 2-year appeal in backlogs within the Department of Health and Human Services. This program diverts the resources hospitals are devoting to caring for patients, to going through the

process of trying to get their money back. That is certainly a problem and increasing the expense of providing health care. But the other aspect of that is often the hospital's money is tied up for 2 years, held by CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, while it is adjudicated. Again, the overwhelming number of cases is decided ultimately in favor of the hospital, but it is certainly diverting resources and increasing costs.

I met with Secretary Burwell at Health and Human Services to discuss what is an urgent need to improve the Medicare RAC Program. I have requested from HHS a timeline and objectives, measurable objectives, to address the RAC problems and the appeals backlog that is in existence now.

Another concern in addition to the RAC audits is the Federal Government's inflexible supervision rules. CMS passed a rule that was delayed but now ultimately put in place. It requires that many pretty routine services that occur in a hospital—that includes things such as a drug infusion or blood infusions, cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation—that they require supervision. That is just not an option in many rural hospital health care settings. There is a lack of understanding and a lack of common sense as to what a small hospital in a small town faces when CMS puts this regulation in place. They make it difficult for those hospitals to continue to provide those necessary services.

Fortunately, we have had some success in addressing this issue. Congress passed legislation that prevents the Federal Government from enforcing that regulation through the near future. I have introduced original legislation to make that change, that regulatory prohibition, permanent. I will reintroduce that legislation in January in the new Congress as we try to capitalize upon the temporary success we have had in fighting back this regulation from CMS to make it permanent so that when the temporary prohibition expires that we will have the opportunity to keep them from reintroducing that provision.

I will say that hospital administrators and employees, when I have a conversation with them, the discussion typically involves serious and strong opposition to a number of proposals that come from the Obama administration each year.

One of those is to change the number of miles that you must be apart from another hospital in order to qualify to be a critical access hospital. It is a program under Medicare and Medicaid Services that allows for a reimbursement that is more based upon cost than otherwise would be the case.

Also the administration has continued to propose a 1-percent reduction in the funding for those critical access hospitals.

Those are pretty much life-and-blood issues for community hospitals across Kansas and around the country. That critical access hospital designation in receiving that cost-based reimbursement means that a hospital with few patients, one that doesn't have hundreds of patients each day, can still be reimbursed at a rate in which they can almost make ends meet, that they can cover their costs but still rarely is there any profit or extra revenue generated from that so-called cost-based reimbursement.

Cutting reimbursements to the hospitals, removing them from the critical access program, I have little doubt but that it would eliminate many, if not most, of those hospitals currently in that critical access hospital program. There would be no place else for them to go, no other category within Medicare that would allow them to survive. I believe the number now is 88 of Kansas's 128 hospitals are those critical access hospitals.

The other topics of conversation that arise in those conversations in visiting with health care providers at a hospital—the physician, the nurses, the physical therapists, the CEO of the hospital, the trustees, the board of directors of the hospital—is the Affordable Care Act.

Again, we symbolically say we care a lot about rural health care providers, but the reality is the Affordable Care Act is creating significant problems, challenges, for the survival of hospitals, particularly the smallest hospitals in my State and across the country.

The Kansas Hospital Association projects that the Affordable Care Act will cost Kansas health care providers approximately $1.3 billion in Medicare funding over the next 10 years. These Affordable Care Act cuts include reductions to hospitals' Medicare reimbursements and a payment called disproportionate share that the hospital receives in order to cover the high level of uninsured patients.

These cuts are taking place on top of what Congress and the President agreed to under sequestration—a 2-percent across-the-board cut—that many, if not all, of our providers are now receiving. So what was supposed to be cost-based reimbursement, which nearly never covered the cost, is being reduced by another 2 percent as a result of sequestration. Again, this is something this Congress—and if not this Congress, the new Congress that begins in January—needs to deal with, the issue of sequestration.

For this and for other reasons sequestration is a significant problem. While I certainly support the reduced spending aspects—what the goal was of sequestration—the idea that we would do across-the-board cuts is irresponsible. We ought to be establishing the priorities—the things Congress, on behalf of the American people, thinks are the most important and beneficial to the American people, the things that are allowed for under our Constitution. Those are the things we ought to be funding, as compared to taking a step back and just having automatic cuts because we don't have the ability to decide in a responsible way what we can afford and what we cannot afford.

Further, I would say the Affordable Care Act forced States to adopt—the original act as passed by Congress—an expansion of Medicaid. The U.S. Supreme Court, in its 2012 ruling, indicated that Medicaid expansion was optional, not mandatory under the Constitution. So that portion of the Affordable Care Act was determined to be unconstitutional.

States are now faced with the difficult decision that involves Medicaid and long-term costs associated with potential expansions, and hospitals face tremendous uncertainty about how they will care for an increased number of patients while they are already absorbing the Affordable Care Act's Medicare cuts. So States are struggling to figure out what to do about expansion of Medicaid.

Hospitals are suffering from the consequence of not having additional Medicaid dollars. That is on top of the cuts that occur as a result of changes in Medicare. Really, in most hospitals across my State, two components are so important: Medicaid and Medicare cover a significant portion of the number of patients that are admitted to a hospital, and in many instances there are not many private pay patients who have their own health insurance to add additional revenue to the hospital's revenue stream.

This scenario of Medicare and Medicaid both creating problems, being squeezed from both programs, presents significant problems for rural hospitals. Again, those reimbursements—Medicare and Medicaid—make up about 60 percent of those hospitals' revenues.

The Affordable Care Act also put hospitals in the difficult position of having to balance increasing regulatory burden with reduced revenues. So in addition to the Medicare-Medicaid pressure, there is also the problem of increasing costs associated with more and more regulations emanating from the Department of Health and Human Services and other places across the Federal Government at the same time the reimbursement rates are declining. So increased cost, reduced revenue—again, a significant problem.

In 2011, the average Medicare margin for hospitals in Kansas was a negative—not enough to cover the cost—4.9 percent. These losses have to be offset somewhere, and that often results in a reduction in staffing. It sometimes means a reduction of services. The end result is a hospital that is not always able to meet the needs of their citizens—their patients.

In many instances it is the hospital that may be among the largest employer in a county or community in our State. In addition to reduced staffing, an inability to buy equipment, and reducing certain specialty programs offered at the hospital, we are also seeing

a significant depletion in their cash reserves and a freeze on capital expenditures. This circumstance is just not sustainable, and so we are seeing hospitals close.

Since about 1990, the number of rural hospitals across the country has remained stable at around 2,000, but last year 15 rural hospitals closed. We have to be concerned there are more to follow. This is an alarming trend. These hospitals play a vital role in health care to those rural communities. It can determine whether a community has a future—whether individuals and families will decide to live there. The loss of a hospital has huge ripple effects and it harms patients. Their primary purpose is to save lives and improve health care, but it is also a tremendous loss to the community itself.

I outlined problems that I believed would occur for hospitals with the passage of ObamaCare long before the law became law. I also would say it doesn't mean I don't believe there aren't significant improvements to be made to our health care delivery system, but I think the reality is that the Affordable Care Act causes more problems—significantly more problems—than those it solves.

Many Kansas hospitals struggle to meet the needs of the aging population in their States and the Affordable Care Act cuts are an exacerbation of their circumstance. Again, the Affordable Care Act had the promise of: If you like your plan, you can keep it. If you like your health insurance plan, you can keep it. If you like your physician, you can keep him or her. That didn't turn out to be true.

In fact, if you liked your policy, you were probably not able to keep it, and that something else now—that replacement policy—often involves increased copayments and deductibles. That certainly is a problem for the policyholder and his or her family. It is a problem for the business and their employees. But we may have forgotten it is a huge problem for the health care provider.

Almost every hospital I have visited, now that the Affordable Care Act is being implemented, will tell me about the increasing amount of unpaid hospital bills—the amount of money that is owed that is attempting to be recovered. The reason that occurs is because the copayments and deductibles are so significantly higher that patients don't have the ability to pay a $5,000 copayment or even a $1,000 copayment. So the hospital's bad debt is increasing because patients don't have the necessary amount of money to pay for their portion of what their health care insurance policy now requires of them.

Again, this comes from a law that was described to us as going to increase the affordability and the availability of health care. I guess what I would point out is, in the circumstance we are now in, the policies are so expensive, so much more costly both in premiums and copayments and deductibles, that the affordability is a problem again and not just for the patient, not for the policyholder but for the hospital that is now left holding the bag because so many of their patients can't pay the copayments or the deductibles.

When the Affordable Care Act passed, the President's own Medicare Chief Actuary noted that the cuts would cause as many as 15 percent of hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and home health agencies to be unprofitable by 2019. While that point in time may have seemed a long time away, 2019 is now just about 5 years away. If ObamaCare remains in place, the estimated percentage of unprofitable providers is projected to increase, reaching roughly 25 percent in 2030 and 40 percent in 2050. So by 2030 25 percent of the hospitals, health care providers, will be unprofitable, and by 2050 40 percent—nearly half—of the health care providers will be unprofitable.

Again, in particularly rural communities, if you can't make it on the revenues that come from patients, from providing health care to individuals, often the option is to increase taxes—property taxes, sales tax—or something to keep your hospital doors open. That ought not be the consequence of legislation passed by Congress—to require taxes to be raised for a Federal program called Medicare because it is failing to meet the needs of American citizens, our patients. These providers, our hospitals, just simply can't sustain in the circumstance they find themselves in. The Affordable Care Act has put us on a path that I think is dangerous for individuals, for businesses, and now for the health care providers themselves.

In addition to the bad debt experience, many of the new health care plans have limited or restrictive provider networks, so that a local hospital may be eliminated from their network. This means that while under their previous insurance policy they could see a hometown physician or be admitted to their hometown hospital, because of these network restrictions they must go someplace out of town to access health care. This again is a terrible consequence for the individual, for the patient, but also something that drives revenues away from the hometown provider, much to the detriment of everybody who would want to make certain that provider, that doctor, remains in the community and that the hospital doors remain open.

There is lots of evidence that the problems we are facing are real. They demand attention. Access to affordable health care is something that still deserves our attention. I look forward to trying to make certain we have that opportunity. Again, that is nothing that is going to happen in the next few days, but we have a responsibility to see that the things that are reducing the access to affordable health care are addressed. The efforts that resulted from the Affordable Care Act are exacerbating the problem, not solving the problem.

I look at elections as like a new year. There is this optimism that maybe something good can come from a new Congress; that we can establish our New Year's resolutions and we can begin working, and I certainly make the offer to my colleagues throughout the Senate—all 99 of my colleagues—to be someone who wants to be problem solving, oriented toward finding solutions, and working together to make sure those health care providers that are so important to our lives, our safety, to our health, are around for a long time to come and that the communities that depend upon those hospitals—those 128 hospitals in my home State—have a viable future.

We have to get the regulatory environment under control, we have to resolve the problems created by the Affordable Care Act, and we need to make certain that health care is an opportunity for people who live in places across my State to still have the opportunity to see the hometown physician, to have a prescription filled by the hometown pharmacist, and to make certain those hometown hospital doors remain open for today and for future generations of communities across my State.

I appreciate the opportunity to address the Senate this afternoon, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CYBERSECURITY ACT

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 490, S. 1353.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1353) to provide for an ongoing, voluntary public-private partnership to improve cybersecurity, and to strengthen cybersecurity research and development, workforce development and education, and public awareness and preparedness, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 1353

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Cybersecurity Act of 2013''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. Definitions.
Sec. 3. No regulatory authority.

TITLE I—PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION ON CYBERSECURITY

Sec. 101. Public-private collaboration on cybersecurity.

TITLE II—CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Sec. 201. Federal cybersecurity research and development.

Sec. 202. Computer and network security research centers.

TITLE III—EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Sec. 301. Cybersecurity competitions and challenges.

Sec. 302. Federal cyber scholarship-for-service program.

Sec. 303. Study and analysis of education, accreditation, training, and certification of information infrastructure and cybersecurity professionals.

TITLE IV—CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS

Sec. 401. National cybersecurity awareness and preparedness campaign.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) CYBERSECURITY MISSION.—The term ''cybersecurity mission'' means activities that encompass the full range of threat reduction, vulnerability reduction, deterrence, international engagement, incident response, resiliency, and recovery policies and activities, including computer network operations, information assurance, law enforcement, diplomacy, military, and intelligence missions as such activities relate to the security and stability of cyberspace.

(2) INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term ''information infrastructure'' means the underlying framework that information systems and assets rely on to process, transmit, receive, or store information electronically, including programmable electronic devices, communications networks, and industrial or supervisory control systems and any associated hardware, software, or data.

(3) INFORMATION SYSTEM.—The term ''information system'' has the meaning given that term in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code.

SEC. 3. NO REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to confer any regulatory authority on any Federal, State, tribal, or local department or agency.

TITLE I—PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION ON CYBERSECURITY

SEC. 101. PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION ON CYBERSECURITY.

(a) CYBERSECURITY.—Section 2(c) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act (15 U.S.C. 272(c)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (15) through (22) as paragraphs (16) through (23), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following:

''(15) on an ongoing basis, facilitate and support the development of a voluntary, industry-led set of standards, guidelines, best practices, methodologies, procedures, and processes to reduce cyber risks to critical infrastructure (as defined under subsection (e));''.

(b) SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS.—Section 2 of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act (15 U.S.C. 272) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(e) CYBER RISKS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the activities under subsection (c)(15), the Director—

''(A) shall—

''(i) coordinate closely and continuously with relevant private sector personnel and entities, critical infrastructure owners and operators, sector coordinating councils, Information Sharing and Analysis Centers, and other relevant industry organizations, and incorporate industry expertise;

''(ii) consult with the heads of agencies with national security responsibilities, sector-specific agencies, State and local governments, the governments of other nations, and international organizations;

''(iii) identify a prioritized, flexible, repeatable, performance-based, and cost-effective approach, including information security measures and controls, that may be voluntarily adopted by owners and operators of critical infrastructure to help them identify, assess, and manage cyber risks;

''(iv) include methodologies—

''(I) to identify and mitigate impacts of the cybersecurity measures or controls on business confidentiality; and

''(II) to protect individual privacy and civil liberties;

''(v) incorporate voluntary consensus standards and industry best practices;

''(vi) align with voluntary international standards to the fullest extent possible;

''(vii) prevent duplication of regulatory processes and prevent conflict with or superseding of regulatory requirements, mandatory standards, and related processes; and

''(viii) include such other similar and consistent elements as the Director considers necessary; and

''(B) shall not prescribe or otherwise require—

''(i) the use of specific solutions;

''(ii) the use of specific information or communications technology products or services; or

''(iii) that information or communications technology products or services be designed, developed, or manufactured in a particular manner.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Information shared with or provided to the Institute for the purpose of the activities described under subsection (c)(15) shall not be used by any Federal, State, tribal, or local department or agency to regulate the activity of any entity.

''(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term 'critical infrastructure' has the meaning given the term in section 1016(e) of the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)).

''(B) SECTOR-SPECIFIC AGENCY.—The term 'sector-specific agency' means the Federal department or agency responsible for providing institutional knowledge and specialized expertise as well as leading, facilitating, or supporting the security and resilience programs and associated activities of its designated critical infrastructure sector in the all-hazards environment.''.

(c) STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study that assesses—

(A) the progress made by the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology in facilitating the development of standards and procedures to reduce cyber risks to critical infrastructure in accordance with section 2(c)(15) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act, as added by this section;

(B) the extent to which the Director's facilitation efforts are consistent with the directive in such section that the development of such standards and procedures be voluntary and led by industry representatives;

(C) the extent to which sectors of critical infrastructure (as defined in section 1016(e) of the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e))) have adopted a voluntary, industry-led set of standards, guidelines, best practices, methodologies, procedures, and processes to reduce cyber risks to critical infrastructure in accordance with such section 2(c)(15);

(D) the reasons behind the decisions of sectors of critical infrastructure (as defined in subparagraph (C)) to adopt or to not adopt the voluntary standards described in subparagraph (C); and

(E) the extent to which such voluntary standards have proved successful in protecting critical infrastructure from cyber threats.

(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter for the following 6 years, the Comptroller General shall submit a report, which summarizes the findings of the study conducted under paragraph (1), to—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(C) the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

TITLE II—CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 201. FEDERAL CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

(a) FUNDAMENTAL CYBERSECURITY RESEARCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in coordination with the head of any relevant Federal agency, shall build upon programs and plans in effect as of the date of enactment of this Act to develop a Federal cybersecurity research and development plan to meet objectives in cybersecurity, such as—

(A) how to design and build complex software-intensive systems that are secure and reliable when first deployed;

(B) how to test and verify that software and hardware, whether developed locally or obtained from a third party, is free of significant known security flaws;

(C) how to test and verify that software and hardware obtained from a third party correctly implements stated functionality, and only that functionality;

(D) how to guarantee the privacy of an individual, including that individual's identity, information, and lawful transactions when stored in distributed systems or transmitted over networks;

(E) how to build new protocols to enable the Internet to have robust security as one of the key capabilities of the Internet;

(F) how to determine the origin of a message transmitted over the Internet;

(G) how to support privacy in conjunction with improved security;

(H) how to address the growing problem of insider threats;

(I) how improved consumer education and digital literacy initiatives can address human factors that contribute to cybersecurity;

(J) how to protect information processed, transmitted, or stored using cloud computing or transmitted through wireless services; and

(K) any additional objectives the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in coordination with the head of any relevant Federal agency and with input from stakeholders, including appropriate national laboratories, industry, and academia, determines appropriate.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Federal cybersecurity research and development plan shall identify and prioritize near-term, mid-term, and long-term research in computer and information science and engineering to meet the objectives under paragraph (1), including research in the areas described in section 4(a)(1) of the Cyber Security Research and Development Act (15 U.S.C. 7403(a)(1)).

(B) PRIVATE SECTOR EFFORTS.—In developing, implementing, and updating the Federal cybersecurity research and development plan, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall work in close cooperation with industry, academia, and other interested stakeholders to ensure, to the extent possible, that Federal cybersecurity research and development is not duplicative of private sector efforts.

(3) TRIENNIAL UPDATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Federal cybersecurity research and development plan shall be updated triennially.

(B) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall submit the plan, not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and

each updated plan under this section to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

(b) CYBERSECURITY PRACTICES RESEARCH.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall support research that—

(1) develops, evaluates, disseminates, and integrates new cybersecurity practices and concepts into the core curriculum of computer science programs and of other programs where graduates of such programs have a substantial probability of developing software after graduation, including new practices and concepts relating to secure coding education and improvement programs; and

(2) develops new models for professional development of faculty in cybersecurity education, including secure coding development.

(c) CYBERSECURITY MODELING AND TEST BEDS.—

(1) REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, shall conduct a review of cybersecurity test beds in existence on the date of enactment of this Act to inform the grants under paragraph (2). The review shall include an assessment of whether a sufficient number of cybersecurity test beds are available to meet the research needs under the Federal cybersecurity research and development plan.

(2) ADDITIONAL CYBERSECURITY MODELING AND TEST BEDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Director of the National Science Foundation, after the review under paragraph (1), determines that the research needs under the Federal cybersecurity research and development plan require the establishment of additional cybersecurity test beds, the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Homeland Security, may award grants to institutions of higher education or research and development non-profit institutions to establish cybersecurity test beds.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The cybersecurity test beds under subparagraph (A) shall be sufficiently large in order to model the scale and complexity of real-time cyber attacks and defenses on real world networks and environments.

(C) ASSESSMENT REQUIRED.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall evaluate the effectiveness of any grants awarded under this subsection in meeting the objectives of the Federal cybersecurity research and development plan under subsection (a) no later than 2 years after the review under paragraph (1) of this subsection, and periodically thereafter.

(d) COORDINATION WITH OTHER RESEARCH INITIATIVES.—In accordance with the responsibilities under section 101 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511), the Director the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall coordinate, to the extent practicable, Federal research and development activities under this section with other ongoing research and development security-related initiatives, including research being conducted by—

(1) the National Science Foundation;

(2) the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

(3) the Department of Homeland Security;

(4) other Federal agencies;

(5) other Federal and private research laboratories, research entities, and universities;

(6) institutions of higher education;

(7) relevant nonprofit organizations; and

(8) international partners of the United States.

(e) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION COMPUTER AND NETWORK SECURITY RESEARCH GRANT AREAS.—Section 4(a)(1) of the Cyber Security Research and Development Act (15 U.S.C. 7403(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (I), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(J) secure fundamental protocols that are integral to inter-network communications and data exchange;

''(K) secure software engineering and software assurance, including—

''(i) programming languages and systems that include fundamental security features;

''(ii) portable or reusable code that remains secure when deployed in various environments;

''(iii) verification and validation technologies to ensure that requirements and specifications have been implemented; and

''(iv) models for comparison and metrics to assure that required standards have been met;

''(L) holistic system security that—

''(i) addresses the building of secure systems from trusted and untrusted components;

''(ii) proactively reduces vulnerabilities;

''(iii) addresses insider threats; and

''(iv) supports privacy in conjunction with improved security;

''(M) monitoring and detection;

''(N) mitigation and rapid recovery methods;

''(O) security of wireless networks and mobile devices; and

''(P) security of cloud infrastructure and services.''.

(f) RESEARCH ON THE SCIENCE OF CYBERSECURITY.—The head of each agency and department identified under section 101(a)(3)(B) of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511(a)(3)(B)), through existing programs and activities, shall support research that will lead to the development of a scientific foundation for the field of cybersecurity, including research that increases understanding of the underlying principles of securing complex networked systems, enables repeatable experimentation, and creates quantifiable security metrics.

SEC. 202. COMPUTER AND NETWORK SECURITY RESEARCH CENTERS.

Section 4(b) of the Cyber Security Research and Development Act (15 U.S.C. 7403(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking ''the research areas'' and inserting the following: ''improving the security and resiliency of information infrastructure, reducing cyber vulnerabilities, and anticipating and mitigating consequences of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure, by conducting research in the areas'';

(2) by striking ''the center'' in paragraph (4)(D) and inserting ''the Center''; and

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (C);

(B) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (D) and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(E) the demonstrated capability of the applicant to conduct high performance computation integral to complex computer and network security research, through on-site or off-site computing;

''(F) the applicant's affiliation with private sector entities involved with industrial research described in subsection (a)(1);

''(G) the capability of the applicant to conduct research in a secure environment;

''(H) the applicant's affiliation with existing research programs of the Federal Government;

''(I) the applicant's experience managing public-private partnerships to transition new technologies into a commercial setting or the government user community;

''(J) the capability of the applicant to conduct interdisciplinary cybersecurity research, basic and applied, such as in law, economics, or behavioral sciences; and

''(K) the capability of the applicant to conduct research in areas such as systems security, wireless security, networking and protocols, formal methods and high-performance computing, nanotechnology, or industrial control systems.''.

TITLE III—EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 301. CYBERSECURITY COMPETITIONS AND CHALLENGES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce, Director of the National Science Foundation, and Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall—

(1) support competitions and challenges under section 105 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (124 Stat. 3989) or any other provision of law, as appropriate—

(A) to identify, develop, and recruit talented individuals to perform duties relating to the security of information infrastructure in Federal, State, and local government agencies, and the private sector; or

(B) to stimulate innovation in basic and applied cybersecurity research, technology development, and prototype demonstration that has the potential for application to the information technology activities of the Federal Government; and

(2) ensure the effective operation of the competitions and challenges under this section.

(b) PARTICIPATION.—Participants in the competitions and challenges under subsection (a)(1) may include—

(1) students enrolled in grades 9 through 12;

(2) students enrolled in a postsecondary program of study leading to a baccalaureate degree at an institution of higher education;

(3) students enrolled in a postbaccalaureate program of study at an institution of higher education;

(4) institutions of higher education and research institutions;

(5) veterans; and

(6) other groups or individuals that the Secretary of Commerce, Director of the National Science Foundation, and Secretary of Homeland Security determine appropriate.

(c) AFFILIATION AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—Competitions and challenges under this section may be carried out through affiliation and cooperative agreements with—

(1) Federal agencies;

(2) regional, State, or school programs supporting the development of cyber professionals;

(3) State, local, and tribal governments; or

(4) other private sector organizations.

(d) AREAS OF SKILL.—Competitions and challenges under subsection (a)(1)(A) shall be designed to identify, develop, and recruit exceptional talent relating to—

(1) ethical hacking;

(2) penetration testing;

(3) vulnerability assessment;

(4) continuity of system operations;

(5) security in design;

(6) cyber forensics;

(7) offensive and defensive cyber operations; and

(8) other areas the Secretary of Commerce, Director of the National Science Foundation, and Secretary of Homeland Security consider necessary to fulfill the cybersecurity mission.

(e) TOPICS.—In selecting topics for competitions and challenges under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary of Commerce, Director of the National Science Foundation, and Secretary of Homeland Security—

(1) shall consult widely both within and outside the Federal Government; and

(2) may empanel advisory committees.

(f) INTERNSHIPS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel Management may support, as appropriate, internships or other work experience in the Federal Government to the winners of the competitions and challenges under this section.

SEC. 302. FEDERAL CYBER SCHOLARSHIP-FOR-SERVICE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the

Director of the Office of Personnel Management and Secretary of Homeland Security, shall continue a Federal Cyber Scholarship-for-Service program to recruit and train the next generation of information technology professionals, industrial control system security professionals, and security managers to meet the needs of the cybersecurity mission for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments.

(b) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND COMPONENTS.—The Federal Cyber Scholarship-for-Service program shall—

(1) provide scholarships to students who are enrolled in programs of study at institutions of higher education leading to degrees or specialized program certifications in the cybersecurity field;

(2) provide the scholarship recipients with summer internship opportunities or other meaningful temporary appointments in the Federal information technology workforce; and

(3) provide a procedure by which the National Science Foundation or a Federal agency, consistent with regulations of the Office of Personnel Management, may request and fund security clearances for scholarship recipients, including providing for clearances during internships or other temporary appointments and after receipt of their degrees.

(c) SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS.—Each scholarship under subsection (b) shall be in an amount that covers the student's tuition and fees at the institution under subsection (b)(1) and provides the student with an additional stipend.

(d) SCHOLARSHIP CONDITIONS.—Each scholarship recipient, as a condition of receiving a scholarship under the program, shall enter into an agreement under which the recipient agrees to work in the cybersecurity mission of a Federal, State, local, or tribal agency for a period equal to the length of the scholarship following receipt of the student's degree.

(e) HIRING AUTHORITY.—

(1) APPOINTMENT IN EXCEPTED SERVICE.—Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, an agency shall appoint in the excepted service an individual who has completed the academic program for which a scholarship was awarded.

(2) NONCOMPETITIVE CONVERSION.—Except as provided in paragraph (4), upon fulfillment of the service term, an employee appointed under paragraph (1) may be converted noncompetitively to term, career-conditional or career appointment.

(3) TIMING OF CONVERSION.—An agency may noncompetitively convert a term employee appointed under paragraph (2) to a career-conditional or career appointment before the term appointment expires.

(4) AUTHORITY TO DECLINE CONVERSION.—An agency may decline to make the noncompetitive conversion or appointment under paragraph (2) for cause.

(f) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a scholarship under this section, an individual shall—

(1) be a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States;

(2) demonstrate a commitment to a career in improving the security of information infrastructure; and

(3) have demonstrated a high level of proficiency in mathematics, engineering, or computer sciences.

(g) REPAYMENT.—If a scholarship recipient does not meet the terms of the program under this section, the recipient shall refund the scholarship payments in accordance with rules established by the Director of the National Science Foundation, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management and Secretary of Homeland Security.

(h) EVALUATION AND REPORT.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall evaluate and report periodically to Congress on the success of recruiting individuals for scholarships under this section and on hiring and retaining those individuals in the public sector workforce.

SEC. 303. STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION, ACCREDITATION, TRAINING, AND CERTIFICATION OF INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONALS.

(a) STUDY.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall undertake to enter into appropriate arrangements with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive study of government, academic, and private-sector education, accreditation, training, and certification programs for the development of professionals in information infrastructure and cybersecurity. The agreement shall require the National Academy of Sciences to consult with sector coordinating councils and relevant governmental agencies, regulatory entities, and nongovernmental organizations in the course of the study.

(b) SCOPE.—The study shall include—

(1) an evaluation of the body of knowledge and various skills that specific categories of professionals in information infrastructure and cybersecurity should possess in order to secure information systems;

(2) an assessment of whether existing government, academic, and private-sector education, accreditation, training, and certification programs provide the body of knowledge and various skills described in paragraph (1);

(3) an evaluation of—

(A) the state of cybersecurity education at institutions of higher education in the United States;

(B) the extent of professional development opportunities for faculty in cybersecurity principles and practices;

(C) the extent of the partnerships and collaborative cybersecurity curriculum development activities that leverage industry and government needs, resources, and tools;

(D) the proposed metrics to assess progress toward improving cybersecurity education; and

(E) the descriptions of the content of cybersecurity courses in undergraduate computer science curriculum;

(4) an analysis of any barriers to the Federal Government recruiting and hiring cybersecurity talent, including barriers relating to compensation, the hiring process, job classification, and hiring flexibility; and

(5) an analysis of the sources and availability of cybersecurity talent, a comparison of the skills and expertise sought by the Federal Government and the private sector, an examination of the current and future capacity of United States institutions of higher education, including community colleges, to provide current and future cybersecurity professionals, through education and training activities, with those skills sought by the Federal Government, State and local entities, and the private sector.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Academy of Sciences shall submit to the President and Congress a report on the results of the study. The report shall include—

(1) findings regarding the state of information infrastructure and cybersecurity education, accreditation, training, and certification programs, including specific areas of deficiency and demonstrable progress; and

(2) recommendations for further research and the improvement of information infrastructure and cybersecurity education, accreditation, training, and certification programs.

TITLE IV—CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS

SEC. 401. NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS CAMPAIGN.

(a) NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS CAMPAIGN.—The Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (referred to in this section as the ''Director''), in consultation with appropriate Federal agencies, shall continue to coordinate a national cybersecurity awareness and preparedness campaign, such as—

(1) a campaign to increase public awareness of cybersecurity, cyber safety, and cyber ethics, including the use of the Internet, social media, entertainment, and other media to reach the public;

(2) a campaign to increase the understanding of State and local governments, institutions of higher education, and private sector entities of—

(A) the benefits of ensuring effective risk management of the information infrastructure versus the costs of failure to do so; and

(B) the methods to mitigate and remediate vulnerabilities;

(3) support for formal cybersecurity education programs at all education levels to prepare skilled cybersecurity and computer science workers for the private sector and Federal, State, and local government; and

(4) initiatives to evaluate and forecast future cybersecurity workforce needs of the Federal government and develop strategies for recruitment, training, and retention.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In carrying out the authority described in subsection (a), the Director, in consultation with appropriate Federal agencies, shall leverage existing programs designed to inform the public of safety and security of products or services, including self-certifications and independently verified assessments regarding the quantification and valuation of information security risk.

(c) STRATEGIC PLAN.—The Director, in cooperation with relevant Federal agencies and other stakeholders, shall build upon programs and plans in effect as of the date of enactment of this Act to develop and implement a strategic plan to guide Federal programs and activities in support of the national cybersecurity awareness and preparedness campaign under subsection (a).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Director shall transmit the strategic plan under subsection (c) to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF S. 1353

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I ask consent to engage in a colloquy with Senator ROCKEFELLER, Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, regarding important aspects of S. 1353, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014.

Yesterday I held a hearing on the importance of improving information sharing between agencies on cyber security. As I said yesterday, law enforcement, the intelligence community, Treasury, and financial regulators each may have different missions, but in addressing cyber security concerns they all must be united in what some call a ''whole government'' approach. Cyber security is one of the most important issues facing the financial system and I hope next Congress can work together to pass a comprehensive cyber security bill. I thank my colleague, the Senator from West Virginia, for his work on this important matter and for strengthening the public-private collaboration on cyber security with this bill.

However, I would like to ensure that the language in this bill does not have

unintended consequences on the abilities of financial regulators to effectively oversee our financial system. As chairman of the Banking Committee, I am mindful of the importance of strong regulators examining and supervising our financial institutions. This is particularly important in the case of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the agency that was created in 2010 to police areas of the financial market that previously were not regulated at the federal level, as well as the prudential regulators. A provision in S. 1353 states that information shared with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (known as NIST), may not be used by a government agency to regulate the activity of any entity. However, other existing statutes and regulations provide government agencies with the authority to require entities they regulate to provide them with information.

Moreover, a regulatory agency may discover such information on its own, through the entity, or through other sources. For example, a bank regulatory agency may discover cyberthreat information during a routine examination of a bank and, might want to exercise its existing legal authority to require the bank to adjust its systems to protect against future cyberthreats. I seek clarification from the Senator from West Virginia with respect to the provision in the proposed legislation.

Can my colleague from West Virginia confirm that this provision is not intended to prohibit an agency from taking regulatory action, if the agency independently obtains such information pursuant to other statutory or regulatory authority, even if a regulated entity has shared this information with NIST?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I thank Senator JOHNSON for his interest and support for this legislation and for his shared interest in strengthening cyber security. I also thank my colleague from South Dakota for drawing attention to the potential impact of this provision on financial regulatory authorities under the Banking Committee's jurisdiction, including those of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the prudential regulators. I would like to assure the Senator that the consensus-based voluntary process for developing cyber security standards established in Title I of this bill is not intended to alter or limit financial regulatory agencies' regulatory authority in any way. Title I, particularly new section (e)(2) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act, encourages private entities to participate in NIST's standards development process, but is in no way a ''safe harbor'' for participants who are subject to the jurisdiction of financial regulatory agencies. An entity that participates in the standards development process established in Title I is still fully subject to the regulations, supervision, and other requirements of its financial regulatory agency. Sharing information with NIST as part of the process established in Title I is not a valid basis for withholding information from a regulator, including information about cyber threats.

NIST is the Federal government's premier science and standards agency. It is not a regulatory agency, nor is it a national or homeland security agency. NIST's unique role is to bring together knowledgeable players from government and industry and to build consensus around common technical standards. NIST has no authority to require any private entity to follow standards it develops. The cybersecurity standards development process established in Title I is therefore not a rulemaking process. It in no way imposes new or duplicative regulations on entities that are subject to the authority of financial regulatory agencies, and it in no way disturbs or diminishes agencies' authority to exercise their important oversight duties.

It is not intended to prohibit an agency from taking a regulatory action, such as an action to require an individual entity to protect against future cyber threats, if the agency independently obtains such information pursuant to other statutory or regulatory authority—even if an entity has shared this information with NIST. Nothing in this bill is intended to modify, limit, or otherwise affect the authority of the federal financial regulators under any other provision of law.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. I thank the Senator from West Virginia for his work on this important matter and for working with me to clarify the scope of this bill.

Mr. KING. I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to, the Rockefeller-Thune substitute be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 4097) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The bill (S. 1353), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

TOM COBURN

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to make some remarks about Senator COBURN.

TOM COBURN is one of the more remarkable Senators who have served in this body—certainly since I have been here. He is a man with absolute courage, conviction, and dedication to make this country better. He didn't come here to go through the job and go through the motions; he came here to invest his great skills and his great intellectual ability and to pour his drive and effort into making America a better place. It is very special. It is unusual. I have not seen anything like it, as I said, since I have been here.

I always had great reluctance to disagree or oppose anything Tom offered. They were not always perfect, but basically I opposed them so seldom because I agreed with him time and time again. I always hated to vote no because I knew he had studied the issue, understood it, and was doing what he believed was right.

His whole philosophy and approach to government, had it been more effectively followed by other Members of this body, would have led us to a better country. To support what he said, I think in a way, was supporting high ideals for America.

I want to say I am going to miss him. People have no idea how many times he has stopped or altered bad legislation to make it better and less problematic and more principled. He believes that ours is a constitutionally limited government. He didn't just believe that, he acted on it and has acted on it consistently.

I understand, and I have no doubt of this—we don't need to run a test—but I understand and have no doubt that he has offered more amendments since I have been in the Senate than any other Senator. They have been amendments to stop waste, fraud, and abuse, to make the government more efficient, leaner, to consolidate multiple programs that should be consolidated for efficiency.

He has worked across the aisle on a host of issues. He has sought bipartisan support for matters that are small and large. It is remarkable. I have to say that we are going to lose someone who is of great value. He would easily have been reelected had he run again.

I remember him saying one time—and this is his philosophy—if you want to be reelected, don't worry about being reelected, just do the right thing, and you won't have any difficulties. He never had any difficulties in his election, because people trusted him. They

knew every day, night and day, long hours, whatever, he was working to advance the common interest of our country. They trusted that he was not seduced, bought out, compromised by the powers that be in Washington, DC, and he remained true to those who sent him here.

I would say this: Part of the strength he has—as a matter of fact, maybe the greatest part of his strength he has is his faith. He is intelligent, sophisticated, knowledgeable, a scientist, a doctor, but a man of simple Christian faith which impacts his life as much as anybody in this body. He understands the true meaning of life, and he gives himself to others in a most remarkable way.

Thank you and colleagues for the opportunity for me to share these remarks. We are going to miss our friend TOM COBURN, who is going to object to those bills that require a lot of effort to make them better or stop some that are so bad they cannot be passed. A lot of us are going to have to pick up the slack.

Maybe TOM would say, ''What are you doing down here, JEFF, wasting time talking about me when you ought to be studying this bill and finding some of the bogus spending that is in it? You should be spending your time fixing it.''

But every now and then I think we should stop and recognize an extraordinary life and an extraordinary Senator.

I wanted to share these remarks.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLAY HUNT SAV ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, Mr. Clay Hunt is a marine veteran who committed suicide in March of 2011 at the age of 28. Clay enlisted in the Marine Corps in May of 2005 and deployed to the Al Anbar Province near Fallujah in January of 2007. He was shot in the wrist by a sniper's bullet that barely missed his head, and it earned him the Purple Heart.

Clay recuperated at Twentynine Palms, CA, and then graduated from Marine Corps scout sniper school in March of 2008, and he was redeployed in southern Afghanistan a few weeks later. His unit returned to the United States in late October 2008 and he was honorably discharged from the marines in April 2009.

After he returned home, Clay suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD. He struggled for many years and he struggled with inadequate care from his local VA hospital before taking his own life.

The Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act passed the House of Representatives a little while ago this week. I believe this is an important piece of legislation. I serve on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and we had testimony related to suicide prevention, suicide among our veterans, a few weeks back, and it is so clear in Kansas and across the country that many veterans and their families deserve something much more than we are able to provide—than we are providing now—and this legislation which will help in that regard deserves swift passage by the U.S. Senate.

This bill, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act, would be instrumental in developing a VA system capable of offering first-class, first-rate mental health care services as well as utilizing the expertise of outside organizations to provide support for those struggling with the invisible wounds of service.

The legislation would require third parties to conduct an annual evaluation of suicide prevention programs within the Department of Veterans Affairs and within the Department of Defense. It would also provide for a new Web site that would offer veterans information regarding available mental health care services, and it would create a joint pilot loan repayment program for VA psychiatrists. There is a tremendous shortage of VA professionals that this would help alleviate, and it will improve the exchange of training, best practices, and other resources among the VA veterans service organizations and not-for-profit mental health organizations to enhance the cooperation of their efforts in suicide prevention.

During that Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing on November 19, last month, we were honored to hear Clay's story from his mom, Susan Selke. Susan shared her son's story of reliving the traumatic experiences of war and his disappointment when the VA failed to offer him the care he needed to treat his stress disorder.

In fact, it was one of the most compelling—again, I have served on the Veterans' Affairs Committee since I came to Congress, and this mother's testimony was one of the most important pieces of information I have heard from a witness during the committee hearing. What she indicated was that in her belief—and she indicated that she believed her son thought this as well—that it was the VA bureaucracy, the inability, the unwillingness, the falling through the cracks, the culture that we have heard described in the Department of Veterans Affairs that was the straw that broke the camel's back and that caused her son to commit suicide.

We have ranted, we have raved, we highlighted, we pointed out, we have discussed the VA and its problems, its bureaucracy, its culture, its failure of leadership, its service to the VA as compared to its service to veterans many times over many years. We often bemoan bureaucracy among all Federal agencies, but it is especially important at the Department of Veterans Affairs, because while it is easy to talk about the bureaucracy, the paperwork, the shuffling, the falling through the cracks, this mother's testimony about the death of her son indicated that it is not just about bureaucracy, it is not just about paperwork, it is not just about a culture. Those circumstances contributed to the death of a human being. In this case it contributed to the death of one who served our country nobly.

So we can bemoan the bureaucracy, but we need to remember that it is that circumstance that causes the loss of life. Suicide is something that needs to be addressed. We need to have a concerted effort, and legislation that is now pending before the Senate that needs to be passed before this Senate concludes is one step we can take to make certain there are less circumstances in which a soldier or a veteran commits suicide.

I cannot imagine the heartache, the difficulty, the challenge, that comes from a mom who comes to DC to testify about the suicide death of her son. I don't know how to put myself in that position, but I know it has to be a tremendously difficult, traumatic experience. The reason she must do that is because she wants to make certain that other sons of other parents of other mothers have a different experience than the one she, her family, and her son, experienced.

It is clear we have a problem. It is critical that the VA follow through on its commitment and its responsibilities to our Nation's veterans. It is critical that they must follow through to those veterans who are just returning home, those who have been home a long time, and to their families who need to have the love and support and care of the VA and the American people. We have to keep working to find solutions to the issues of mental health our service men and women and veterans now face, and we must hold the VA accountable for their responsibilities when it comes to providing for the needs of those veterans. And that care and treatment must be provided in a timely, high quality, and in a specialized way that meets the needs of each individual veteran and their family.

My presence on the Senate floor this evening is to highlight the importance of the message of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act, to pay honor and tribute to Clay Hunt and to his family, and to the hundreds of individuals and families across the country who have faced similar circumstances, and call us to the point that we recognize that steps taken today can make certain there are no more Clay Hunts, no more mothers who face the circumstance of the loss of their son, and that America lives up to its commitment to those we have called to duty.

I urge my colleagues to make certain that this legislation passes the U.S. Senate before we recess for this holiday period.

Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO DEPARTING SENATORS

JAY ROCKEFELLER

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to share a few remarks as we mark the end of the long tenure of Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER and his service to his country and to the Senate. He has served in the Senate for 30 years. He served two terms as Governor of West Virginia, and served as Secretary of State, and in the House of Delegates.

He came to the State of West Virginia as a young VISTA volunteer. I have heard him tell the story about that, how he really wanted to participate and reach out and help others. He came to West Virginia as a young man and stayed. He worked with people in a small mining community. His heart was right to try to be helpful. He came from a prestigious family, but he wanted to help others.

He has been a remarkable Member of the Senate for now 30 years. He has a brilliant mind, capable of grasping all sorts of thoughts, but he also has the ability to delight in little things. One of those is sports. He has a tremendous capacity to have in that brain of his sports trivia. He likes the Atlanta Braves. He knows Southeastern Conference football. I have been pleased to be able to chat with him on occasion on the floor.

It just goes to show a lot of times people don't realize that we get along pretty well in this body personally. We may disagree on issues, but we care about one another. JAY ROCKEFELLER has always been nice to me. He has always been a friend. He has always been courteous. He has always been collegial to me, and I have appreciated that over the years. So I wish to thank him for his service to his country, his commitment to others, and I wish him Godspeed in his further endeavors.

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

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

SAXBY CHAMBLISS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to share a few thoughts about the service in the Senate of our good friend and colleague SAXBY CHAMBLISS.

SAXBY is one of the best liked and most respected Senators in this body. Every Member knows him. Every Member likes him. Every Member respects him. I truly share that view. And on matters particularly related to national security, intelligence issues, and terrorism, I consistently want to know what SAXBY has to say about it.

He has done a whole lot of things in this Senate. He has been a participant and a contributor on many issues. He worked really hard to try to create a bipartisan solution to our debt crisis. That didn't quite develop, but it was a positive part of the discussion this Senate went through.

What I really want to say is that as Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and having been a longtime Member of the House Intelligence Committee, and here in the Senate, he has become the go-to person with regard to the sensitive issues relating to the security of our country. I consistently have looked to him because I trust his judgment, trust his integrity, and trust his wisdom to help sort through all the political news articles and debates and hot issues, and to distill down to the bottom of what is important, what we should be focused on, and what the right thing is for America.

Truly, he has been a remarkable Senator. We are going to miss SAXBY. I am going to miss SAXBY, as so many of us will. He is the son of an Episcopalian minister. He is a man of faith.

He has a delightful wife, Julianne. My wife is a good judge of character and she thinks Julianne hung the Moon, and that is so true. They are a great family and great partners.

SAXBY has given so much to the Senate. Georgia has produced some great Senators, particularly Senators known for their commitment to national security and the defense of America: Richard Russell, for whom the Russell Senate Office Building is named; Sam Nunn, who was so long a leader in the Congress with regard to national defense.

SAXBY CHAMBLISS is in that category. That is the kind of Senator he has been—from defending America to helping his colleagues sift through difficult issues and make good, wise decisions. It has been a great pleasure for me to serve with him. I wish him every success in his future endeavors and look forward to seeing him back in this area many times.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MARK BEGICH

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would also just say that we will be losing a good friend, MARK BEGICH. MARK and I served on the Armed Services Committee together for a number of years. We were very active. I was Ranking Member and he was Chairman of the Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, dealing with missile defense, which Alaska was deeply involved with as a state.

MARK was an expert on those issues. We dealt with nuclear issues and outer space and satellite issues. That was a particularly good time together. I believe every committee—every decision we reached—was a bipartisan decision that came out of committee. We supported the Subcommittee report that was made a part of the Armed Services bill and then became law. For the most part I think not too many changes were made in it.

I think a lot of people may not appreciate that Senators do get along. We do work together on issues important to the country, such as space and military space necessities that are so valuable to our men and women as they are in harm's way, to be able to produce a missile defense system that ensures that this country is not vulnerable to attack by a missile from an adversary.

That system is up, standing, and operating today. It was great to work with MARK in establishing it. He is a delightful person to work with, always with a positive attitude. I know he will be successful in whatever future endeavors he undertakes. He was mayor of Anchorage. Anybody who has been a mayor has learned some things and has had to deal with constituents face-to-face. He loved actually meeting his constituents and talking with them.

I wish MARK every success in his future endeavors and would like to express my appreciation to him for the courtesies he has shown me and the effort we made together to improve the defense of the United States.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HOURS OF SERVICE REGULATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, at this time of year, Thanksgiving and the holidays that are upcoming, a lot of Americans are on our roads. A lot of us know that Americans are on the roads because my colleagues and I travel using the highways of our States so frequently.

We know as parents, as family members, that in the back of our minds when a son or daughter is driving, there is a tiny bit of apprehension and anxiety about safety. It is safety not only concerning people on our roads but also on our railways. As a member of the commerce committee, where the Presiding Officer served, I know he has young children and he probably has the same apprehensions and anxieties that

all of us share when our family members are driving, particularly late at night, early in the morning, hours when weariness, fatigue, and tiredness are one of the main enemies—particularly when the weather is bad.

The omnibus funding measure, soon to be under debate, has many good provisions, but it also has a provision that is antithetical and deeply destructive to the principle of road safety because it affects truck drivers who are on the roads for long periods of time. I am referring to section 133 of division K, one paragraph. I am here to talk about it, to ask that my colleagues oppose it. If there is any way to strip it from the bill, I urge that it be done. It is a provision that is virtually incomprehensible to the average American on the roads or in their homes as to what it means and what its ramifications are and what its consequences may be to their safety and the safety of others in their families on the road.

The fact is that nearly 4,000 people who are killed each year in truck crashes and the nearly 100,000 each year who are injured show the toll of fatigue and weariness of our truck drivers.

According to NHTSA, truck crash injuries in fact increased by 40 percent between 2009 to 2012. We all have seen the consequences of fatigue on the roads when we drive—the truck driver who may pull his rig in front of us or slide over into our side of the road, not because he is not well trained, experienced, able. In fact, the vast majority of truck drivers are experienced and able and well trained and extraordinarily prudent in the way they drive.

But fatigue is an enemy to them as it is to all of us who drive. Many of the headlines we have seen recently have concerned hours of service regulations governing truck drivers, as many truck crashes involve tired truck drivers. There are rules that have been enacted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, rules that have been implemented to curb the number of fatigued truck drivers on our roads, implemented after years of rulemaking and analysis and study and even litigation. They are fact-based rules. They are supported by science. They are rules that move American roads and drivers in the right direction, truly, literally on the right path.

I am not the only one who supports these rules. They are supported by the Secretary of Transportation. Secretary Foxx is to be commended for his steadfast, strong, courageous defense of these rules. His integrity and intellect in support of these rules I greatly appreciate. But he is not alone any more than I am alone. The folks who are most adamant and passionate about it are the truck drivers themselves.

The Teamsters and the United Transportation Union, they have inspired me to be as passionate and steadfast as I am on these rules. They are not alone either. Law enforcement, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Troopers Coalition, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance, and the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association all support these rules.

They are also supported by consumer and public health groups and safety groups such as Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways, the Consumer Federation of America, the American Public Health Association, the John Lindsay Foundation, the Truck Safety Coalition, KidsAndCars.org, the Trauma Foundation, and Public Citizen. These are the preeminent public and safety consumer advocacy groups in this country. They all support these rules.

Tragically and unfortunately, there are organizations representing victims such as Parents Against Tired Truckers and Roadsafe America which also have been inspired to support these rules. I say tragically and unfortunately, because none of us welcome the fact that there are victims of crashes resulting from tired truckers. Most regretful are the truckers themselves, which is why they are supporting these rules. But the families and loved ones of victims of these crashes support the rules, and even many trucking companies like those represented by the Trucking Alliance support these rules.

The fact is there is good reason for the rules and there is good reason to strip the bill of a provision that negates, in effect, undercuts, and eviscerates these rules, section 133 of Division K. There is good reason. The 2005 study conducted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration demonstrated that before the current rules were implemented, 65 percent of drivers reported feeling drowsy while driving and 48 percent admitted to falling asleep while driving at some point the previous year.

But under the current rules, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration says that it will save 19 lives, prevent about 1,400 crashes, 560 injuries each year, see an estimated $280 million in savings from fewer large truck crashes, and see $470 million in savings from improved driver health.

These are dry, abstract statistics, but they measure compelling losses in human lives and in dollars.

Unfortunately, the folks who want to stop these rules have found a home in the omnibus appropriations bill that may be coming over from the House later today. In addition, while the rules are blocked, the language in the House bill would also require that this issue be studied further.

The rules have been studied a lot. If there is a need for further study, fine. I am completely on board with study and factfinding. But in the meantime, let's keep the rules as they are, as prescribed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. They are in the business of safety. They have said these rules are necessary. Let's keep the rules implemented, but we can study them. If we are going to make any changes, it should be done with proper analysis and debate—not in a spending bill. It ought to be in the committee with jurisdiction, the commerce committee, where I serve.

That is why in late July my subcommittee held a hearing on truck safety and this issue featured prominently. We gave everyone a chance to testify, to debate all points of view. Until then, the only discussion was in the context of appropriations and spending bills, not in the context of real policy.

The hearing I held highlighted some real issues. First, with these changes, drivers will be able to drive nearly 80 hours a week. In other words, if this provision is adopted, if the rules are rolled back, drivers will be able to drive nearly 80 hours a week and hundreds more a year.

It is more likely that trucking companies will push their drivers to drive the maximum limit, which is about twice the average American workweek. That is exactly what the rules are designed to prevent, truck drivers being forced to work too many hours, getting exhausted, and then endangering themselves and other drivers on the road.

All we are trying to do with the rules is take tired truckers off the roads—not tell them when they must sleep or what they must do while they are off the roads. It is about taking tired trucker drivers off the road. The changes in the omnibus would enable drivers to drive nearly 80 hours a week and hundreds more hours a year and would really impede truck drivers' resting, which they should be doing instead of driving more.

The rules implemented by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration were the result of compromise. To roll them back further undermines that compromise. If anything, we ought to be instituting greater safeguards.

If there is factfinding that justifies stronger precaution and protection, we welcome that study. But in the meantime, allow the rules to work and protect drivers, truck drivers and other drivers on the road. Americans are in favor of these rules. They are in favor of truck safety.

Polling data released in October shows why so many Americans are concerned about allowing drivers to be on the roads while they are fatigued. Americans simply don't want these large trucks, which in many respects operate like missiles zooming down the road. A missile out of control can do huge, humongous, enduring damage to life and limb and to the futures of people whose lives may be transformed by a fatal or serious crash.

Let's make sure we have a real conversation about this issue in the commerce committee. Let's make sure we do the factfinding and have the rules in place while that factfinding takes place. Let's make sure that Americans are protected against weary and tired

truckdrivers. Let's give them the same attention and care as we would want for our families during this season, on the roads, while they are driving late at night, maybe in bad weather, because there are going to be storms as there are, inevitably, in December, January, and February.

But every day, every season, these rules deserve to be in place. That is why this provision, which would roll back those rules—making changes endangering the lives of ordinary Americans on the road—is so antithetical to safety and such an anathema to the values of saving and preserving life and increasing the safety of our drivers on the road.

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

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CLAY HUNT SAV ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I wish to inform my colleagues, although the hour is late, that the Clay Hunt bill, H.R. 5059, has been cleared on the Democratic side and I hope we will have unanimous consent to move it tomorrow in the session that we have on Friday.

This bill is of tremendous importance to not only me as a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and my colleagues—many of them including, I believe, Senator MCCAIN, who introduced an updated and improved version of the Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, but also to the families who have been affected, I want to say in particular to Susan Selke, who testified before the Veterans' Affairs Committee—and I was there for her testimony, speaking on behalf of herself and her husband, Richard, as the mother of Clay Hunt, a marine combat victim who died by suicide in March of 2011 at the age of 28.

I am not going to speak at length about the reasons of why we need more assistance and support to prevent more wonderful young men and women like Clay Hunt, who served and sacrificed for our Nation, the kind of resources and support that are necessary to prevent them from becoming victims at this time of tragic circumstances.

We owe it to Susan Selke, Clay Hunt's mom, and all the families who lose loved ones to suicide, to do better, to do more, and do it now.

The reforms and programs directed by this legislation hopefully will enable the VA to better serve and treat veterans suffering from the hidden or invisible injuries of war, and the mental health and other conditions that ought to be addressed to save young men and women such as Clay Hunt.

I will seek to move this bill tomorrow by unanimous consent, and I hope my colleagues will enable me to do so.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the bill we are on—the National Defense Authorization Act—by taking a look at the condition of the world today. This is an important time to do it, as we enter the end of this year and begin to look forward to the new year. We should take a moment to take a snapshot of the world and the threats that exist around us and the complexities in the world because I think they are directly on point as to what our military capabilities are going to need to be in the 21st century.

I note that the tendencies have often been on a number of occasions, even in my lifetime, where we have tried to take, for lack of a better term, what is known as a peace dividend—the end of the Cold War, for example, and then again after the events of 9/11—it is the idea that somehow the threats around the world and the challenges we face have somehow ebbed and it is time to nation build at home. I am always in favor of nation building at home. The problem is that today, now, in the 21st century more than ever, there is no such thing as a remote problem. There is no such thing as any issue that is of major importance abroad that doesn't somehow impact us here at home. This has always been true, but it has never been more true than it is today because of the global nature of our economy.

As we look around the world—and I want to take a brief moment to go over some of the parts of the world—we start to see what the need for American leadership is and the need for a strong national defense capability on the part of the United States and how important it is in this new global economy.

Let's begin by looking at the Middle East, the most troubled region of the world, and that has been true for a very long time. We begin by talking about the negotiations that are going on with Iran. Look, I would hope—we all do, I think—to wake up one day to the news that Iran has decided to walk away from sponsoring terrorism, that Iran has walked away from its desire to blow up Israel, that Iran has rejected the human rights violations it commits against its own people, and that they have abandoned their nuclear ambitions. We would all love to see that happen. That is the ideal outcome. It is also, frankly, the least likely.

The truth is, while we shouldn't root against the negotiations that are going on with Iran, we shouldn't be naive enough to believe they have a serious chance at success, and I say this for a couple of very different but simple reasons.

The first is because I think Iran looks at what has happened with North Korea—a country that barely has an economy; it is not even a country in the sense we think of, having a government. It is really an area of land run by a criminal syndicate. Iran has seen how North Korea, because it has a nuclear weapon, has been able to be immune to international pressures, up to a certain point. Then Iran looks to Libya and it looks to Iraq and it says: Look what happens to people who don't have nuclear weapons. So I am convinced the Supreme Leader wants that nuclear capability. Whether he will ever actually build the weapon—it may not be something they have decided yet, but the ability to build that weapon—I have no doubt that is what they want.

I have no doubt—and I believe the administration knows this to be true—that they have gone into these negotiations with a very clear objective; that is, we want you, negotiator, to get rid of as many sanctions as possible without agreeing to any irreversible concessions.

It is an interesting plan because their idea is to get rid of the sanctions, thinking they will do what they need to do in the short term—whatever that may be, as long as they are not irreversible—and at some point in the future they will restart the weapons program. It is going to be easier for Iran to restart the weapons program than it is going to be for the United States and the nations of the world to reimpose sanctions. So I think they have figured that out, and that is what their mandate has been. But even that has its limits because when we look to these negotiators—and there is a history of this, when we look to these negotiators—there have been times in the past when Iranian negotiators might have agreed to something at the table, but then they have to come back and pull the offer because when they take it to the Supreme Leader, he says no.

We have to understand that the Supreme Leader is an isolated individual. This is not a person who travels the world or interacts with other national leaders of other nations. This is a person who is an ideologue, a religious fanatic. And I don't care what the negotiators agree to or what the President of Iran agrees to, ultimately it is the Supreme Leader's decision. I hate to say this, but they are not going to agree to any sort of deal that is good for the national security of the United States. I believe that to be true, and we need to be prepared for that.

I hope one of the first items we take up in this Chamber in the new year, in the new Congress, will be a bill to require congressional authorization for any deal, and I think we should also consider putting in place sanctions for the day when that deal fails.

In the meantime, as we talk about those negotiations that are going on—and Iran has already acquired a concession on the part of the West that they

can leave in place some level of the infrastructure they need to enrich uranium and reprocess plutonium—they are still expanding their missile capability, they are still sponsoring terrorism all over the world, they are still deeply embedded and aligned with Shia militias in Iraq who pose a danger to the United States—and I will touch more upon that in a moment—and they still have plans to one day destroy Israel. So we should not be naive about the situation with Iran, and I hope in the new year more clarity will come to that.

The second issue that directly touches upon our national security is the conflict between Iraq and Syria with regard to ISIL and the speed by which they have spread throughout two countries. Their goals are very simple. The goal of ISIL is to establish an Islamic caliphate that stretches from Europe—literally from Spain all the way through the Middle East, into India and Afghanistan, and in through north Africa. That is their very clear goal. They have said so. That is their plan, and it began in Syria, and it is spreading to Iraq. They made some pretty impressive gains before they started getting hit from the air. But even with that, they are the best funded and the best armed terrorist organization in modern history.

We already are beginning to see the spread of ISIL. One place to keep an eye on is Libya. They control an entire province in Libya. An affiliate of theirs, a group who has pledged allegiance to them, now controls an entire province in Libya, and here is what is dangerous about that. For a group such as this to prosper and grow, they need an ungoverned space. They need a piece of territory where no one is shooting at them, where no one is protesting their presence and they have no one to fight against them. That is why al Qaeda was able to grow so fast in Afghanistan—because the Taliban gave them that ungoverned space. That is why ISIL was able to grow so quickly out of Syria and into Iraq—because they were able to carve out an ungoverned space where the Syrian Government wasn't.

In Libya they have no one to fight. There is no functional government right now. There are no rival rebel groups to shoot at them. And they are going to use that ungoverned space to grow their capability. In fact, it would not surprise me, unfortunately, if in a few months, maybe a year, the hub of ISIL's activities is located largely in that province of Libya and beyond.

By the way, ISIL's presence isn't just a threat to Iraq and Syria; their immediate threat as well is to the Kingdom of Jordan, a critical U.S. ally. And if they are a threat to Jordan, they are a threat to Israel and, ultimately, to Saudi Arabia. They are a threat to Turkey already. They are a threat to Lebanon, and, as I said, they are present in north Africa as we speak. This is a very dangerous development, and it must be dealt with seriously.

We also can't anticipate the alliances that ISIL might make. We have to understand what is happening. As they make these gains—or supposed gains—they have also become very good at propaganda. They are convincing young, radicalized individuals—including here in the United States—that they are the preeminent jihadist group on the planet, that they are the most successful jihadist group on the planet, that they will inevitably succeed, and that they are an unsurmountable force. They are convincing people to abandon other groups and join them. They are convincing donors to stop giving money to other groups and give to them. We don't know what this is going to develop into, but we can foresee in the very near future where other groups begin to align themselves with them just to remain relevant.

By the way, as a side note, there is an additional danger to ISIL's spread, and that is that the other jihadist groups in the world, who are now losing donors and losing recruits, are now feeling an urgency to go out and carry out some spectacular attack, such as here in the homeland against American interests or air travel somewhere. They now have an interest in carrying out a spectacular attack because they need to do something to reattract donors and reattract members.

But back to my original point. The danger is that these new groups, in order to remain relevant and not lose their fighters, may decide they are going to pledge their allegiance to ISIL. The host of groups already exploring that are dangerous—the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Taliban in Pakistan, the Haqqani Network that is in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, and there are other groups in north Africa as well that at least nominally have pledged some level of allegiance and support for what ISIL is doing. We need to keep an eye on this threat because a year ago, if I had stood on this floor and said we need to take ISIL seriously, no one would have known what I was talking about. That is how quickly this threat has spread, and we have no idea what it can morph into in the next few years, not to mention the next few months.

There is one additional point I wish to make. The city of Mosul has a university with a significant research capability, and one thing for us to be very cautious about is that ISIL is not using that university and its research capabilities to develop rockets or, God forbid, chemical weapons or even a dirty bomb. That is something to keep an eye on in the months and weeks to come. That is another example of the complex national security threats our Nation faces.

Our ally Israel—their struggles and their challenges are well documented. It begins with Iran. We have talked about the fact that single greatest threat facing Israel today is the prospect of a nuclear Iran and what it would mean to Israel's security in the long term. They face a very difficult challenge with the Palestinian Authority.

There was a poll I read about this morning that talked about a large majority of people—Palestinians—who believe it is morally right to kill Israelis, to kill Jews. I am not saying that I believe all Palestinians think that, but it bears noting what that poll found. It should not surprise us when the educational institutions of the Palestinian Authority—not to mention what is being taught in Gaza—teaches people that not only is it right, it is heroic to kill Jews and to be an anti-Semite.

Then they are being pressured, including by this administration—Israel is—to enter into a peace agreement with these individuals, with those so-called leaders. How can you enter into a peace agreement with people who want to destroy you? How could you possibly enter into a peace agreement with an organization that wants to eradicate you? What are you going to negotiate—the terms of your destruction?

I don't know of any nation on Earth that wants peace more than Israel does. What do they have to gain from this constant conflict? How can you have peace with an organization, with a group that is committed to their destruction?

Instead of saying: Israel, your No. 1 problem right now is—we know what it is—the threat of an Iranian nuclear weapon, this administration and some political leaders even in this Chamber believe we should be pressuring them that their No. 1 objective should be entering into some sort of peace agreement with an organization that wants to destroy them, that in some quarters won't even recognize their right to exist, an organization that harbors individuals who deny that Jews were ever present on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which is absurd. Of course, I would just encourage them to do a little archeological research to confirm the longstanding Jewish presence in the region.

Suffice it to say that Israel is our strongest ally in the region. It is everything we wish the Middle East was—a prosperous, free enterprise economy, a stable democracy with a vibrant political process, and a loyal friend to the United States in international forums. I wish there were more countries in the world like that. We should do everything we can to support Israel and stop putting pressure on them because every time we put pressure on them on these things, we create daylight between the United States and Israel, we imperil their security, and we encourage their enemies to become even more aggressive.

The last point I will make about Israel: Let there be no doubt that there is a global effort to delegitimize their right to exist as a Jewish state. It has infiltrated throughout Europe, and we are starting to see it rear its ugly head in academia here in the United States.

We should not let that stand. We should speak out against it and condemn it for what it is.

As if the Middle East were not complicated enough, we turn our focus to Europe and the threat Russia now poses. Interestingly enough, a year and a half ago, Mitt Romney, the former Governor of Massachusetts, the Republican Presidential nominee, said that Russia was our most serious geopolitical threat in the short term. He was universally mocked by elitists and the press, even by some here in Washington—many here in Washington. It turns out he was right, as were many of us who were saying the same thing.

The truth is that Vladimir Putin many years ago concluded that the United States was a threat to Russia, many years ago concluded that he wanted Russia to be reestablished as a world power and that the only way he could achieve that was by confronting the United States and being seen as a counterbalance to the United States on the global stage, and we see that in place after place. In international forums, when it comes to Syria, on issue after issue Russia is against us because Putin believes it gives them relevancy on the global stage.

But there is a second issue and do not take this lightly. We don't spend all day obsessed about Russia. We don't spend all night thinking the Russians are going to invade us. But they do. There are leaders in the Russian Government who believe the United States wants to get into a military conflict with them, and they increasingly believe that now more than ever. We can see it in the military moves they are making. These are not just provocations. This is an all-out change to their defense posturing, to their defense theory, a defense theory that is increasingly looking like a Cold War one, a defense theory that is increasingly looking like they need to have the ability to prevent a U.S. first strike or to somehow be able to react to a U.S. first strike.

I know for us it sounds absurd that the United States would ever launch a nuclear attack against Russia. But there are Russian leaders at very high levels that believe that is plausible, and we are seeing it rear its head in every part of the world. Not a day goes by that there is not a report of a Russian intrusion here or a submarine appearing somewhere or an airplane—Russian bombers that have been intercepted by NATO or even the United States. These are not just provocations. They are muscle flexing.

This is a change in their defense theory, and it is a very dangerous change, not to mention the fact that I believe evidence now exists that Russia is in violation of multiple treaties they have signed with the United States, and there needs to be consequences for that.

Then, of course, as part of that strategy they believe they need strategic depth, which means they need all the countries that border them, especially the former Soviet Republics, to be in their camp. They don't want anyone near them turning toward the West. The best example of that is what is happening in Ukraine.

What is happening in Ukraine is easy to understand. As Ukraine turned westward, Russia said that was unacceptable; they invaded Crimea and took it, and they are now engaged openly in a conflict with Ukraine that is, by the way, an outrageous one.

First of all, Russian troops have entered Ukrainian territory. Maybe they were disguised as something else, but Russian troops have made incursions into Ukraine territory and carried out combat operations against the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

The Russians are supplying the Ukrainians with weapons and armored vehicles.

They will claim: No; these armored vehicles are armored vehicles we seized, and they are clever about the armored vehicles they supply them with. They are only supplying them with armored vehicles that look like the ones the Ukrainians already have in their current stockpiles. But they are arming, equipping, and training Ukrainian separatists, and their goal is to achieve one of two things:

Their first objective, plan A, is to force Ukraine, because of the pressure they are putting on them through these separatists, because of the economic levers they hold on a very fragile Ukrainian economy through energy and exports and so forth—their first objective is to force Ukraine into a federation system of government; basically, a system of government that gives those eastern provinces and areas more autonomy because that would keep the country sufficiently divided so it can never turn toward Europe and the West.

If that doesn't work, however, then plan B that they are perfectly comfortable with is to freeze the status quo, to basically freeze the current conflict as the status quo for the long term. After the next 15 or 20 years, there will be armed and trained separatists, supported by Russia, carrying out combat operations against the Ukrainian Government in the eastern parts of the country.

Plan A is the federation; plan B is to freeze the status of the current conflict. That is the reality we are facing.

What is interesting is here is what Russia is banking on. They are banking on the sanctions which have been imposed will not be sustained; that eventually, after a couple of years, Europe will say: OK. It is time to accept what has happened and move on and that sanctions will be lifted. In fact, that is what Putin is probably telling his inner circle and the people around him: Don't worry. We are going to get through this. These sanctions will eventually be lifted off of us, and everything will be back to normal.

But those sanctions are hurting right now. I would hope those sanctions don't fall apart. I would hope the European nations understand what a direct threat this poses to them if Russia could just invade a country and take it over. But time will tell.

I think a strong American leadership is critical. I think a reinvigoration of NATO is critical. That is why it is so important that we focus on our defense capability.

But that is Putin telling everyone around him: Don't worry about these sanctions. They are going to be gone in a while. We will get through this.

Interestingly, to give some insight into Putin, the inner circle around him, the elites who are closest to him, they are being shielded from the impact of these sanctions to a certain point. In fact, one of the people, Igor Sechin, who was specifically sanctioned by the sanctions that were passed here and in Europe—he actually convinced Putin to indict an energy rival of his, take his property and his assets, and give it to Igor Sechin as compensation. That is how cynical this has become.

So the elites that surround and are closest to Putin, they are being protected by the impact of the sanctions. Everybody else is paying a terrible price, not the least of which are the people.

I also think there is clear evidence that Putin is increasingly isolated in terms of whom he listens to, whom he takes advice from, and whom he consults with, and it is going to have a devastating impact on Russia. Next year their economy is predicted to contract. Yet despite this—just to give a true indication of where Russia is headed and to give insight as to where we should be headed—contraction of their economy, despite the collapse of oil prices which has been devastating to their economy, Putin just announced budget cuts throughout every part of their government except for one—the one part of the budget they are holding harmless—military spending. I hope that gives some insight as to where they are heading.

My last point on Russia is they are increasingly present in the Western Hemisphere. They are actively seeking lease agreements in Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba to be able to have naval assets and aircraft stationed in our own backyard, in the Western Hemisphere.

Let's talk about Asia for a moment, another place that poses some very significant national security and military implications for the United States.

I talked about North Korea earlier. I think it bears repeating. North Korea doesn't have a government. It is a nation or is a territory governed by a criminal syndicate run by an insane and erratic leader—but an insane and erratic leader with nuclear weapons, an insane and erratic leader who is developing long-range missile capabilities, and an insane and erratic leader that may end up overestimating his military capabilities, miscalculating, and

trigger a dispute with South Korea that could quickly escalate and implicate the United States, which has a very strong and important military and defense agreement arrangement with South Korea and our allies in the south. It bears watching.

Let's focus for a moment on China. First of all, we cannot ignore their aggressive territorial claims against both the Philippines and Japan. Interestingly, they picked on the Philippines first, a nation that doesn't have much of a military to speak of. This is the first nation they have gotten into a sort of conflict with, but they have them also with Japan and with Vietnam, and they have been pretty aggressive about it. To understand that, we have to understand a little bit about history.

For thousands of years, China was the dominant nation in that region. For them, the last 200 years is an aberration, and their increasing assertiveness is an indication that they believe it is time to go back to normal, which is their dominance of the region. Their dominance, by the way, doesn't mean they are going to invade these countries and take them over. They are not going to invade the Philippines. They are not going to invade Japan.

What they believe is that all these countries should be tributary stakes, that all these countries should fold underneath China's leadership, that all these countries should recognize China is big and they are small, and they should listen to China's directives and orders.

So we see the silk road initiative. We see them trying to come up with an alternative to the other global institutions that have served the world so well since the end of World War II. They want to displace the United States and the global order that existed since the end of World War II with their own order, run by China to China's advantages, and that begins with territorial claims.

The next time you have a chance to see in some Chinese passports, they have a map that indicates the nine-dash line. The nine-dash line is what they think the world looks like in terms of territories. If we look at what that means, they basically believe the entire South China Sea is their territory. That is why they have made these aggressive moves against these islands. Let me tell you how the strategy works.

They send fishermen to these areas to fish or others to exploit resources. The other countries send out their coast guard to defend it. They send out their coast guard or navy to push back. They basically show you: Even if you wanted to fight against us, there is nothing you can do about it.

Eventually what they want these nations to conclude is: There is no point in fighting China because we can't win. The United States is not going to come to our defense. So we might as well cut a deal with them and accept their dominance.

That is their plan, slowly but surely to change the facts on the ground, to assert themselves, to convince these other countries there is nothing they can do about it. They can't count on the United States anymore, and eventually these countries will say: Fine, China. We will do whatever you want and cave. That is their plan and they are carrying it out.

They have also shown their true colors in Hong Kong. When the agreement was signed to turn Hong Kong over from the United Kingdom to the Chinese, one of the things that was important in that agreement was autonomy; that Hong Kong couldn't have its own foreign policy, but it could have its own domestic system of government autonomous from the Chinese system.

But now things have changed. Now the Chinese basically want to have veto power over who can run for office and who can lead Hong Kong. In fact, the criteria they have established is: You have to love the nation. But I will translate what that means: You have to love the Chinese Communist Party and do what they want you to do. So this is an important development that we need to keep an eye on.

Beyond that, going back to military affairs for a moment—because we are on the NDAA—just look at what China is doing in its military expenditures: dramatic increases in military expenditures, the true nature of which we don't know because China doesn't pass a budget like ours for public knowledge. We know what they have spent, but we don't know how much more they have spent than what they have declared. But we can tell you they are developing anti-access/anti-area denial weapons, anti-access weapons. They have tested supersonic missiles fired off their ships designed to penetrate U.S. missile defense.

Here is why they develop these: They want us to know that if we were to somehow encroach upon these territories, if there was a conflict in Asia and the United States responded militarily, the Chinese can destroy one of our aircraft carriers. The Chinese could destroy one of our expensive naval capabilities. That is what they want to be able to prove to us. What they hope the calculation will be is that the United States goes: Look. If one day China invades Taiwan, there is nothing we can do about it because we are not going to lose two aircraft carriers over a conflict.

So that is why they are investing so much in these denial capabilities.

They are also investing in space warfare, the ability to blow up our satellites because they know how dependent American national security is on having technological advantage. So China is racing to militarize space. It is a very serious threat to keep an eye on.

A couple more points on the military. I will close by talking about the Western Hemisphere. The Western Hemisphere poses its own set of challenges as outlined earlier.

Let's start with Venezuela. We took up a bill this week on Venezuela. It was an important bill and I am glad we passed it. It is on the way to the President's desk. It sanctions human rights violations.

The Government of Venezuela is not an ally of the United States. They vote against this country in every international forum they can. They actively undermine U.S. national security interests. They are serial human rights violators at home, and we passed a bill that is going to sanction the human rights violators. The President has indicated he is going to sign it, and I think they are going to have a real impact.

But Venezuela is headed for catastrophe. This is a rich country, by the way, headed toward economic catastrophe. Basic goods such as toothpaste and toilet paper are unavailable in Venezuela. The Venezuelan economy today resembles the Cuban economy. By the way, there is no embargo against Venezuela. It just shows socialism doesn't work. They have run out of things to give away.

It is not a democracy. Venezuela is no longer a democracy. They have something called the National Electoral Commission, and they are actively, as we speak, trying to replace people not loyal to the government on that commission with people loyal to the governing party.

The second thing I predict you are going to see is that the current President of Venezuela, Maduro, is going to move up the elections to July or June of this year because he knows the longer this crisis goes on, the less and less popular the government party is going to be. So I predict that the Venezuelan elections are going to be moved up, but I also predict financial disaster.

In fact, here is a curious thing that we received calls about in the last few days. Venezuela is now begging the Petrocaribe nations, the Mercosur nations, and the Alba nations to buy Venezuelan products. In fact, they are going to the Petrocaribe nations and saying: Instead of paying us back in cash, you can pay us by buying our products.

There is going to be a financial disaster in Venezuela. The price of oil and its collapse is not helping them.

What I predict is not just financial disaster but severe depression, and I predict that in the year 2015 we are going to see severe human rights violations, severe repression on the part of the Maduro Government and everything that goes with it, all the impact that it is going to have on the region. It is something we need to be beginning to think about because that will lead to mass migration into Colombia and into the United States. That is going to lead to instability in the region that could potentially lead to armed conflict between the professional armed services of Venezuela and the Cuban agents who now for all intents and purposes run the Cuban Government.

Talking about Cuba—a nation I talk a lot about because my parents came from there—I live in a community of people who came from there and had to leave for a free economy.

Let me begin by saying that Alan Gross is still a hostage. Alan Gross committed no crime. He did nothing wrong. He is a hostage in a Cuban prison, a hostage the Cubans are holding because they want to exchange him for five Cuban spies convicted in the courts of the United States. Alan Gross is not a spy. All he wanted to do was help a small Jewish community in Cuba, and for that he was jailed. It is outrageous. It shows the true nature of this government.

We shouldn't be surprised. They still detain as a matter of course innocent people who disagree. Every Sunday they beat up and harass the Ladies in White, which is a group of mothers who have sons in jail or fathers who have been killed or husbands who have been killed or jailed, who every Sunday march and dress in white to protest the government, and every Sunday the government thugs come after them. It is shameful that the people know this and look the other way, but that is the reality that is happening every single day in Cuba. It is still going on. It is the most repressive government in the Western Hemisphere and one of the most repressive governments in the world.

They are also a violator of international agreements. We know for a fact that a ship going through the Panama Canal from Cuba to North Korea was carrying equipment and material in violation of the U.N. sanctions on North Korea. The U.N., which is not an easy place to get to condemn Cuba, found the exact same thing. And our response to that has been nothing—absolutely nothing. The Cuban Government assisted North Korea in evading U.N. sanctions, and we have done nothing about it.

On the contrary, we have people who are saying: Let's lift the embargo and normalize relations—which leads me to a point directly related to this, which is the nomination of Tony Blinken that is before this Senate. I would use every procedural method available to me to ensure that this Senate will have to take as long as possible to confirm him, and I will tell you why. On three separate occasions I asked Mr. Blinken: Is your government going to ignore U.S. law and unilaterally change policy toward Cuba? And he would not answer my question. So until I get a clear answer on that, I intend to hold his nomination as long as the rules allow me to.

I would like to make one more point about Cuba. In addition to being the ally to every tyrant on the planet—from Assad, to Iran, to Qadhafi before he fell and died—by the way, Cuba is the home of a significant number of Medicare fugitives, people who have come to the United States and stolen money from Medicare. That is a subject for another day, but Medicare fraud in South Florida is rampant. It is out of control. In fact, law enforcement officials in South Florida will tell you that if you are only willing to steal $200,000 a month, they will never catch you. An inordinate number of people are coming from Cuba, stealing from Medicare, and then when they are about to get caught, they go back to Cuba with all that money. There are numerous Medicare fugitives in Cuba. It is hard to believe that they came here and were able to mount such operations so quickly without assistance from somebody.

Now we see signals from the White House that we are going to invite Cuba—that we are open to them being invited to the Summit of the Americas—the Summit of the Americas is a forum for democracy, not for 20th-century relics such as the Cuban Government. And now there is talk of unilateral policy changes. I want us to change policy toward Cuba, but the first step that has to happen is from the Cuban Government. They have to change first.

Let me tell you what would happen if we lifted the embargo on Cuba tomorrow. What would happen is what is happening now with China. We passed a bill today out of Foreign Relations on the issue of Hong Kong, and I am getting phone calls in my office from American companies that do business in China that are saying: Hey, why don't you guys drop that? What they are really saying is: Hey, why don't you guys drop that? It is bad for the deal we have going with the Chinese.

That is the same thing that will happen. If we lift the embargo, American companies will become invested in whatever deal the regime gives them, and they will come to DC and lobby on behalf of the interests of that regime without any interest of the freedom and liberty of the Cuban people.

I will fight with all the marrow in my bones against any sort of unilateral change in U.S. policy toward Cuba.

From a military perspective, Cuba is not a benign country, although they don't have the military they once had. In fact, there have been open source reports that Cuba is looking to restart, with Russian cooperation, an intelligence-gathering station in the city of Lourdes in Cuba whose sole purpose is to collect intelligence against the United States, particularly Southern Command in South Florida. So as we look at the NDAA, that is something to keep in mind.

I would close with four points that we should think about as we get into the new year and we debate this bill on national security and national defense.

The first is this: We should stop confusing tactics with strategy. We had a debate today in the Foreign Relations Committee about authorizing the use of military force. Everyone wants to debate tactics: Should it be 3 years or 1 year? Should we have ground troops or no ground troops? Should we define the geography of where it is and where it isn't?

Tactics are not the same thing as strategy, and time and again around the world with many of these problems, this administration has not articulated a strategy. They are telling us what we are tactically doing. We are doing airstrikes, imposing sanctions. But they don't tell us what the strategy is. What is the strategy behind all these things? The strategy should be clear.

We are in favor of a world that is free and a world that is prosperous, where more people than ever live in a prosperous middle class so they can buy the things we sell and invent and innovate and make and the services we offer. We want there to be peace and prosperity throughout the world, and we believe the best system for that is an international order that respects human rights and democracy and freedom and the dignity of every individual. That is our overlying aim, and of course the security of the United States is deeply tied to all of this.

In each region of the world, we would have a strategy—a strategy that, because it is backed up by strong national defense, tells our partners in Asia that we are here for the long haul. And not only are we here to pivot to Asia, we have something to pivot with through our military capability that tells NATO: You still do have a purpose, and that purpose is to ensure the territorial integrity of the nations of Europe; a military strategy that tells our partners in the Middle East: We stand with you, and we will do what we need to do to defeat radical jihadists and prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon. So that is important.

The second thing is that we have to spend money on these things. The sequester cuts to the military are unsustainable. At a time when the world has gotten more complicated, where the threats that this Nation faces have gotten more complicated and more difficult to deal with than ever before, we are severely cutting back our military spending in an unsustainable way. In fact, no one believed that the budget cuts we are facing in the military now were realistic or sane, for that matter. That is why they put them in that bill I voted against—because they thought these budget cuts were so bad, they would force them to actually do something about the debt. They underestimated the willingness of this Congress to do bad things, because those cuts are here to stay, and we have the smallest Air Force and Navy at least since the end of World War II, while our potential adversaries are ramping up military spending and their military capabilities.

My third point is directly related to national defense and national security. We cannot continue to try to erode our intelligence-gathering capabilities. The threats we face around the world are real and they are significant. They are threats from nation states such as Russia and China. They are threats from rogue states such as Iran and North

Korea. They are threats from nonstate actors such as al Qaeda and ISIL. They are threats from transnational criminal groups who steal the personal data of Americans and who could potentially conduct other cyber attacks against our infrastructure.

These threats are real, and I hope the day will never come, but if it does and if another major attack occurs here in the homeland—perhaps one even worse than 9/11—the first question people are going to ask will be, Why didn't we know about it and why weren't we able to stop it? And the answer cannot be because we took apart our intelligence-gathering capabilities, because we took down our ability to identify these threats, and we took them down because of conspiracy theories, because we have people running around telling people that all their phone calls are being listened to, that all their cell phone calls are being tracked. That is false. That is categorically and patently false. That is not true. Yet we are prepared to dismantle our ability to acquire information that could prevent those sorts of attacks.

By the way, these are intelligence capabilities that also give us a strategic advantage over potential adversaries and intelligence-gathering abilities that also inform our diplomacy. Yet there are people advocating taking that apart. In fact, just today we had someone come to the floor of the Senate and divulge classified information on the floor of the Senate. Unprecedented, outrageous, irresponsible, and unacceptable.

Last but not least, we have to truly believe with all our hearts that the world is a safer and better place when America is the strongest military power in the world. No nation is perfect. Ours never has claimed to be. But I know of no nation that has used its power more benevolently than we have. It is Americans who have sent their sons and daughters abroad to fight for the freedom and liberty of other people. It is America that has gone abroad to fight against communism and radical Islam and nazism and Imperial Japan and other threats to human dignity and the survival of mankind, and we did so without taking a single inch of territory. We didn't turn Iraq into the 51st State. We didn't turn Afghanistan into a U.S. territory.

This is a nation that, after we defeated Japan and Germany in World War II, helped to rebuild those countries. Today they are among our strongest allies. This is the country that, even after a ceasefire in the Korean war, still stands so many years later on the frontlines of South Korea protecting her freedom and territorial integrity to a point where South Korea—a nation that just two decades ago was a beneficiary of global aid—is now a donor; a country that has gone from having an economy smaller than North Korea's to now having one of the top 10 economies in the world. This is the Nation that did that.

We are not perfect, but I challenge you to find another nation in human history that has used its military power for the good of mankind more than we have. The world knows that too. When you talk about national defense, it is not just about bombs and bullets.

Let me close with a story I picked up earlier this year when I traveled to Asia. I went to the Philippines, an area badly hit by the storm last year. This area was devastated. These people were already poor to begin with, and the typhoon made things even worse.

I got to speak to some of the people. I asked them: When did you finally know there was hope? Was it when the humanitarian aid groups showed up or when the U.N. got here? When was it that you finally thought that there is hope here?

A gentleman turned to me and said: Do you know when I knew there was actually some hope? When I woke up one morning and looked to the horizon and there was a U.S. aircraft carrier. That is when I started to believe that maybe we are going to make it, maybe things are going to be OK.

That aircraft carrier didn't stay long, but it stayed long enough to make a difference in those early days after that storm, and it stayed long enough to give people hope. It is the same aircraft carrier they saw off the coast of Haiti after the terrible earthquake. It is the same aircraft carrier they saw off the coast of Japan after they had a nuclear accident. That is also America's military power. That is also what we have done with our national defense capabilities.

We have not been perfect, but America has been a source for good in the world. No nation in the history of mankind has ever done more good for the planet and for the people of this Earth than we have, and we should be proud of that. Now is not the time to dismantle that capability. The world needs a strong America today and now more than it ever has.

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

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, we are going to pass, sometime tonight, before 12 o'clock, a resolution that will ensure that the government does not shut down. The House passed the omnibus. It was by a nice margin—not overwhelmingly, but a nice margin. As a result of that, we will take up the long-term spending bill tomorrow.

Senators who want to debate this legislation will have that opportunity. The Senate will vote on the long-term funding bill as soon as possible. In the Senate, ''as soon as possible'' could be tomorrow, it could be 2 days after cloture is filed on it, it could be a lot of different times.

But we are going to work as hard as we can to expedite things around here. But if we are going to do this tomorrow, we need cooperation from everyone. As I indicated, we had a number of things we had to do. We had to keep the government functioning. We are going to do that tonight. We are going to do a short-term extension, as I have indicated, until we finish this bill. I think the extension will be for 2 days. That means we have to finish this bill in the next 2 days.

We have to finish the defense bill that is now before the body. That time runs out tomorrow afternoon. No one can stop us from the time running out tomorrow afternoon. We hope to be able to expedite that. There are conversations going on now to make that so we can finish that sometime early tomorrow afternoon.

I want to take this time, though, to spread on the RECORD my admiration for the work done by Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, the chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. This good woman came to the Senate when I came. We came together. I was fortunate to be on that Appropriations Committee as a freshman. That was really a big deal for this young Senator. Seniority-wise, there was always one person ahead of me, and that was BARBARA MIKULSKI. She has done a remarkably good job as a Senator. I have said many times, when we came to the Senate together, she was it. There was no other woman here. Look at what she has done as the matriarch of this body. Everybody looks up to her—men and women. She is someone who is admired by everyone. Her taking over this Appropriations Committee was something she had wanted to do for a long time. She has done such a good job.

She is proud of the committee. She is trying to reestablish the committee to what it used to be. We as legislators have to recognize we have three separate branches of government. In terms of the Constitution they are supposed to be equal. We have had a lot of our power taken from us by the executive branch of government. BARBARA MIKULSKI is trying to reestablish that so we have three separate, equal branches of government.

What took place in the House today, a few minutes ago, will help her establish the Appropriations Committee for what it should be. We have an obligation as legislators to have congressionally directed spending. That is in the Constitution. All the decisions as to where the money goes should not be made down at 16th and Pennsylvania Avenue.

So the bill that she and Congressman ROGERS worked on is not a perfect bill. But as the Presiding Officer knows as a legislator, there are no perfect bills. There are some people who are upset about items in this bill. To be candid

with you, I am kind of upset about some items in the bill. But this bill is so much better than a short-term CR. It would have been—when I say ''short term'' I mean 3 months and do it all over and over again, threatening the government to shut down, especially about the same time we have to raise the debt ceiling again. So I want to end by saying this would never ever have happened but for BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Tomorrow should be a very interesting day. With a little bit of good fortune, we could complete the spending bill for the country for the fiscal year that is fast upon us. We could finish the defense bill and then look to do the tax extenders and completing the work on TRIA, whatever that may be.

From that point forward we would work on nominations. We could be out of here fairly quickly. But everyone is going to have to work together to get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL

Ms. MIKULSKI. I rise to speak on the omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2015.

I wish to thank the Democratic leader, the majority leader, for his kind words. But it is not only about his kind words about me, it has been his advocacy to make sure that as we look at the need for funding for the entire government that there would be no government shutdown and no government on autopilot.

Just a few minutes ago, the House of Representatives did their part. They passed the omnibus spending bill, passing it 219 to 206. It was well debated and the vote speaks for itself. It now comes to the Senate, and I am here tonight to kick off that debate.

For hours after hours after hours in the past several days, I have heard what is wrong with this bill. I don't dispute my colleagues' analysis, I will debate it, but now we have to start talking about what are the good aspects of this bill and why we did this bill in the first place. Tonight I want to remind people what we are doing.

First, we are funding the entire U.S. Government's discretionary spending. We have $550 billion in the bill for national defense, to stand for America, to make sure our troops have the best weapons, the best support, and the best medical treatment—$550 billion, for more money for peacekeeping, for money to fight ISIL, to refuel an aircraft carrier. We did our job. You will hear more about that.

We wanted to also fight Ebola, which had the American people near panic this summer. We said we have a plan, working with the administration, and some of the best scientists and thinkers in our own country, and brave and gallant people such as Doctors Without Borders over there. While they make the cover of Time magazine, they are now going to make the Federal checkbook in the United States of America.

We have $5.4 billion to deal with Ebola, a huge sum of money to fight it in Africa. It is also to make sure we are ready for any pandemic in the United States.

We also have a Samaritan set of money to deal—that is my word—with the Samaritan communities who were willing to take the Ebola patients, care for them, treat them, and make sure there was security for them and their surrounding communities. Millions of dollars were spent, whether it was in Nebraska, whether it was in Georgia at Emory.

My own home State is home to the National Institutes of Health, where a patient flew in to a small rural airport. They were ready to accept and provide the security down route 270 to get them to the beds at NIH. Those communities need to be recognized. We do that.

We have money in the bill for national security, but we also have money for veterans. Oh, we love our veterans. We love to sing songs, we love to wear yellow ribbons, we love to go to concerts. We even love to vote for an authorizing bill. I did it. But without money in the Federal checkbook, it is a hollow opportunity.

So guess what. Your Appropriations Committee, on a bipartisan basis, said we are going to do something that was never done before. We are going to put in the money not only to meet what we said we would do—to reform health care. No more wait lists, no more backlogs. No more them being a victim of the dysfunctional Congress if there is a shutdown or a gridlock.

We then did something. We, working with the veterans service organizations and the authorizing committee, by Senator SANDERS, we have advanced appropriations. So even if there is a shutdown or delay, our veterans will be taken care of.

There is more money in there for research. There is more money in there for care. There is an extra $40 million to add to the close to $2 billion to deal with the backlog. These numbers are mind-numbing, but the results are not.

We have that money and we also increased the DOD defense money for medical research for prosthetic devices, for stunning achievements such as in my own Johns Hopkins where they did a limb transplant. Working with Department of Defense dollars, our gifted and talent surgeon was able to take a veteran and reinstitute limbs, muscle, and nerve endings.

This enables them to also come up with a technique to prevent the rejection that often comes with transplants. It is stunning. That man will be able to have the use of his arms because of this type of work that we do here and what we do to help him will be able to help hundreds, and one day we will be able to help thousands.

That is what we do in appropriations. We take good intentions and make them as big dreams as possible. We are very proud of that.

The other item we are proud of is on a bipartisan basis we passed the child care and development block grant. Working with Senators RISCH and BURR of North Carolina, I led that. With the superb help of Senators ALEXANDER and HARKIN, we passed it.

But we also wanted to reform our quality standards, regulation without strangulation. We now know that we are going to have fire and safety inspection facilities, better training for providers, and background checks to make sure our vulnerable populations are protected. But for everything that we ask, we put in $75 million to be able to deal with this. I think that is pretty impressive.

The other issue we worked out was how we worked out the college affordability. In this program that we passed, we will increase the maximum Pell grant by $100 for a total maximum of $58,530, $100 more. That means you will be able to buy a book, you will be able to pay that lab fee if you want to be a nurse or an inhalation therapist, a surgical tech, and so on. But we also reformed the Pell grants, so any student who simultaneously is working on a GED and a college degree would be eligible for Pell grants.

As part of the listening tours that Senator CARDIN and I had, we found out that there were many people who at a certain point in life dropped out of school. They made a particular choice that they now are trying to compensate for. So they are working on their GED, making great progress. They have to show that, but simultaneously they are eligible for that Pell grant so they don't lose time. We have been able to do that.

There are other aspects related to college affordability, but we also wanted to focus on safety issues. We have money now for the 149 air traffic control facilities in rural communities. Those 149 air traffic controllers—we have the Maryland 5: Salisbury, Easton, Frederick, Hagerstown, and Baltimore County. I know the Presiding Officer has them in Wisconsin. That is taken care of.

We also wanted to look at other areas of safety such as food safety. Thanks to what we have done in this bill, we have funded the FDA so they can meet the new food safety standards we are concerned about.

I am also particularly happy and proud of what we did for women. I won't go into all the discussions on ObamaCare, the usual provocative topic such as funding for abortion and very special circumstances. Yes, we will talk about that tomorrow.

Do you know what I am happy about? What we did for victims of violence. This legislation has $430 million for the Violence Against Women Act. It is at an all-time high. Again, taking what the authorizers wanted—but they all do conference calls in their home State. We actually put money into the Federal checkbook.

We also paid special attention to the situation of what happens to rape victims. Very often—and I know you talk

with the rape victims in your own State or those who are their advocates—they feel doubly victimized. They often feel there was a violent attack on them—so repugnant I don't want even to talk about it on the Senate floor, which is horrible enough. But when they turn to the system, they often find that the very forensics that are needed to go after the perpetrator are either stuck in a crime lab somewhere in a backlog or, even worse, sitting in a police locker instead of being tested. So they wait days, weeks, months, and even years.

We have gotten into this, thanks to our Vice President, JOE BIDEN, who was the originator of the Violence Against Women Act. He asked the Justice Department to go to police departments and say where is this evidence and why isn't it being processed?

They found there were over 400,000 sexual assault kits sitting in police lockers instead of getting tested. Can you imagine? Four hundred thousand.

Thanks again to the advocates, the best ideas come from the people—I think somebody is calling me now about it.

What we have now is we have added a $40 million grant program, again a bipartisan effort, to go work with local police departments to bring down—where we already know where they have gotten underway with existing funds, they are finding that some of these predators have been serial rapists. Some of their cases go back 5, 10, 15 years because of the DNA things we can do. We can do this. We are going to change it.

There are other issues I can talk about, droughts, forest fires, all of these kinds of things. I will talk about them more tomorrow, but I just wanted to show the American people tonight, as we kick off this debate, while we focus on three items—and I don't minimize their importance, I don't minimize the value to debate them. I want people to know what is in this bill.

When we had to deal with the omnibus, we had to deal with $1 trillion because we were stiff-armed, and also we couldn't bring up the bills one at a time, so we have to bring all but the Homeland Security up now.

We faced 98 riders, some of which were highly controversial. We did the best we could with them, and I will have more to say about those tomorrow.

But while everybody talks about one item or this item, I wanted to talk about some of these items. I really hope we pass this omnibus bill, because when we do, our country will be safer because of threats over there. We will be safer because of threats at home.

But I believe the biggest threats we face are gridlock, deadlock, and the way we paralyze ourselves by making the perfect the enemy of the good. No piece of legislation is perfect. I will be the first to say that in this bill.

By the way, people might say: Boy, this is a big bill, Senator MIKULSKI. It really is. It is discretionary funding for our entire Federal Government, but it is also on the Web site. People can go to our individual subcommittees in Defense, Labor-HHS, Interior, Transportation and Housing, and read about what we did.

I had to summarize here. I was prepared to read them all night, but I know we are anxious to bring this evening to a close. But I wanted to open the debate today to talk about how we tried to govern on a bipartisan basis.

We have reached across the aisle and we have reached across the Capitol dome. The House has done its job. Now I hope we do our job and that within the next 24 hours we pass the omnibus spending bill and show that we can govern, that we will not have a government shutdown, we will not have government on autopilot, and we will be able to fund our responsibilities, protect America, and really prepare America for both today and the rest of the 21st century.

I look forward to working with my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, once again, the Senate has an opportunity to consider the National Defense Authorization Act. This bill is named for the two retiring chairmen of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, Senator CARL LEVIN and Congressman BUCK MCKEON. CARL LEVIN has been a fierce defender of Michigan, strong advocate for the men and women of our armed services, and a friend. When the Senate passes this bill, and the President signs it into law, it will be a fitting tribute to Senator LEVIN's storied legacy of public service.

This compromise—a comprehensive authorization of the Nation's military arm—is far from perfect. No bill is. But this authorization provides support and resources for the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces, who defend our Nation, and whose families sacrifice so much in the name of public service. The bill prepares our country to face future challenges, and promotes the goals and values that have become a hallmark of our national defense.

Of primary importance to me, this defense authorization bill protects the Leahy law, the requirements by which we vet the individuals and units of foreign security forces we train and equip. While one component of the Leahy law, traditionally incorporated annually in the Department of State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill as it relates to the activities of the State Department, was made permanent in 2012 as section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act, this Defense authorization bill makes the component of the law as it relates to Defense Department activities permanent law.

This provision permits human rights training, which is narrowly defined, for individuals who are members of units of foreign security forces that have been deemed ineligible under the Leahy law. However, those individuals must not have been involved in violations, the training must have the concurrence of the State Department, it may only occur in the individuals' home countries, the State Department must be consulted on the content, methodology, and intended beneficiaries, and the training is not sufficient for meeting the accountability requirement for purposes of the exception in the law.

Some in the Pentagon have suggested that the Leahy law has impeded their ability to engage with foreign security forces. Not only do the facts prove otherwise, that is the same discredited claim of those who have argued that the CIA's torture of prisoners was legal and made us safer.

The United States may have the most powerful military, but that power is immeasurably weakened if we fail to uphold the values and principles this Nation was founded on: due process, respect for the rule of law, and respect for the laws of war.

We should learn from history. When we abandon those values and principles and support or associate ourselves with foreign forces who commit atrocities, we pay a heavy price.

This defense authorization also includes a provision I authored with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM to establish a commission on the future of the army. The President's fiscal year 2015 budget proposal reflected many tough choices about the future size and shape of each of the services. It also included decisions about the U.S. Army that would irreversibly change the nature of that branch. Most dramatically, the proposal included a plan to eliminate the Nation's reserve of Apache helicopters by consolidating all of them within the active component. Such a move raises serious questions about the ability to sustain long-term operations or be ready for unexpected contingencies. As cochairs of the Senate National Guard Caucus, Senator GRAHAM and I, with the support of 47 other Senators, proposed legislation to minimize the budgetary impact of these decisions by providing for additional review while allowing tough, but noncontroversial changes to go forward. I am grateful to Senator LEVIN and our partners in the House for supporting its inclusion in this broader bill.

This authorization bill will provide important support to the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families. While I do not support some of the included changes to benefits, those that are part of this final bill are far less severe than originally proposed. With the Military Compensation and Retirement Commission soon to report, I hope we can finally put an end to what has become an annual effort by the Department of Defense to draw back benefits already earned by our servicemembers. There should be no bait and switch.

Unrelated to defense policy, I am grateful that this legislation includes

an important designation for Vermont. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System recognizes and preserves rivers with remarkable scenic and recreational value. With the passage of this legislation, Vermont will join 40 other States with designated national wild and scenic rivers. This designation of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers is the capstone of more than 7 years of work, including intense study and planning by the local communities that want to protect the natural, cultural, and recreational qualities of these rivers.

This defense authorization bill is not perfect; politics as much as policy makes that the case. I am disappointed that this authorization fails to build on important progress made last year to streamline the transfer of detainees from Guantanamo Bay and move closer to finally shuttering the detention facility there. This compromise bill will maintain the status quo by continuing to prohibit the transfer of detainees to the United States for detention or trial. I am disappointed that a provision contained in the Senate Armed Services Committee version of the authorization that would have provided exceptions to this prohibition was removed during negotiations. However, I am pleased that the bill does not contain the statutory ban on detainee transfers to Yemen that also was contained in the Senate bill.

As long as the detention facility at Guantanamo remains open, it serves as a recruitment tool for terrorists, and tarnishes America's historic role as a champion of human rights. The prison facility at Guantanamo remains a tremendous waste of taxpayer dollars—costing this country billions of dollars at a time when budgets are tight and that money is needed elsewhere. Closing Guantanamo is the morally responsible thing to do; my commitment on that has not wavered.

With regard to some of the provisions included in this bill that relate to combatting the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), I expect the Department of Defense to abide by the Leahy law. These terrorists pose a threat to the United States and to our partners; they must be stopped and brought to justice. But we cannot ignore our own laws or permit the United States to be implicated, either directly or indirectly, in gross violations of human rights when we support either governments or irregular forces in the fight against ISIS.

There have been multiple reports that some in the Iraqi Army and the militias they fight alongside engage in reprehensible conduct similar to the barbaric crimes of ISIS. As a matter of law and policy, we must condemn this. I cannot—and will not—support any effort to weaken the application of the Leahy law to the Iraqi Army or to any entity it is aligned with.

As in every defense authorization bill, there are things in here that I support and things I wish were not in here. Compromise is inherent in this process. But we cannot forsake our principles and ideals when it comes to supporting our national defense and the men and women who serve. I will support this compromise bill and remain committed to ensuring that we preserve the values that make this Nation a beacon of civil and human rights around the globe.

Madam President, I am grateful that the fiscal year 15 National Defense Authorization Act includes an important designation for Vermont. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers system recognizes and preserves rivers with remarkable scenic and recreational value. With the passage of this legislation, Vermont will join 40 other States with designated National Wild and Scenic Rivers. Designation of the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers is the capstone of more than 7 years of work, including intense study and planning by the local communities who want to protect the natural, cultural and recreational qualities of these rivers.

This has not been a Federal-led initiative; instead it was an occasion for Vermont citizens to work together. The communities along the rivers contacted me in 2006 to request the initial Federal study for this designation. The decision to move ahead was made by local communities that agreed to specific goals and priorities for these two rivers. This designation was put to a vote at the communities' town meetings and was approved by every town that is included in the legislation.

National Wild and Scenic status for these rivers will help the local communities promote recreational use, while also protecting the rights and values of landowners who make their homes and livings on the banks of these rivers. I am proud that this process has been driven by the impacted communities, working to ensure that the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers will forever be enjoyed by fishermen, hunters, and paddlers and that water quality will be protected. The benefits will extend downstream as far as Lake Champlain and beyond.

Ms. MIKULSKI. 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. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.J. Res. 130, the short-term, 2-day continuing resolution, which was received from the House and is now at the desk.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 130) making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the joint resolution be read three times and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the joint resolution.

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

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading, and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 130) was passed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to consider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—Continued

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that at noon on Friday, December 12, tomorrow, all postcloture time on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979 be considered expired; that it be in order, notwithstanding cloture having been invoked, for Senator COBURN to offer a motion to refer the House message; that there be 3 hours of debate, 1 hour each for Senators COBURN and REID, or their designees, and 30 minutes each for Senators MURKOWSKI and INHOFE, or their designees, prior to a vote in relation to the motion to refer; that the Coburn motion to refer be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; that if the Coburn motion to refer is not agreed to, Senator COBURN be recognized for the purposes of making a motion; that following disposition of the Coburn motion, the pending motion to concur with a further amendment be withdrawn; that the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur; that no motions other than the Coburn motions, motions to waive or motions to table be in order; that the vote on the motion to concur be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; finally, that if the motion to concur is agreed to, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following concurrent resolutions en bloc: H. Con. Res. 121, to correct the enrollment of H.R. 3979, providing a new title to the bill; and H. Con. Res. 123, to correct the enrollment of H.R. 3979; that the concurrent resolutions be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the House message with respect to H.R. 3979, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 697, 632, 1055, 542, 637, 1051, 1057, 791, 1102; that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to each vote; that upon the use or yielding back of time the Senate proceed to vote with no intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that any rollcall votes, following the first in the series, be 10 minutes in length; that if any nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WALSH

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to take a few moments to thank a Senator who will be leaving at the end of this term: Senator JOHN WALSH of Montana.

Though only in the Senate a brief time, Senator WALSH brought his wealth of experience to the work here and fought the good fight. Serving 33 years in the Montana Army National Guard, he brought his bravery and courage into the Senate. JOHN WALSH supported the Paycheck Fairness Act and was one of the original cosponsors of the Bring Jobs Home Act. He lived up to the values he was fighting for in the military by standing for workers here.

I thank him for his service and friendship and wish him the best in all his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY ERICKSON AND SHEILA DWYER

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President I would like to take a moment to thank a woman whom most Americans do not know but whose name is well-known to every employee of the United States Senate because—among other reasons—she signs our paychecks. Nancy Erickson will be leaving the Senate at the end of this session.

For the last 7 years, Nancy has served as the Secretary of the United States Senate. All told, she has worked for the Senate for 26 years.

For those who may not know, the Secretary of the Senate is this body's top appointed position. It is like being CEO of a large corporation. The Secretary oversees two dozen departments—from payroll and printing to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Nancy Erickson is the 32nd person—and the sixth woman—to hold that position. Nancy is a consummate professional who has won the respect of Senators on both sides of the aisle. She is unfailingly cheerful and unflappable.

Nancy Erickson loves the United States Senate even more than she loves the Green Bay Packers—and that is saying a lot. Nancy got the political bug early. As a fifth grader in Brandon, SD, she campaigned door-to-door for South Dakota Senator George McGovern in his 1972 Presidential campaign. She moved to Washington, DC, after college to work for the Government Accountability Office, which was then known as the General Accounting Office. After 2 years of desperate homesickness, she was ready to pack her bags and head back to South Dakota when she got a better offer.

A young South Dakota congressman with a bright future offered her a job as his scheduler. His name was Tom Daschle. Over the next 16 years Tom Daschle moved from serving as a House Member to Senator to Senate majority leader. Nancy moved up the ladder, too, eventually becoming Senator Daschle's deputy chief of staff. When Senator Daschle left the Senate in 2005, Senator REID immediately snapped Nancy up to serve as his representative to the Senate Sergeant at Arms. Two years later Senator REID became majority leader and asked Nancy to serve as the Secretary of the Senate. Nancy calls being Secretary of the Senate her ''pinch me job.''

Over the course of her 26-year Senate career, there have been traumatic moments. On the morning of September 11, 2001, Nancy was at her desk in the Capitol when Capitol Police rushed in and ordered that the building be evacuated immediately, fearful that the Capitol was under terrorist attack.

One month later Nancy was one of 28 people in the Senate who were exposed to anthrax when a letter carrying the deadly bacteria was opened in Senator Daschle's office. Experts estimated that the affected staffers were exposed to between 1,000 and 3,000 times the lethal dose of anthrax. Fortunately, with expert medical assistance, no one in the Senate was seriously injured in the anthrax attack.

To walk back into the Capitol the day after 9/11 took courage. To keep coming back after living through a potentially deadly anthrax attack required not just courage but a true devotion to public service and a love of this Senate.

You can see Nancy's love of this Senate and its history in the exquisitely restored Old Senate Chamber, whose renovation occurred on Nancy's watch. You can see her love of the Senate in the ongoing restoration of the Capitol's magnificent Brumidi Corridors, a project that Nancy has championed.

You can see Nancy Erickson's reverence for the U.S. Senate in a massive portrait of one of the giants of Senate history, former Kentucky Senator Henry Clay. That painting, measuring 11 by 7 feet, was discovered a few years ago in a storage room in New York State. The paint was peeling, and there were holes in the canvas created when a high school had used it as a basketball backboard. Nancy spearheaded the effort to procure and restore that lost masterpiece. Today, the painting of the Senate's ''Great Compromiser'' hangs just off the Senate floor—a reminder to all of us of the noble art of principled compromise. We thank you, Nancy, for that reminder and for your many years of service to this Senate and to America.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge Sheila Dwyer, who has served as Assistant Secretary of the Senate since 2007. Majority Leader HARRY REID, who paid tribute to Sheila on the Senate floor yesterday, appointed her to this post. Sheila has done an outstanding job overseeing the departments within the Office of the Secretary and assisting in the day-to-day legislative, financial, and administrative operations of the Senate. Sheila never forgets the little touches, or as any Democratic Senator can tell you, the meals that make the U.S. Senate an enjoyable place to work.

Sheila first came to Washington, DC, in 1980 as a House page for Speaker Tip O'Neil. Immediately after graduating from Suffolk University in Boston, she returned to DC and was hired to work in New York Governor Mario Cuomo's Washington office. She went on to work for Senators Charles Robb and Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Sheila was responsible for logistics of not one—but two—Democratic national conventions. The first was in 1992 in New York City. Then at the 1996 convention in Chicago, I chaired the Illinois Delegation as a candidate for the U.S. Senate, and Sheila Dwyer once again kept the logistics for the event moving smoothly.

It has been an honor to work with Sheila for all these years, and I wish her the best as she begins a new chapter in her life.

To Nancy and to Sheila, thank you for sharing so much of your time and talent with this Senate. We will miss you both.

TRIBUTE TO KAY HAGAN

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I rise today to honor my colleague from North Carolina, Senator KAY HAGAN, who is departing from the Senate at the end of this year. Senator HAGAN has been a strong voice for North Carolina's families, first during her decade in the North Carolina State Senate and during her service here in the United States Senate. Over the last two years, I have been consistently impressed with Senator HAGAN's compassion for and advocacy on behalf of her constituents and her willingness to forge the tough, bipartisan compromises that our country needs.

KAY actually first came to the Senate in the 1970s as an intern in the Capitol, where she operated the elevator that continues to carry Senators to and from the Chamber. After finishing her college education and pursuing her law degree, KAY became an attorney for North Carolina National Bank and eventually became a vice president in the estates and trust division.

Senator HAGAN's business and banking experience has been a tremendous asset during her time as a member of the banking committee, where we serve together. Senator HAGAN's understanding of the housing finance system and commitment to affordable housing was invaluable as she and I worked together with a bipartisan group of committee members to draft and advance legislation reforming the system to make sure the American taxpayer is protected and made whole. During the debate Senator HAGAN used her expert knowledge of the industry to craft a commonsense, bipartisan solution. Our proposal makes sure taxpayers are never left holding the bill again, while preserving the 30-year mortgage and supporting affordable housing—a huge accomplishment.

Senator HAGAN comes from a family and a State with a rich military history. Her father and brother both served in the Navy, and her husband, Chip, is a Navy Vietnam veteran. She has diligently supported and honored servicemembers and veterans as a member of the Armed Services Committee. She visited North Carolina troops in the Middle East to better understand their mission and needs, and she helped found the Military Family Caucus to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by those with loved ones abroad. In conjunction with her work on the small business committee, she introduced legislation to reduce veteran unemployment by providing employers a work opportunity tax credit for hiring a member of the National Guard.

As a member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and Chair of the Subcommittee on Children and Families, Senator HAGAN has consistently fought to make sure America's children have the education, tools, and resources to build a better tomorrow. In fact, Senator HAGAN's first bill was on a subject very dear to me—financial literacy. Far too many young Americans fall victim to financial scams or take out too many loans because they haven't been given an adequate education on personal finances. Senator HAGAN's legislation—which she has pressed every Congress—would have helped States integrate financial literacy into middle-and high school curriculums. That is the kind of commonsense legislation Senator HAGAN is known for and Congress should be passing.

Senator HAGAN has been an outstanding public servant for the people of North Carolina. Although I am saddened to see such a well-respected female colleague depart from the Senate, I know Kay will continue to be a champion for North Carolina's families in the years ahead, and I wish her all the best.

AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE FAA MODERNIZATION AND REFORM ACT

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I join my colleague Senator INHOFE in the passage of S. 2614. This legislation corrects a glitch in the law that was doing great harm to 100,000 American Airlines employees, including approximately 10,000 employees working out of or residing in Ohio. Ninety-five percent of these workers were unionized.

We are talking about pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, ramp workers, and dispatchers, all unionized. Part of the collective bargaining agreement was a defined benefit pension plan. These are plans where you earn benefits through your hard work, and those benefits provide you with annuitized income for life.

When American Airlines went bankrupt, these workers all received a single lump sum payment. For pilots, these payments were as much as $162,000, but the average payment was $120,000. For other workers, these payouts were much, much less.

Now, $162,000 may sound like a lot of money, and it is a lot. But not when it is meant to take the place of your entire pension for what could easily be a 20- or 30-year retirement. What we have done in the past for employees at United, Delta, Northwest, and US Airways is allow them to roll this entire amount over into an Individual Retirement Account or IRA.

It is important to understand what this is. When you roll over, you generally do not pay tax on it until you withdraw it from the new plan. The assets in the account continue to grow tax deferred. Deferred is the operative word.

This does not mean that the employees do not pay taxes. It means they will pay them as they make withdrawals to finance their own retirement. This bill is needed to give the American Airlines' employees that same opportunity. It is a simple fix, and it is the least we can do for workers who work hard and play by the rules, but lost their pensions through no fault of their own.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN AHLBERG

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, as I prepare to depart the Senate, I would like to take a few minutes to express my deep appreciation to Brian Ahlberg, my chief of staff for the last decade. Of course, every Senator knows that the title ''chief of staff'' encompasses a vast range of roles and responsibilities—counselor, confidant, kibitzer, trouble-shooter, day-to-day manager, strategic planner, and, in Brian's case, trusted friend. Brian has excelled in all of these critical roles, and I am very grateful to him.

Knute Rockne was fond of saying: ''I've found that prayers work best when you have big players.'' As Senators, we know that it is not enough to be on the side of the angels; we have got to have big players. For me, that means big intellect, big work ethic, big heart. And those are qualities that Brian Ahlberg possesses in superabundance.

Brian originally joined my staff in 2003 as legislative director, after a decade of service in that role and others for my great friend Senator Paul Wellstone. In short order, I promoted him to chief of staff, and he has served in that role with enormous skill and professionalism ever since.

Staff directors on committees have the challenge of managing large staffs. As chief of staff, Brian has had what is arguably an even bigger challenge: managing me. He has done so with great loyalty, intelligence, tact, and consistently good judgment. He is the proverbial calm amidst every storm. When my Irish is up, Brian's Norwegian cool serves as a calming counterweight. He has never hesitated to speak up when he thinks I am wrong or misguided—an invaluable service. He has done a great job of allowing me, as Senator, to get into just enough trouble to be effective in my own job.

It has been said, perhaps only half jokingly, that Senators are a constitutional impediment to the smooth functioning of staff. I long ago learned to get out of Brian's way and let him manage my far-flung operation. We call ourselves Team Harkin—staffers on my Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, on my Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, and on my personal staff, both in Washington and back in Iowa. Brian is the impresario who skillfully coordinates their work as a single, collaborative team, skillfully resolving conflicts and keeping people focused on the mission at hand. I believe that Brian's skill in this role is a major reason for Team Harkin's remarkable legislative productivity over the last decade.

Brian has a great way of keeping my staff and me focused on what is truly important and strategic, avoiding detours and sidetracks. In meetings and

one-on-one, he functions like a whetstone—his aim is to make things sharper, and to cut to the heart of an issue or task.

I also appreciate the way Brian interacts with staff. He helps me to hire seasoned professionals, and then he empowers them to do what they do best, giving them confidence that he will be there to back them up when the going gets tough. His authoritative but soft-spoken, even-tempered approach seems to bring out the best in people around him.

Brian's focus is always on the task, not his ego. Washington is to self-promotion what Iowa is to corn and soybeans; but self-promotion is the opposite of Brian's style. He is always quick to spread the credit around, especially if that is what it takes to strengthen the team or seal the deal.

The questions you can always count on Brian to ask are: ''How does this help people in Iowa?'' and ''How does this give a hand up to people who truly need it and deserve it?''

Over the years, Brian Ahlberg has become a consummate Washington player. But he remains a Midwesterner through and through, a passionate progressive like his early mentor Paul Wellstone, with a passion for fairness and justice, a determination to make life better for ordinary working Americans.

Finally, I want to note that Brian has always been wonderfully attentive to my staff members' family needs, doing everything possible to accommodate them in times of sickness, bereavement, or emergency. Certainly, family comes first in Brian's own life. On that score, I realize that Brian's wife Jodi and sons Anders and Lucas have sacrificed because of his long hours at work, and for that I owe them a debt of gratitude.

Brian Ahlberg is my colleague, my confidant, my trusted friend. He is also a wonderful public servant. I will always be grateful to him for the personal sacrifices he has made to help me advance my agenda here in the Senate. Likewise, I will always be grateful to him for his extraordinary service to the people of Iowa and, more broadly, the people of the United States. I wish Brian and his family much happiness and success in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO DEREK MILLER

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, as I prepare to relinquish the gavel as chair of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, I would like to take a few minutes to express my deep gratitude to our staff director, Derek Miller, for his sterling service in one of the Senate's most demanding staff positions.

Knute Rockne was fond of saying: ''I've found that prayers work best when you have big players.'' Successful committee chairs in the Senate have the same approach. We know that it is not enough to be on the side of the angels; we have got to have big players. Here in the Senate, that means big intellect, work ethic, big heart. Those are qualities that Derek Miller possesses in superabundance.

Derek originally came to work for me in 2003, during my tenure as chair of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, where he was the lead staffer in our efforts to address the childhood obesity epidemic by improving the nutritional content of foods available in schools. Derek's goal and mine, simply put, was to get junk food out of our schools and to get healthy foods in. Our efforts came to fruition with passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which reformed the school lunch program and established national nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools, including foods sold in vending machines, school snack bars, and à la carte cafeteria lines.

In addition, in the 2008 farm bill, Derek was instrumental in dramatically expanding a program I created in the 2002 farm bill to provide fresh produce free of charge to students in elementary schools that have a high proportion of children from low-income families. Also in that 2008 farm bill, he spearheaded important reforms to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as the food stamp program.

In 2010, Derek moved to my personal office as legislative director, where he proved himself to be a gifted parliamentary strategist and where he combined equal measures of humor and commitment to progressive policy to successfully advance my agenda. It is my hope that his weekly email summations of the Senate floor activity live on in posterity.

Early this year I tapped him to lead the staff of the HELP Committee.

The ''P'' in the HELP Committee abbreviation stands for ''pensions.'' But we also like to think it stands for ''people.'' Traditionally, the HELP Committee has been a powerhouse of progressive legislation—legislation to give people a hand up, provide a ladder of opportunity, and expand access to health care and a secure retirement.

Under Derek's skilled leadership, the committee has been true to that great progressive tradition. He has played a critical role in passing important bipartisan legislation to meet the everyday needs of working Americans. Indeed, amidst a Senate too often mired in partisanship, I thank Derek for helping our committee to chart a very different course—a course of bipartisanship and accomplishment. In this 113th Congress, the HELP Committee has passed a remarkable 23 bills signed into law by the President, distinguishing our Committee as the Senate's most productive.

But beyond legislative accomplishments, I want to pay tribute to Derek's excellence as a manager, as not just staff director but a true staff leader. Derek's colleagues respect that he has no ego, he has only a job to get done—and that is so rare here on the Hill, where empire-building and self-aggrandizement are all too common.

Derek is respected by staff because his approach is to empower those around him, to support them in every way, but to give them plenty of room to do what they do best.

He sees the professionals on the HELP Committee as people first, and as staffers second. If there is an illness, a pregnancy, or some other challenging circumstance, Derek will move heaven and earth to give the staffer the support he or she needs.

Derek is attentive to his colleagues' family needs because, in his own life, family comes first. Inevitably, Derek's wife Sun and his son Philip have paid a price because of Derek's long hours at work, and for that I owe them a debt of gratitude.

On behalf of my Senate colleagues, and in particular on behalf of members and staff on the HELP Committee, I thank Derek for his dedicated service to the people of the United States. I wish him much happiness and success in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO ZACHARY SCHECHTER-STEINBERG

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President. I wish to pay tribute and to extend my thanks to one of my smartest and most passionate staff members Zachary Schechter Steinberg. A native of Iowa City, IA, Zach started with the office as an intern in the summer of 2007. He became an official staff member immediately upon his graduation from Wesleyan University in 2008. Just 6 years later he serves as the Economic Policy Adviser for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and my most trusted advisor on tax, budget and banking issues. Zach is perhaps the strongest and most knowledgeable staff voice in the Senate on effectively preserving Social Security and on the critical importance of maintaining and strengthening the Social Security Disability Insurance program.

Zach has the ability to quickly develop a full understanding of very complicated issues and to work with other staff to forge policy solutions. This is perhaps best illustrated with his work on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Although newly promoted to legislative assistant, when I was appointed to the conference committee to resolve differences between the House and Senate bills, he advised me on many narrow convoluted issues. He not only performed well, but won the respect of many of the committee's professional staff for his ideas. Zach also understands that passage of provisions into law is but one step, and has remained a stalwart advocate of successful implementation of the bill.

As many of you here in the Senate know last year saw the retirement of Richard Bender, my longest serving

staff member and a Senate institution in his own right. It is my firmly held opinion that Richard only allowed himself to begin his retirement because he was leaving Zach to handle his portfolio. I am also quite certain that Zach is the only staff member during Richard's 35 year tenure that he would have felt comfortable leaving in charge.

That is because not only does Zach possess a keen intelligence, a work ethic second to none and an innate ability to translate arcane tax and budget data into understandable prose—but he has the heart of a true progressive. Zach cares deeply about the people of Iowa, about the future of the middle class in this country and about making sure that every American has a fair shot at economic security.

It has been a pleasure to watch Zach grow personally and professionally over the past 6 years—as he transformed from a headstrong intern to one of the most skilled and able staffers in the Senate, from a new college graduate to a senior advisor newly married to Sarah this past summer.

This week I am concluding my 40 years in public office. It has been an amazing ride. One of the things that makes it easier to say goodbye is that I am leaving behind talented people like Zach from whom I know I can expect great things in the future.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN S. PISTOLE

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, it is my great privilege to recognize the distinguished career of John S. Pistole, on the occasion of his retirement as the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration. He has been a dedicated public servant and leader for the past 31 years. Next year, John will take on an exciting new leadership role when he returns to his alma mater, Anderson University, as its president.

I am privileged to have worked with John and received his counsel on important issues like addressing the terrorist threats facing our Nation in the post-9/11 era, and helping to guide the FBI and TSA to successfully meet the challenges brought on by those threats.

Throughout his career, John has taken on many of the most challenging roles in law enforcement. He's fought against organized crime in the FBI and led frontline counterterrorism efforts as head of the TSA. However, for a person who has had to maintain a tough exterior in these roles, John has remained thoughtful, compassionate, and courteous—important traits which he demonstrated in his appearances before the Commerce Committee.

After earning his law degree at Indiana University in 1981 and spending 2 years in private law practice, John decided to enter public service by joining the FBI. John rose through the ranks as a special agent in Minneapolis and New York. He worked hard—first becoming a supervisor at FBI Headquarters, where he was recognized as a role model for new FBI agents, and then chosen to be an instructor at the FBI Academy. A few years later, John was recognized for his capabilities with an opportunity to teach the first sessions at a new International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest.

In the late 1990s, John got involved with the FBI's efforts to fight white-collar crime. In Indianapolis, he created task forces fighting fraud and public corruption, and was promoted to Assistant Special Agent in Charge at the Boston Field Office. When Egypt Air Flight 990 crashed off the coast of Rhode Island, John investigated this aviation attack that would serve as a prelude to his post-9/11 roles.

When our Nation was attacked on September 11, 2001, John had just been assigned to the Inspections Division at FBI Headquarters though he was quickly reassigned to help build FBI's Counterterrorism Division. He rose steadily through the ranks, eventually serving as the FBI's Deputy Director for more than 5 years. John's exemplary service in that role, combined with his experience in counterterrorism and excellent management of and care for the FBI workforce, culminated in 2010 when he was nominated to be the TSA Administrator.

John assumed the leadership of TSA at a time when the agency had been without a confirmed administrator for a year and a half. During this time, the agency had been grappling with the fallout from the Christmas Day attack of 2009, and had become a political and media punching bag. TSA needed a strong leader to take on the formidable task of improving the agency's stature. TSA needed to be effective in its duty to protect our Nation, while also finding a way to respond to the public outcry over onerous and invasive search procedures. TSA needed to deal with dissatisfaction within its own ranks, while navigating a tough fiscal environment. We were fortunate when John accepted the President's nomination and was confirmed by the Senate unanimously to this important role.

Under John's exceptional leadership, the TSA has maintained a compelling track record in preventing terrorist attacks against our Nation's transportation networks. The agency has taken a more risk-based approach to security so as to lessen the burden on the average American traveler. Many people point to the TSA's successful PreCheck program, which I signed up for last week, as an example of John's great work. PreCheck is popular because it makes airport security more convenient and predictable, while freeing up TSA resources so the agency can be more focused on high-risk areas.

While John was improving both TSA's effectiveness and the security experience for the traveling public, he was simultaneously focusing on improving the TSA workforce. By exemplifying the traits he expected of his officers, and by taking the time to meet with his workforce and address their concerns, he earned their loyalty.

John took important steps to implement policies that would hold TSA staff accountable, and he also demonstrated that security interests can be safeguarded while allowing officers to unionize. This was a great step forward for officers' labor rights, and has provided a constructive way to handle officers' concerns.

Appointed from outside the organization, John quickly earned the respect of TSA employees, who then supported him in reforming outdated policies. When TSA moved away from its one-size-fits-all approach, his workforce overcame many challenges to implement a more complex risk-based security process. Without the support John earned from TSA employees, that shift would not have been possible. We will always want better security and more convenience for less cost, and John has done better than anyone yet at striking the right balance.

John Pistole has long shone as a beacon of integrity in government service. Today it gives me great pleasure to commend him—and thank him—for his enormous contributions to improving the Nation's security. I am grateful for his service to this country and it is an honor to call him a friend. I wish John and his family the best as he embarks on a new chapter in his distinguished career.

TRIBUTE TO DANIELLE HANSON

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Danielle Hanson, a legislative aide in my Washington, DC, office, for the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Danielle is a native of Rapid City, SD, and is a graduate of Benedictine College. Upon graduation from Benedictine, Dani moved from Atchison, NE, to Washington, DC, to become a member of my personal office staff. In her 2½ years on my staff, Dani has worked as a staff assistant, legislative correspondent, and legislative aide.

I extend my sincere appreciation to Dani for her hard work and dedication and wish her continued success in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO DEVEN SCOTT

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Deven Scott, the deputy scheduler in my Washington, DC, office, for the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Deven is a native of Aberdeen, SD, and is a graduate of the University of South Dakota. Upon graduation from USD, Deven moved from Vermillion, SD, to Washington, DC, to become a member of my personal office staff. In her 1½ years on my staff, Deven has worked as a staff assistant, legislative correspondent, and deputy scheduler.

I extend my sincere appreciation to Deven for her hard work and dedication

and wish her continued success in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM ''BILL'' LOVELADY JR.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I wish to recognize Mr. William ''Bill'' Lovelady, Jr., for his 34 years of service in the U.S. Army. Bill has worked on behalf of our Nation as a civil servant, rising to chief counsel for the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, or ERDC. Throughout his career, he has displayed leadership, professionalism, initiative, and dedication. His accomplishments will have a significant and lasting impact on the Corps of Engineers' laboratory community, the Army, and our Nation. Today, in recognition of his retirement, I offer thanks and congratulations.

Prior to Bill's 22 years as counsel to the ERDC and Waterways Experiment Station, he served as assistant division counsel to the Lower Mississippi Valley Division and Corps of Engineers. He also worked for the Vicksburg District of the Corps as a trial attorney. In these capacities, Bill played an instrumental role in the successful execution of the command's missions, particularly regarding research and development. In fact, he is acknowledged as the Corps' leading legal authority in this mission area.

Bill's accomplishments do not end there. He has been recognized by chief counsels as an example for other legal managers in the command, including his selection as a charter member of the Chief Counsel's Managing Partners Group, board of directors. This group, comprised of senior Corps attorneys, is responsible for recommendations to improve the delivery of legal services. Bill's exceptional legal advice, acumen, and sound judgment were no doubt of immense value to this group.

Bill has also served as an advisor to the ERDC Installation Planning Board, ERDC Program Budget Advisory Committee, ERDC-Vicksburg Site Partnership Council, ERDC Special Recognition Committee, and ERDC Senior Anti-Terrorism Steering Committee. He is a member of the Federal Laboratory Consortium Legal Support Subcommittee and an active participant in the Department of Defense, DOD, Technology Transfer Integrated Project Team.

In 1999, Bill worked tirelessly in the reorganization of the Corps' laboratories to establish the ERDC. He helped develop plans, worked to implement them, and solved numerous leadership, administrative, labor-management, and legal challenges. In reviewing all aspects of the reorganization plans, he ensured that R&D leadership was advised of potential legal concerns and solutions through the process. Moreover, he effectively assumed leadership over the geographically dispersed and formerly independent legal assets of the Corps' laboratory system. Because of the legal team's substantial contributions, ERDC's structure and operating mode have served as a model for delivery of legal services across the Corps.

Bill has always been a proven manager and adviser. In 1998, a new human resources system was instituted under one of nine congressionally authorized science and technology laboratory personnel management demonstration projects. Bill applied his leadership and legal experience to identifying the distinctions between the features of the project and the basic Federal personnel system. His advice was critical to implementation strategies and problem-solving during the transition.

Bill is the coauthor of the ''Research & Development Partnering Handbook,'' a comprehensive guide that collected all R&D partnering authorities, pursuant to the Technology Transfer Act. He has assisted in the negotiation and resolution of complicated legal issues involving the licensing of ERDC-developed technologies. He also has played a key role in supporting ERDC's laboratories with the drafting and negotiating of domestic and international patent licenses, cooperative research and development agreements, education and interagency partnership agreements, and service agreements. These instruments have seen ERDC partner with State and local governments, other Federal agencies, colleges, universities, and private companies.

Since the early 1990s, Bill has also provided legal advice and assistance for the Department of Defense's High Performance Supercomputing Modernization Plan. He was essential to the establishment of DOD's first High Performance Computing Resource Center and recently addressed issues involving access to DOD's high performance supercomputing facilities.

In short, Bill has been vital to the Engineer Research and Development Center management team and its success. His friendly, outgoing personality only adds to his professionalism. On a personal note, I would add that he has been a close friend of mine for over four decades and his wife Dianne has been a lifelong friend. I wish them both the best in this new chapter of their lives.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING SUN WOO PARK

• Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Portsmouth resident grand master Sun Woo Park—an exceptional New Hampshire citizen who has devoted his life to teaching martial arts and serving his community.

Sun Woo Park immigrated to the United States from Korea in 1985. Shortly after settling in Portsmouth, he opened Park's Taekwondo School, a world-class taekwondo training center. In fact, Park's is one of the only taekwondo schools in the world to have eight practicing Masters who learned under the same grand master.

During his nearly three decades of teaching taekwondo, thousands of seacoast area students have developed self-esteem, self-control, confidence, and fitness through studying the key elements of martial arts. Sun Woo Park even brought taekwondo to the University of New Hampshire, founding a taekwondo club there in 1995.

On June 16, 2000, Sun Woo Park proudly became a U.S. citizen. True citizenship means serving your country, your community, and your fellow citizens, and Sun Woo Park has done just that.

He is a founding member and the current president of the Korean American Society of New Hampshire. Every year since 1987, he has organized an event to honor the brave service and sacrifice of New Hampshire's Korean War veterans. He has even been honored by the President of the Republic of Korea, Noh Moo Hyun, for his service on behalf of Korean war veterans.

Sun Woo Park has also been quietly helping his local community in many other ways. He is held numerous fundraisers in support of the Saint Charles Children's Home in Rochester, NH, as well as many other local schools and nonprofits.

I am pleased to join the citizens of New Hampshire and all of grand master Sun Woo Park's students in wishing him all the best in his future endeavors. We thank him for his many years of teaching and service to the State of New Hampshire.•

TRIBUTE TO GARY FROST

• Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, today I wish to recognize an outstanding New Hampshire citizen, Mr. Gary Frost. Gary will retire at the end of this year after serving as the CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Manchester for 26 years.

Gary grew up in Keene and graduated from the University of New Hampshire. He has devoted his life to improving the lives of children and New Hampshire citizens in need. In his 37-year tenure at the Boys and Girls Club of Manchester, it has become a safe and welcoming place for Manchester's youth to study, play and find a hot meal.

When Gary first joined the organization, the club was housed in one building on the corner of Union and Lowell Streets in Manchester. One of his greatest accomplishments was spearheading the $7.2 million dollar capital campaign to renovate and expand the Union Street Club House so that the organization could serve more children. Today, under Gary's capable leadership and steady hand, the Boys and Girls Club now extends across an entire city block and serves over 600 children a day.

Those who work with Gary describe his deep commitment to and compassion for the children he works with and his community.

In addition to his work transforming the Boys and Girls Club, Gary has served Manchester in many other ways. He was an integral member of the committee that brought the Verizon Wireless Arena to Manchester, an important addition to the city's cultural offerings. He's also been a longtime member of the Manchester Rotary Club.

I hope Gary enjoys retirement at his camp on Newfound Lake and spending time with his wife Dotti and his two daughters, Abby and Kara. I join the City of Manchester and residents across the Granite State in thanking Gary for his service and wishing him all the best for a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO FRANK BIGGER

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I wish to honor Frank Bigger, who will retire as the Pocahontas Mayor after 4 years of public service to the citizens of Arkansas in this elected position.

Frank was inspired to run for city mayor at 67, the first political office he has held. Frank ran on the platform of economic prosperity and job creation. In that light, he fought hard alongside the Chamber of Commerce and the Intermodal Authority to bring a Poultry, Egg Company, PECO, processing facility to the county. This created more than 1,000 local jobs and led to improved infrastructure to accommodate the business.

Frank helped the community overcome the worst flooding residents remember. Highways, bridges and businesses were closed because of several feet of water from a levee breach of the Black River. Under Frank's leadership, Pocahontas recovered.

Before serving as mayor, Frank graduated from Arkansas State University and served on the Black River Technical College board of trustees. In 1996, he retired as president from what is now Pinnacle Frame and Accent, and has also worked as a part-time bank owner and has owned local cattle farms.

My staff and I have enjoyed working with Mayor Bigger on the projects important to Pocahontas. I am truly grateful for his years of honorable service and dedication to the community.●

REMEMBERING LEO MOSKOVITZ

● Mr. CASEY. Madam President, Jermyn and Northeastern Pennsylvania lost a long-treasured member of the community when Leo Moskovitz passed away on November 24 at the age of 109. Although he lived for well over a century, his death feels premature to his family and his community. His wife of 45 years, Ann, described him as one of a kind, a fantastic man in every sense of the word. His contributions to the Commonwealth, both public and private, are many and will not be soon forgotten. As one of Northeastern Pennsylvania's true pioneers, he helped transform the region's economic and cultural outlook over the past century. Those who knew him likened him to a real-life history book, reciting stories from 80 or 90 years ago as if they had happened the day before. On any day of the week, he could catalogue the many evolutions the greater Scranton region went through with perfect detail.

As founder and president of the First National Bank of Jermyn, Leo presided over significant growth in the bank's assets, while always offering opportunity to the small business owners and people of Lackawanna County. He was a banker who bet on people and usually won for all concerned. Leo was ahead of his time in many ways, including promoting women in an era when such a practice was far from commonplace. From the vocational schools he helped establish, to the numerous art and cultural organizations he and his wife supported throughout the region, Leo Moskovitz's love and compassion for his community and its people endured for over a century, and will continue to shine for many years to come.●

FAR EXCEPTION THREE

● Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, the Mercer Engineering Research Center, or MERC, is the nonprofit, research and applied engineering arm of Mercer University, a private university founded in 1833 and located in a state-of-the-art research facility in Warner Robins, GA; just a short drive from Robins Air Force Base. For over 175 years, the University has served Georgia as a highly respected educational institution.

In 1984, the School of Engineering was established at the Macon, GA, campus with the charter class beginning studies in 1985. Two years later, MERC was established under the School of Engineering to provide locally available engineering and scientific services with critical specialized skills to the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, while simultaneously providing a workload support-base to the Mercer School of Engineering in its development of high-technology skills in the Middle Georgia area.

MERC has a highly qualified professional staff, complex tools and test equipment, and extensive technical capability in the fields of aircraft structural analysis and design, flight test instrumentation, reverse engineering and prototyping, laboratory structural testing, electronic warfare software algorithm development, web deployed applications with integrated database access, industrial engineering and logistics.

MERC also employs engineering interns providing an avenue for students to get real world, Air Force-related experience, and today they are the largest source of entry-level engineers for Robins Air Force Base while also providing superior support to all other military services, large and small business, and other research agencies.

MERC has been able to maintain a successful, strategic relationship with Robins Air Force Base because of its Ph.D-level knowledge of sponsors' requirements and problems; its developing capability; its broad corporate knowledge and quick response capability; independence and objectivity; freedom from conflicts of interest; and lower costs. Their demonstrated ability to provide efficient, cost effective solutions to pressing research and development problems established MERC as the preferred source of real solutions to real problems

Over the last few years, however, the Air Force and the Robins Air Force Base Small Business Office have emphasized increasing the percentage of small business contract awards; an initiative not without merit for sure. However, their interpretation and application of the Federal Acquisition Regulations, or FAR, has resulted in MERC essentially being barred from providing contracted services the likes of which they have provided with unmatched efficiency and significant savings for the Air Force for almost 30 years.

Since nonprofit research organizations by definition cannot be small businesses, they are excluded by law from competing for small business set-asides. However, the FAR offers seven equal and independent statutory authorities the U.S. government can apply which authorize, under certain conditions, contracting without providing for full and open competition.

Senior Air Force leadership at Robins Air Force Base have long supported the use of those exceptions, specifically, the so-called ''Exception Three'' which allowed for contacting without providing for full and open competition ''when it is necessary to award the contract to a particular source or sources in order to establish or maintain an essential engineering, research, or development capability to be provided by an educational or other nonprofit institution or a federally funded research and development center.''

That application of the FAR allowed Robins AFB to maintain the essential engineering capabilities of MERC to augment their own because under FAR Exception Three, MERC received sole source contracts when their expertise, flexibility and lower costs demanded it.

In recent years, however, the Small Business Office at Robins Air Force Base has approved the use of only one of the FAR exceptions, that being when ''only one responsible source and no other supplies or services will satisfy agency requirements.''

This application of the FAR, or misapplication if you will, makes it virtually impossible for the Robins Air Force Base to award certain contracts to any entity other than small businesses. It translates to higher costs and greater inefficiencies. Robins Air

Force Base continues to seek MERC's unique expertise and essential engineering skills, but is forced to pass money through small and large businesses to MERC adding time and cost to the product/service delivery. By demanding more awards go to small businesses, the government also suffers a loss of intellectual property, IP, since MERC transfers ownership of all said property back to the U.S. Government, while small businesses can retain IP for future revenue.

You would be hard pressed to find any bigger supporter of small businesses in the Senate than myself. However, when it comes to ensuring our men and women fighting overseas for our freedom have what they need to get the job done, there are only three things I care about: cost, schedule, and performance. Our men and women in uniform deserve that.

In this era of defense spending austerity, the Air Force can ill afford the unintended consequences of precluding entities that supply vital complex engineering solutions, along with the added benefit of cross pollination of educational experience between government employees, both civilian and military, and the best in the academic engineering community, from receiving business simply to meet a set-aside quota.

This issue is about ensuring Robins Air Force Base maintains essential engineering capabilities to supplement their own and their ability to swiftly and inexpensively select the most capable organization to provide the best product or service at the best value to the government. The Small Business Office at Warner Robins, in their attempt to carry out the Air Forces' broader goal of increasing small businesses participation, is jeopardizing the very survival of institutions provided for and protected by the FAR.

By selectively applying the FAR exceptions, the Air Force is ignoring the intent of the acquisition regulations. It is certain to destroy these few vital educational links between academic institutions and government engineers that need that level of expertise. More importantly, by ignoring FAR Exception Three, the government is limiting its ability to pursue the best solutions at the best price. We can ill-afford such consequences in this period of economic austerity, simply in the name of fostering the growth of small businesses.

I was encouraged in September when the Air Force took a step in the right direction with their approval of a Justification and Approval, J&A, for the use of other than full and open competition for an engineering, research and development contract in support of technologies and methodologies applicable to aging aircraft and support equipment. The contract will maintain essential engineering, research, and development capabilities at Robins AFB through support provided by MERC.

I am hopeful this recent development is indicative of a new way of doing business at Warner Robins. In case it is not, I urge my colleagues here in the Senate to remain vigilant in their oversight responsibilities, and I renew my call to the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure local commands apply the FAR as written so as to guarantee our men and women in uniform have exactly what they need, when they need it, and at a price that is in keeping with our responsibilities as stewards of the American tax dollar.●

REMEMBERING MARY ANN MOBLEY

● Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, my State has lost one of our finest citizens. Mary Ann Mobley, a friend to many and one of our best known Mississippians, passed away Tuesday. Mary Ann was the first young woman from Mississippi to be crowned Miss America, an accomplishment that was a source of great pride to my State. I got to know Mary Ann at the University of Mississippi, where she was really a superstar and a fine actress. Incidentally, we were cast in a University Players production of ''Tiger at the Gates'' at Ole Miss. She made Mississippians proud of her success as an entertainer in Hollywood and a person who kept our State close to her heart throughout her career.

I ask unanimous consent that a December 11, 2014, article from the Clarion-Ledger newspaper titled ''Mary Ann Mobley 'never forgot her roots' '' be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Clarion-Ledger, Dec. 11, 2014]

MARY ANN MOBLEY 'NEVER FORGOT HER ROOTS'

(By Billy Watkins)

They danced in the streets of Brandon the night one of their own, Mary Ann Mobley, was crowned the 1959 Miss America.

''That's not just a saying, that's a fact,'' said Waymon Tigrett, 70, who grew up with Mobley and has owned Brandon Discount Drugs the past 46 years. ''They put a jukebox out by the statue in the middle of Main Street, ran an extension cord out to it and that thing blared music all night. People danced and carried on for hours. It was a true celebration.

''You have to remember, Brandon was only about 2,000 people back then. It was a small, isolated town. And all of a sudden, a girl we all know is on television and winning Miss America. That was a huge deal back then. And still is to us.''

Mobley, Mississippi's first Miss America, died Tuesday after a long battle with breast cancer. She was 77.

Services will be 1 p.m. Monday at Christ United Methodist Church in Jackson. Visitation will be Sunday from 4–6 p.m. at Parkway Funeral Home in Ridgeland.

Mobley won the crown in September 1958, the same year she graduated from the University of Mississippi.

''She never forgot her roots, where she came from,'' said Tigrett, who lived four houses down from Mobley on what is known now as Mary Ann Drive. ''Rankin County used to own Rankin General Hospital, and we had a big benefit every year, Affair of the Heart, to raise money for it. Mary Ann would come back from Hollywood and emcee it.

''She remembered everybody. She treated us just the same. She never got too big for us. She was the same girl who used to ride palomino horses in the pasture behind her house.''

Judy Trott, former dean of students at Ole Miss, said Mobley ''was always generous with her time when it came to Ole Miss.''

''She would come back and oversee the Miss University pageant—the one she won to send her to Miss America—and the Parade of Beauties, another pageant that we still hold,'' she said.

Trott wasn't surprised Mobley went on to become a popular film and TV actress.

''Mary Ann was groomed for it,'' she said. ''She had great talent, a great voice. Her mother would often come to pageants up here with her, and she was outgoing and bubbly. I guess that's where Mary Ann got her personality.

''I remember after one of the pageants taking Mary Ann and her mother down to the Holka, a place you could get cake and coffee. We were in there for three hours that night. It wasn't just the students talking to Mary Ann, it was Mary Ann talking to the students. She was interested in them, wanted to know their plans, their goals. She was extremely warm and outgoing. It was easy to love her.''

Hometown friends, saddened by her death, quietly reminisced Wednesday.

Mobley not only battled breast cancer in recent years but suffered carpal tunnel syndrome in both hands and arms. Emails became shorter as every letter of every word required effort.

Phone calls to check on the people of her hometown also became shorter, but no more infrequent. If the conversation ever turned toward her own problems, Mobley would laugh and find a way to quickly change the subject.

Some of the memories stirred laughter. Such as the time Mobley was to perform at Brandon High School but the family car wouldn't crank. Her mother saddled a horse for the 5–mile ride, and she and Mary Ann made it there in time.

And the night Brandon folks danced in the street, the celebration spread to the capital city. A few town residents decided it would be a good idea to take the volunteer fire department's truck and drive it up and down Jackson's Capitol Street with the siren blaring. Jackson police eventually tired of the racket and impounded the truck.

Mobley also became a filmmaker, producing documentaries in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Kenya, Zimbabwe and the Sudan.

Mobley's husband of 45 years, TV personality Gary Collins, died in 2012. The couple had one daughter, Clancy Collins-White.

Collins-White phoned friends Tuesday in Brandon to tell them of Mobley's death.

Three other Mississippians have won the Miss America crown: Lynda Lee Mead of Natchez, 1960; Cheryl Prewitt of Ackerman, 1980; and Susan Akin of Meridian, 1986.●

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL FINALS RODEO

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the annual National Finals Rodeo, which takes place at the Thomas & Mack Center on the campus of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The National Finals Rodeo has been held in Las Vegas for the past 30 years of the event's 55 year history. Often noted as the foremost

championship rodeo event in the United States, I, along with my fellow Nevadans, am proud that it has called the Silver State home for so many years.

The National Finals Rodeo was established in 1958 by the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association in order to determine the world champions in various events from bull riding to tie-down roping. First held in Dallas in 1959, the National Finals Rodeo was held in many different cities until 1984, when Las Vegas became its permanent home. An integral part of the Las Vegas community for 30 years, the National Finals Rodeo has brought more than 170,000 fans annually to see some of our Nation's toughest cowboys and cowgirls compete in 10 days of competition. This event has become a yearly tradition not only for Nevadans, but for people across the nation and the world. As rodeo lovers and horse enthusiasts, my wife Lynne and I were thrilled to attend this year's event.

The National Finals Rodeo offers Nevadans and rodeo goers nationwide a place to truly experience the gritty, energetic entertainment the Wild West is best known for. In one of the hardest hit regions during the recession, this event plays an integral role in Nevada's tourism economy. Tourism continues to be a prominent economic driver within the Silver State, and I am thrilled to learn this event will be a part of the Las Vegas community through 2024.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in recognizing the National Finals Rodeo, a special event that has proudly called Las Vegas home for the past 30 years, and I would like to offer the best of luck to all who are participating in this year's events.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN KROLICKI

● Mr. HELLER: Madam President, I wish to congratulate Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki, of Stateline, for his decades of service to the State of Nevada. After most recently serving as Nevada's lieutenant governor for 8 years, he will be retiring on January 5, 2015. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate my friend and colleague on his 24 years of hard work and dedication to the Silver State.

While serving as Nevada's Secretary of State, I came to know Lieutenant Governor Krolicki not only as a trusted colleague, but also as a dear friend. While attending Stanford University, Lieutenant Governor Krolicki fell in love with Lake Tahoe, NV. After earning a bachelor's degree in political science, he moved to Nevada. While maintaining his Silver State residence, he went on to become an investment banker in New York City and San Francisco. Lieutenant Governor Krolicki's public service career began in 1990 when he was tapped to serve as chief deputy treasurer to then-State treasurer Bob Seale. His many years of financial experience made him an ideal candidate for State treasurer after the retirement of Treasurer Seale. Upon being sworn in as treasurer in 1999, he began to tirelessly devote his efforts to the people of Nevada. He created the Nevada college savings plans, and was responsible for the successful rollout and administration of the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship. Under his leadership, Nevada saw its first upgrade in credit ratings in nearly 30 years.

After serving 8 years as treasurer, he sought the lieutenant governorship in 2006 and won by a sizeable margin. During Lieutenant Governor Krolicki's two terms of service, he has ably focused on advancing the Silver State's tourism industry all over the Nation and around the globe. Lieutenant Governor Krolicki has served as chairman of the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition since 2006, and is actively fighting for northern Nevada to host the 2026 Olympic Games. This year, my wife Lynne and I were honored to participate in Nevada's 150th anniversary celebrations. As chairman of the Nevada Sesquicentennial Commission that successfully carried out over 500 events, Lieutenant Governor Krolicki has once more shown his dedication to the State of Nevada.

As a devoted husband and proud father to three girls, Lieutenant Governor Krolicki stands as a shining example of someone who has dedicated his life to serving his community. I am grateful for his dedication and commitment to the people of the State of Nevada. He exemplifies the highest standards of leadership and community service and should be proud of his long and meaningful career. Today, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in thanking Lieutenant Governor Krolicki for his service to the Silver State and I offer my deepest appreciation for all that he has done to make Nevada an even better place. I offer my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. THOMAS WELCH

● Mr. KING. Madam President, I wish to honor the career of a dear friend and former colleague, Mr. Thomas Welch, who is set to retire this year as Chairman of the Maine Public Utilities Commission. Tom's tremendous 35-year career bridged both the public and private sectors and has always been defined by a steadfast dedication to service and, of course, an unwavering love for the State of Maine.

As Governor, I had the privilege of calling on Tom to lead the Maine Public Utilities Commission, also known as the MPUC, and that is the same position that he was again nominated for and currently holds under Governor Paul LePage.

Serving as Chairman of the MPUC is, at times, a thankless job, but it is also one of monumental importance. Tom's job is central to keeping the lights on, the water flowing, the heat coming, and the people of Maine connected through reliable phone and Internet services. In my administration—just as he does today—Tom performed those tasks and so much more with outstanding acumen, keen judgment, and, I might add, with one eye always towards the future. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that Tom, perhaps more than anyone else across the State, played a pivotal role in ushering Maine's public utilities into the 21st century.

A generation of Maine's young minds can thank Tom for laying the groundwork that hastened their journey into the digital age. Tom recognized early on that the Internet was quickly evolving into a more dynamic and powerful tool that, when placed in the hands of our students and our communities, could become a catalyst for digital learning, a driver of economic growth, and an architect of intra-personal connections that were no longer limited by geographic constraints. With that immense potential in mind, he worked tirelessly to implement the Federal E-Rate program, which delivered Internet access to schools and libraries across the State—and with that newfound Internet access, he delivered new and unprecedented opportunities to people all across Maine, an achievement so fundamental and so critical to our daily lives that it simply cannot be understated.

As high energy prices across Maine continued to weigh heavily on the pockets and minds of people across the State, Tom endeavored mightily to deregulate Maine's electric industry to lower energy prices, and most recently, he lead the charge to expand natural gas capacity throughout the region.

In conclusion, I should point out that I often to refer to Tom as ''SMIM''—the Smartest Maine in Maine. He possesses a vast knowledge of law and public policy that is matched by very few and that has helped inform and shape Maine's telecommunications and energy framework for nearly a decade. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find an individual with a deeper understanding of our State's public utilities infrastructure. But perhaps more important is his genuine ability to teach and share that knowledge with others. These characteristics not only make Tom a remarkable public servant, but a valued role model as well.

I, of course, am saddened to see Tom enter retirement because his departure will be a loss for Maine—but, I, along with the people of Maine, am forever grateful for his many years of service on behalf of our state.

Tom, congratulations and thank you. I hope your retirement is as restful and relaxing as it is well-deserved.●

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE GRANT-DAVIS

● Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I am honored to recognize Ms. Katherine Grant-Davis on the occasion of her retirement from the New Jersey Primary

Care Association, NJPCA, after many years of remarkable service to the Garden State.

Kathy has admirably acted as the President and CEO of NJPCA, a nonprofit organization that represents New Jersey's Federally-Qualified Health Centers, FQHC. Under her leadership, New Jersey's FQHC's have grown in both size and capability while modeling high standards of care for all ages and income levels. She represents the best of what NJPCA has accomplished in addressing the primary care needs of our friends and neighbors, and we owe her a debt of gratitude.

While New Jersey is home to 20 community health centers operating 121 sites throughout the State, this robust network would not be possible without Kathy's tremendous contributions. Under her leadership, FQHCs in New Jersey have come to represent quality, comprehensive, and most importantly, accessible care for more than 495,000 patients.

In addition to these and many more accomplishments during her tenure at the NJPCA, Kathy has also honorably served under two New Jersey Governors within the State's Department of Health and Senior Services. Throughout her career, Kathy has demonstrated an innate ability to get the job done without losing sight of the need to ensure the well-being of all. Whether working to develop new pharmaceutical funding initiatives, directing the New Jersey WIC Program, or helping to implement Title XX funding, her dedication and commitment has earned her the respect and admiration of her peers and colleagues.

In 2012, I was honored to recognize Kathy's efforts with the Evangelina Menendez Trailblazer Award, an honor bestowed upon the strong women of New Jersey who distinguish themselves in our communities each and every day. I am not alone in recognizing and honoring Kathy for the work she had done, as she has received commendations from the National Association of Community Health Centers, the NJ Biz Power 50 in Health Care, and NJ Citizen Action, among others.

While the Affordable Care Act brought the importance of access to high quality, accessible and affordable care to the forefront of the national conversation, it was an issue Kathy had already been working on for years. Her insight and counsel during the debate on health reform, as well as her constant vigilance on the law's implementation, has proven invaluable to me and of immeasurable benefit to FQHCs and their patients, not only in New Jersey but throughout the country. With our health care system evolving to focus on wellness, prevention and access to primary care, Kathy's work building New Jersey's network of community health centers into a nationally-recognized model ensures communities in New Jersey will flourish well into the future.

I congratulate Kathy on her retirement and would like to once again recognize, commend and applaud her legacy of extraordinary dedication to the New Jersey Primary Care Association and her unwavering service to the people of New Jersey.●

RECOGNIZING LA PLAZA

● Mr. RISCH. Madam President, millions of American businesses have found their start in the living rooms, backyards, and garages of aspiring entrepreneurs. Harnessing individual creativity and work ethic, a talent can grow into a lasting enterprise. I wish to honor La Plaza, a restaurant from my home State of Idaho, whose hard work and dedication to quality has seen growth and prosperity while enhancing the local community.

Founded in 2003, La Plaza offers unique and traditional Mexican fare, including an assortment of moles made with chocolate and dried peppers, to diners and visitors in southern Idaho. Guadalupe ''Lupe'' Loza and her husband, Chon, originally from Aguascalientes, Mexico, never planned to own a restaurant until their infant son required long-term hospitalization and they needed to fund his medical bills. As a self-taught chef, Lupe Loza started making tamales and empanadas in her kitchen and selling the food directly to local dairy workers and observers on local soccer fields. As her fans multiplied, and driven by the philosophy that ''farmers can dig the dirt and plant the seeds, but they can't make the plants grow,'' Lupe Loza took a leap of faith and opened the restaurant in a converted two-car garage, where customers sat at folding tables and ate off paper plates.

Today, La Plaza operates out of a 1,992 square foot space on Buhl's Main Street, located on the old Oregon Trail in the western half of Twin Falls County. The Lozas are dedicated to creating and serving authentic Mexican cuisine and making costumers feel like they are eating at home with family. It is not surprising that after 11 years, La Plaza has received overwhelming praise from its diners and the larger community. The from-scratch food and ''grandmother's house'' feel have made La Plaza a local staple and traveler's destination. The small, yet diverse menu is updated frequently, accommodating customer feedback, requests, and favorites. From carne asada tacos to bacon-wrapped cheesy jalapeno bites, customers drive many miles out of their way to sample La Plaza's authentic Mexican cuisine. The restaurant has also expanded to cater at local venues, including the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration for the Latinos Unidos at the College of Southern Idaho. The Lozas dedication to excellence has earned La Plaza a five-star rating on Yelp, the second-highest rated restaurant in Buhl on Trip Advisor, and a 90 percent customer satisfaction rate on Urban Spoon.

Over the past 11 years, La Plaza has doubled in size, and the homemade ranchero fajitas are now served on china plates instead of paper plates. I hope La Plaza's story will inspire others around the country to chase the American Dream. I congratulate the Loza family and the entire La Plaza team on their success, continued growth, and exemplary reputation for quality. La Plaza represents the best aspects of American entrepreneurship and is a credit to both Idaho and the Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO CARTER ADAMS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Carter Adams, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Carter is a junior at the University of Central Florida, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Carter for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MADELINE AHERN

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Madeline Ahern, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Madeline is currently a rising senior at the Madeira School in McLean, VA. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Madeline for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO NATALIE BARRERO

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Natalie Barrero, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Natalie is a graduate of the Catholic University of America, having majored in international business. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Natalie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MOISES BENHABIB

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Moises Benhabib, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Moises is a graduate of the University of Tampa where he majored in government and world affairs. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Moises for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BARR BENYAMIN

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Barr Benyamin, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Barr is a graduate of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, CA, having majored in political science and business administration. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Barr for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MAT BOWERS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Mat Bowers, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Mat is a senior at Cornell University, currently majoring in biology with a concentration in animal physiology. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Mat for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KATIE BULLEK

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Katie Bullek, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Katie is a rising senior at the College the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Currently, Katie is majoring in economics and political science. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Katie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN BURKE

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize John Burke, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

John is a graduate of the George Washington University where he majored in international affairs. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to him for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ALYSON CUERVO

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Alyson Cuervo, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Alyson is a rising junior at the George Washington University in Washington, DC. Currently, Alyson is majoring in international affairs. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Alyson for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JOEL DENNIS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Joel Dennis, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Joel is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, having majored in history and political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Joel for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO RACHEL EILERS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Rachel Eilers, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Rachel is a student at Auburn University, currently majoring in political science and communication. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Rachel for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ABBIE FREY

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Abbie Frey, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Abbie is a junior at Cornell University, currently majoring in industrial and labor relations. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Abbie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO AMELIA GARCIA

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Amelia Garcia, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Amelia is a sophomore at the University of Virginia, currently majoring in commerce. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Amelia for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO EMERSON GEORGE

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Emerson George, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Emerson is a senior at the University of Mississippi, currently majoring in political science and business. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Emerson for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CORINNE HUSTON

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Corinne Huston, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Corinne is a graduate of the University of South Florida in political science. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Corinne for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO HELENA JOO

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Helena Joo, a 2014 summer

intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Helena is a junior at University of Maryland, currently majoring in health administration and public policy. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Helena for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO VANESSA MICHAUD

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Vanessa Michaud, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Vanessa is a senior at the University of Miami, currently majoring in international finance and marketing. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Vanessa for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO WONGANI MTIKA

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Wongani Mtika, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Wongani is a sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, currently majoring in nutrition pre-med. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Wongani for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE NAVARRO

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Stephanie Navarro, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Stephanie is a student at University of Central Florida, currently majoring in physics. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Stephanie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CALEB ORR

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Caleb Orr, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Caleb is a sophomore at Abilene Christian University, currently majoring in political science and sociology. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Caleb for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK O'BRYANT

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Patrick O'Bryant, a 2014 intern in my Tallahassee, FL, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Patrick is a senior at Florida State University, where he is majoring in applied economics and political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Patrick for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN O'CONNER

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Brian O'Connor, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Brian is a junior at Saint Anselm College, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Brian for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO GRAZIELLA PASTOR

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Graziella Pastor, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Graziella is a freshman at New York University, currently majoring in business and political economics. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Graziella for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO NICOLAS PEDREIRA

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Nicolas Pedreira, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Nicolas is a rising senior at the George Washington University in Washington, DC. Currently, he is majoring in political science and international affairs. Nicolas is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Nicolas for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO OLIVIA PEREZ-CUBAS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Olivia Perez-Cubas, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Olivia is a graduate of Florida State University, having majored in political science and communications. Currently, she is studying for a master's degree in journalism at Georgetown University. Olivia is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Olivia for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO TYSON PETERSON

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Tyson Peterson, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Tyson is a senior at the University of North Florida, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Tyson for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO BETHANY POULOS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Bethany Poulos, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Bethany is a graduate of Liberty University, having majored in international relations. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Bethany for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JAIRO RIVERA

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Jairo Rivera, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Jairo is a graduate of Florida International University, having majored in political science. Jairo is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jairo for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JONATHAN RIVERAS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Jonathan Riveras, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Jonathan is a junior at Florida International University, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jonathan for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO DOUGAL ROBINSON

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Dougal Robinson, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Dougal is a graduate of Sydney University, where he majored in government and international relations. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Dougal for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO PETER SCATURRO

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Peter Scaturro, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Peter is a junior at University of Virginia, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Peter for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO RACHAEL ANN SOLOWAY

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Rachael Ann Soloway, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Rachael is a senior at the University of South Florida, currently majoring in communications. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Rachael for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO CHELSIE SUMNER

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Chelsie Sumner, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Chelsie is a graduate of Davidson College, having majored in English. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Chelsie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ARI TEPLER

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Ari Tepler, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Ari is a freshman at Yeshiva University, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Ari for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JACKIE VARAS

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Jackie Varas, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Jackie is a senior at the University of Florida, currently majoring in economics and political science. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jackie for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO COURTNEY VEATCH

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Courtney Veatch, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Courtney is a graduate of the University of North Florida, having majored in English and history. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Courtney for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO FRANCISCO VELEZ

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Francisco Velez, a 2014 summer intern in my Washington, DC office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Francisco is a senior at the University of Florida, currently majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Francisco for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SEVERIN WALSTAD

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Severin Walstad, a 2013 fall intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Severin is a graduate of the University of Florida, having majored in public relations. Severin is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Severin for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL ZINGALI

● Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, today I recognize Michael Zingali, a 2014 spring intern in my Washington, DC, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Michael is a rising junior at the Catholic University of America in

Washington, DC. Currently, Michael is majoring in business management. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Michael for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 1112 through and including 1137, and all nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Margaret C. Wilmoth

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James B. Laster

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. James G. Foggo, III

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Derek P. Rydholm

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Larry D. Wyche

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Lawrence F. Thoms

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Adm. Harry B. Harris, Jr.

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Col. Shelley R. Campbell

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Mark C. Nowland

IN THE ARMY

The following Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army in the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be brigadier general

Colonel Michael G. Amundson
Colonel Charles K. Aris
Colonel Tommy H. Baker
Colonel Joe G. Barnard, Jr.
Colonel Brian B. Barrontine
Colonel Barry K. Beach
Colonel Michael R. Berry
Colonel Thomas H. Blackstock, Jr.
Colonel William B. Blaylock, II
Colonel Daniel J. Bochicchio
Colonel Christopher P. Callahan
Colonel Lloyd P. Caviness, Jr.
Colonel Fred M. Chesbro
Colonel David L.G. Collins
Colonel James D. Craig
Colonel Thomas G. Croymans
Colonel Zachary F. Doser
Colonel Gordon L. Ellis
Colonel William J. Freidel
Colonel Daniel J. Fuhr
Colonel Troy D. Galloway
Colonel Jeffrey L. Gaylord
Colonel David E. Graetz
Colonel Matthew J. Hearon
Colonel William J. Hersh
Colonel Thomas F. Heslin, Jr.
Colonel Michael T. Heston
Colonel Mark C. Jackson
Colonel Bert S. Kozen
Colonel Christopher F. Lawson
Colonel Tim C. Lawson
Colonel Collier H. Lipple
Colonel Joane K. Mathews
Colonel Kenneth L. McCreary
Colonel Anthony V. Mohatt
Colonel Adrian B. Nettles
Colonel Tracy R. Norris
Colonel Stephen B. Owens
Colonel Lawrence R. Powell
Colonel John M. Prine
Colonel Helen E. Rogers
Colonel Paul D. Rogers
Colonel Robert A. Sparing
Colonel Mark C. Strong
Colonel Brian R. Trenda
Colonel Bryan A. Tutko
Colonel William J. Walker
Colonel Steven H. Warnstadt
Colonel Ronald A. Westfall
Colonel Clifford W. Wilkins

The following named officer for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Army under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Darsie D. Rogers, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Frederick S. Rudesheim

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Stephen J. Hager

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Eugene J. LeBoeuf

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12211:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. John C. Harris

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Lewis G. Irwin

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. David E. Quantock

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Anthony R. Ierardi

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Vincent R. Stewart

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Andrew E. Busch

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Army under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Richard D. Clarke, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Aaron T. Walter

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. David W. Ling

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Troy M. Shoemaker

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Vice Adm. Scott H. Swift

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1712–2 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning TAFT OWEN AUJERO, and ending JEFFERY LYNN RICHARD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 15, 2014.

PN1952 AIR FORCE nominations (1193) beginning PETER BRIAN ABERCROMBIE, II, and ending JASON C. ZUMWALT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 31, 2014.

PN2031 AIR FORCE nominations (5) beginning GEORGE W. CLIFFORD, III, and ending YOUNG J. JUN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2147 AIR FORCE nominations (105) beginning TRAVIS K. ACHESON, and ending PAUL C. ZURKOWSKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2148 AIR FORCE nomination of Jennifer C. Alexander, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2149 AIR FORCE nomination of Joyce P. Fiedler, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2194 AIR FORCE nominations (24) beginning ROBERT B.0. ALLEN, and ending KEITH M. VOLLENWEIDER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2195 AIR FORCE nominations (57) beginning RICHARD Y. BAIRD, and ending JEROME L VINLUAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2196 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning RICHARD M. BURGON, and ending JOSHUA N. SCOTT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2197 AIR FORCE nomination of Allyson M. Yamaki, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2198 AIR FORCE nominations (66) beginning AARON J. AGIRRE, and ending GREGORY S. ZILINSKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2199 AIR FORCE nominations (249) beginning ERIKA S. ABRAHAM, and ending FEI ZHANG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2200 AIR FORCE nominations (26) beginning RHETT B. CASPER, and ending STACEY ELIZABETH ZAIKOSKI, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2201 AIR FORCE nominations (137) beginning JOSE C. AGUIRRE, and ending SANDY K. YIP, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2202 AIR FORCE nominations (10) beginning JASON D. EITUTIS, and ending BRIAN K. WYRICK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2203 AIR FORCE nominations (12) beginning SARAHANN BEAL, and ending CAROL C. WALTERS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2208 AIR FORCE nominations (43) beginning DAVID P. ABBOTT, and ending KEVIN D. UNDERWOOD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2209 AIR FORCE nominations (159) beginning MOHAMMED H. ALJALLAD, and ending ANITA M. YATES, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

IN THE ARMY

PN1674–2 ARMY nomination of KIMBERELY DEROUENSLAVEN, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 7, 2014.

PN1927 ARMY nomination of Barry C. Busby, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 22, 2014.

PN2032–1 ARMY nominations (142) beginning LAMAR D. ADAMS, and ending G001317, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2033–1 ARMY nominations (102) beginning ERIC C. ANDERSON, and ending D011466, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2034 ARMY nominations (18) beginning RANDY L. BRANDT, and ending KENNETH R. WILLIAMS, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2036–1 ARMY nominations (234) beginning MICHAEL D. ACORD, and ending D006516, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2037 ARMY nomination of Darrell R. V. Tran, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2038 ARMY nominations (5) beginning GEORGE W. MASON, III, and ending ALVIN D. WILSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2039 ARMY nominations (5) beginning JOHN W. BOZICEVIC, and ending JAMES E. SCALF, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2046 ARMY nomination of Patrick M. McGrath, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2047 ARMY nominations (3) beginning PEGGY E. D. MCGILL, and ending ELENA M. SCARBROUGH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2048 ARMY nominations (7) beginning DELROY A. BROWN, and ending RICHARD G. SCHMID, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2049–1 ARMY nominations (11) beginning BRIAN R. COLEMAN, and ending ROBERT W. THOMPSON, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2050 ARMY nominations (12) beginning VANCE J. ARGO, and ending GREGORY W. TEISAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2051 ARMY nominations (7) beginning SCOTT A. ARCAND, and ending WILLIAM D. WEAVER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2052–1 ARMY nominations (2) beginning DAWN M. FLYNN, and ending SANDRA J. HETZEL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2053–1 ARMY nominations (7) beginning SCOTT B. BYERS, and ending CHARLENE A. WEINGARTEN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2054–1 ARMY nominations (28) beginning DONNA K. AYERS, and ending MARY E. WOODARD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2055–1 ARMY nominations (42) beginning FELIX J. E. ANDUJAR, and ending TERENCE R. WOODS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2056–1 ARMY nominations (26) beginning BRYAN D. BROWN, and ending NICHOLAS D. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2057 ARMY nominations (5) beginning ANTHONY J. LABADIA, and ending JOSEPH F. TOMMASINO, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2058–1 ARMY nominations (3) beginning MARTA E. ACHA, and ending RICORD W. TORGERSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2059 ARMY nominations (7) beginning ZENAIDA M. COFIE, and ending TODD L. STEWART, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 17, 2014.

PN2150 ARMY nomination of Joseph T. Morris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2151 ARMY nomination of Richard T. Knowlton, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2152 ARMY nominations (14) beginning ROBERT A. BORCHERDING, and ending DEAN L. WHITFORD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2153 ARMY nomination of Steven E. Baker, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2154 ARMY nomination of Arun Sharma, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2155 ARMY nomination of James M. Brumit, which was received by the Senate

and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2156 ARMY nominations (24) beginning SAMUEL AGOSTOSANTIAGO, and ending JOHN R. WILT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2157 ARMY nominations (12) beginning EDWIN B. BALES, and ending RYAN M. ZIPF, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2158 ARMY nominations (2) beginning PAUL P. MCBRIDE, and ending PAUL E. REYNOLDS, JR., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2159 ARMY nomination of John E. Atwood, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2160 ARMY nominations (3) beginning DANIEL H. ALDANA, and ending DAVID R. NAVORSKA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2161 ARMY nomination of Eric Graham, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2162–1 ARMY nominations (2) beginning SUSAN DAVIS, and ending MATTHEW G. STLAURENT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2163 ARMY nominations (3) beginning SHELLEY P. HONNOLD, and ending NEAL E. WOOLLEN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2164–1 ARMY nominations (19) beginning SUSAN J. ARGUETA, and ending JASON S. WINDSOR, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2165–1 ARMY nominations (37) beginning JOHN R. BAILEY, and ending D004653, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2166 ARMY nominations (2) beginning GARY L. GROSS, and ending CRAIG D. SHRIVER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2167 ARMY nominations (6) beginning MELISSA R. BEAUMAN, and ending MICHAEL W. STEPHENS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2182 ARMY nomination of Richard M. Hester, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 17, 2014.

PN2190 ARMY nomination of Jay E. Clasing, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 19, 2014.

PN2211–1 ARMY nominations (32) beginning SCOTT J. ANDERSON, and ending STEFANIA V. WILCOX, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2212–1 ARMY nominations (65) beginning RACHEL R. ANTHONY, and ending D011532, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2213 ARMY nominations (186) beginning NADINE M. ALONZO, and ending D012299, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2214–1 ARMY nominations (144) beginning MARK ACOPAN, and ending TIMOTHY R. YOURK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2215 ARMY nominations (84) beginning KATHARINE M. E. ADAMS, and ending HANS P. ZELLER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

PN2216 ARMY nominations (48) beginning ROBERT J. ABBOTT, and ending D011857, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of December 3, 2014.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN2042 MARINE CORPS nomination of Timothy E. Robertson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2174 MARINE CORPS nomination of Christopher E. Hall, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

IN THE NAVY

PN2040 NAVY nomination of Angela M. Rowell, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2041 NAVY nomination of Gregory L. Koontz, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of September 15, 2014.

PN2168 NAVY nomination of Timothy S. Roush, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2169 NAVY nomination of Kimberly M. Freitas, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2170 NAVY nomination of Adam B. Yost, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2171 NAVY nomination of Charles S. Eisenberg, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2172 NAVY nomination of Jack W.L. Tsao, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2173 NAVY nomination of James M. Ross, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 13, 2014.

PN2183 NAVY nomination of Lakeeva B. Gunderson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 17, 2014.

PN2184 NAVY nominations (38) beginning TRAVIS S. ANDERSON, and ending JULIAN G. WILSON III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of November 17, 2014.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

MICHAEL D. RESNICK TERRORIST SCREENING CENTER

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the EPW Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3096, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3096) to designate the building occupied by the Federal Bureau of Investigation located at 801 Follin Lane, Vienna, Virginia, as the ''Michael D. Resnick Terrorist Screening Center.''

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

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 3096) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

DESIGNER ANABOLIC STEROID CONTROL ACT OF 2014

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4771, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4771) to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids.

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

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 4771) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

AMENDING THE ENERGY POLICY AND CONSERVATION ACT

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the energy committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5057 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5057) to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to permit exemptions for external power supplies from certain efficiency standards, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 5057) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

FORECLOSURE RELIEF AND EXTENSION FOR SERVICEMEMBERS ACT OF 2014

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 3008, which was introduced earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3008) to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (S. 3008) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 3008

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 ''Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.

Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–154; 126 Stat. 1208) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''December 31, 2014'' and inserting ''December 31, 2015''; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking ''January 1, 2015'' and inserting ''January 1, 2016''.

UNITED STATES ANTI-DOPING AGENCY REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 608, S. 2338.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2338) to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2338) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2338

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 ''United States Anti-Doping Agency Reauthorization Act''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBIT PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING METHODS.

Section 701 of title VII of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (21 U.S.C. 2001) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (4); and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''and be recognized worldwide as the independent national anti-doping organization for the United States'' after ''Committee'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking '', or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping'' and inserting ''or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency'';

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking '', or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping'' and inserting ''or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency'';

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and the prevention of use of performance-enhancing drugs, or performance-enhancing genetic modifications accomplished through gene-doping by United States amateur athletes; and'' and inserting '', and the prevention of use by United States amateur athletes of performance-enhancing drugs or prohibited performance-enhancing methods adopted by the Agency.''; and

(E) by striking paragraph (5).

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 703 of title VII of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 2006 (21 U.S.C. 2003) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 703. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the United States Anti-Doping Agency—

''(1) for fiscal year 2014, $11,300,000;

''(2) for fiscal year 2015, $11,700,000;

''(3) for fiscal year 2016, $12,300,000;

''(4) for fiscal year 2017, $12,900,000;

''(5) for fiscal year 2018, $13,500,000;

''(6) for fiscal year 2019, $14,100,000; and

''(7) for fiscal year 2020, $14,800,000.''.

U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee on commerce be discharged from further consideration of S. 2983 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2983) to allow for a contract for operation of Melville Hall of United States Merchant Marine Academy after gift by United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation, Inc., for renovation of such hall and for other purposes.

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

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2983) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2983

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 ''U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Improvement Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. MELVILLE HALL OF UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY.

(a) GIFT TO THE MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY.—The Maritime Administrator may accept a gift of money from the Foundation under section 51315 of title 46, United States Code, for the purpose of renovating Melville Hall on the campus of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

(b) COVERED GIFTS.—A gift described in this subsection is a gift under subsection (a) that the Maritime Administrator determines exceeds the sum of—

(1) the minimum amount that is sufficient to ensure the renovation of Melville Hall in accordance with the capital improvement plan of the United States Merchant Marine Academy that was in effect on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) 25 percent of the amount described in paragraph (1).

(c) OPERATION CONTRACTS.—Subject to subsection (d), in the case that the Maritime Administrator accepts a gift of money described in subsection (b), the Maritime Administrator may enter into a contract with the Foundation for the operation of Melville Hall to make available facilities for, among other possible uses, official academy functions, third-party catering functions, and industry events and conferences.

(d) CONTRACT TERMS.—The contract described in subsection (c) shall be for such period and on such terms as the Maritime Administrator considers appropriate, including a provision, mutually agreeable to the Maritime Administrator and the Foundation, that—

(1) requires the Foundation—

(A) at the expense solely of the Foundation through the term of the contract to maintain Melville Hall in a condition that is as good as or better than the condition Melville Hall was in on the later of—

(i) the date that the renovation of Melville Hall was completed; or

(ii) the date that the Foundation accepted Melville Hall after it was tendered to the Foundation by the Maritime Administrator; and

(B) to deposit all proceeds from the operation of Melville Hall, after expenses necessary for the operation and maintenance of Melville Hall, into the account of the Regimental Affairs Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentality or successor entity, to be used solely for the morale and welfare of the cadets of the United States Merchant Marine Academy; and

(2) prohibits the use of Melville Hall as lodging or an office by any person for more than 4 days in any calendar year other than—

(A) by the United States; or

(B) for the administration and operation of Melville Hall.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CONTRACT.—The term ''contract'' includes any modification, extension, or renewal of the contract.

(2) FOUNDATION.—In this section, the term ''Foundation'' means the United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation, Inc.

(f) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed under section

3105 of title 41, United States Code, as requiring the Maritime Administrator to award a contract for the operation of Melville Hall to the Foundation.

RECOGNIZING THE 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 599, submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 599) recognizing the 100-year anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters Southeastern Pennsylvania.

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

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, 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. 599) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 104–191, the reappointment of the following individual to the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics: Dr. Raj Chanderraj of Nevada for a term of four years.

The Chair announces, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 107–12, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: Michael Halley of Nevada.

CORRECTION

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

House agreed to the Senate amendment with an amendment to H.R. 83, Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6583–S6697

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2998–3008, and S. Res. 599. **Pages S6626–27**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled "Fighting Fraud: Lessons Learned from the Senate Aging Committee's Consumer Hotline". (S. Rept. No. 113–305)

Special Report entitled "Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit: Increasing Use and Access of Affordable Prescription Drugs". (S. Rept. No. 113–306)

S. 1784, to improve timber management on Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant land, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 113–307)

S. 1463, to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, and purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, or in a manner substantially affecting interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species. (S. Rept. No. 113–308)

H.R. 4573, to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States.

S. Res. 595, recognizing Nobel Laureates Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai for their efforts to end the financial exploitation of children and to ensure the right of all children to an education, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and with an amended preamble.

S. Res. 597, commemorating and supporting the goals of World AIDS day.

S. 2922, to reinstate reporting requirements related to United States-Hong Kong relations, with an amendment.

S. Con. Res. 38, expressing the sense of Congress that Warren Weinstein should be returned home to his family, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6626**

Measures Passed:

Ukraine Freedom Support Act: Senate passed S. 2828, to impose sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation, to provide additional assistance to Ukraine, after withdrawing the committee amendments, and agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6602–07**

Durbin (for Menendez/Corker) Amendment No. 4092, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6607**

Transfer of Yellow Creek Port Properties: Committee on Environment and Public Works was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3044, to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6607**

Safe and Secure Drinking Water Protection Act: Committee on Environment and Public Works was discharged from further consideration of S. 2785, to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to publish a health advisory and submit reports with respect to microcystins in drinking water, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6607**

Community Financial Institutions: Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3329, to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual

savings, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6607–08

Durbin (for King) Amendment No. 4093, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S6607–08**

Credit Union Share Insurance Fund Parity Act: Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3468, to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to extend insurance coverage to amounts held in a member account on behalf of another person, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6608**

Central Oregon Jobs and Water Security Act: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2640, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S6621–22**

Merkley Amendment No. 4094, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6622**

Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act: Senate passed S. 1535, to deter terrorism, provide justice for victims, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6656–59

Schumer/Cornyn Amendment No. 4096, in the nature of substitute. **Page S6657**

Cybersecurity Act: Senate passed S. 1353, to provide for an ongoing, voluntary public-private partnership to improve cybersecurity, and to strengthen cybersecurity research and development, workforce development and education, and public awareness and preparedness, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto:

Pages S6665–69

King (for Rockefeller/Thune) Amendment No. 4097, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6669**

Continuing Resolution: Senate passed H.J. Res. 130, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015. **Page S6681**

Michael D. Resnick Terrorist Screening Center: Committee on Environment and Public Works was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3096, to designate the building occupied by the Federal Bureau of Investigation located at 801 Follin Lane, Vienna, Virginia, as the ''Michael D. Resnick Terrorist Screening Center'', and the bill was then passed. **Page S6696**

Designer Anabolic Steroid Control Act: Committee on the Judiciary was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 4771, to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6696**

EPS Service Parts Act: Committee on Energy and Natural Resources was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 5057, to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to permit exemptions for external power supplies from certain efficiency standards, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6696**

Mortgages, Mortgage Foreclosure, and Eviction: Senate passed S. 3008, to extend temporarily the extended period of protection for members of uniformed services relating to mortgages, mortgage foreclosure, and eviction. **Page S6696**

United States Anti-Doping Agency Reauthorization Act: Senate passed S. 2338, to reauthorize the United States Anti-Doping Agency. **Pages S6696–97**

Melville Hall of United States Merchant Marine Academy: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. 2983, to allow for a contract for operation of Melville Hall of United States Merchant Marine Academy after gift by United States Merchant Marine Academy Alumni Association and Foundation, Inc., for renovation of such hall, and the bill was then passed. **Page S6697**

100-Year Anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters Southeastern Pennsylvania: Senate agreed to S. Res. 599, recognizing the 100-year anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters Southeastern Pennsylvania. **Page S6697**

House Messages:

Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to 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 S6649–56, S6659–65, S6669–81

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill. **Page S6585**

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid Amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date. **Page S6585**

Reid Amendment No. 3985 (to Amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6585**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 85 yeas to 14 nays (Vote No. 322), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill. **Page S6590**

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 3986, to change the enactment date, fell when cloture was invoked on the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill. **Pages S6585, S6590**

Reid Amendment No. 3987 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 3986), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 3986 fell. **Pages S6585, S6590**

Reid Amendment No. 3988 (to Amendment No. 3987), of a perfecting nature, fell when Reid Amendment No. 3987 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 3986), of a perfecting nature fell. **Pages S6585, S6590**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that at 12 noon, on Friday, December 12, 2014, all post-cloture time on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill be considered expired; that it be in order, notwithstanding cloture having been invoked for Senator Coburn to offer a motion to refer the House Message; that there be three hours of debate, one hour each for Senators Coburn and Reid, or their designees, and 30 minutes each for Senators Murkowski and Inhofe, or their designees, prior to a vote on or in relation to the motion to refer; that the Coburn motion to refer be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; that if the Coburn motion to refer is not agreed to, Senator Coburn be recognized for the purposes of making a motion; that following disposition of the Coburn motion, the pending motion to concur with a further amendment be withdrawn; that the Senate vote on the motion to concur; that no motions other than the Coburn motions, motions to waive or motions to table be in order; that the vote on the motion to concur be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; that if the motion to concur is agreed to, Senate begin consideration of the following concurrent resolutions, en bloc: H. Con. Res. 21, providing for a correction in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3979; and H. Con. Res. 123, directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make a correction in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3979; and that the concurrent resolutions be agreed to. **Page S6681**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, at approximately 10 a.m., on Friday, December 12, 2014. **Page S6646**

Appointments:

National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics: The Chair announced, on behalf of the Majority Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 104–191, the reappointment of the following individual to the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics: Dr. Raj Chanderraj of Nevada for a term of four years. **Page S6698**

Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: The Chair announced, on behalf of the Majority Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 107–12, the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Review Board: Michael Haley of Nevada vice Al Gillespie of Nevada. **Page S6698**

Signing Authority—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that from Thursday, December 11, 2014, through Friday, December 12, 2014, Senator Pryor be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions. **Page S6645**

Nominations—Agreement: A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that following disposition of the House Message with respect to 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, Senate begin consideration of the nominations of Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Independent State of Samoa; Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland; David Nathan Saperstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom; Amy Jane Hyatt, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Palau; Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, to be Director General of the Foreign Service; Virginia E. Palmer, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi; Donald L. Heflin, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde; Michael W. Kempner, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of

Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2015; and Leon Aron, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2016; that there be two minutes for debate, equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees, prior to each vote; that upon the use or yielding back of time, Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nominations in the order listed; that any roll call votes, following the first in the series, be 10 minutes in length; and that no further motions be in order to the nominations. **Page S6882**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

4 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

65 Army nominations in the rank of general.

2 Marine Corps nominations in the rank of general.

4 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy. **Pages S6646–47, S6693–96**

Messages from the House: **Pages S6622–23**

Measures Referred: **Page S6623**

Executive Communications: **Pages S6623–26**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S6626**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S6627**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6627–31**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6686–93**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S6631–45**

Notices of Intent: **Pages S6644–45**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S6645**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S6645**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—322) **Page S6590**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 11:30 p.m., until 10:00 a.m. on Friday, December 12, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6646.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

IMPROVING CHEMICAL FACILITY SAFETY AND SECURITY

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a joint oversight hearing with the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions to examine the implementation of the President's executive order on Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security, after receiving testimony from David Michaels, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Administration; and Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agency.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original resolution to authorize the limited use of the United States Armed Forces against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant;

S. Con. Res. 38, expressing the sense of Congress that Warren Weinstein should be returned home to his family, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 595, recognizing Nobel Laureates Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai for their efforts to end the financial exploitation of children and to ensure the right of all children to an education, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. Res. 597, commemorating and supporting the goals of World AIDS Day;

H.R. 4573, to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States;

S. 2922, to reinstate reporting requirements related to United States-Hong Kong relations, with an amendment; and

The nominations of Antony Blinken, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of State, Leslie Berger Kiernan, of Maryland, as an Alternate Representative of the United States of America, to the Sixty-ninth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and a list in the Foreign Service.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Joan Marie Azrack, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, Loretta Copeland Biggs, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina, Elizabeth K. Dillon, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Virginia, and Michael P. Botticelli, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of National Drug Control Policy.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 39 public bills, H.R. 5848–5886; and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 779–781 were introduced. **Pages H9302–04**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H9304–05**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2612, to amend title 40, United States Code, to improve the functioning and management of the Public Buildings Service (H. Rept. 113–656);

H.R. 5233, to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–657);

H.R. 5402, to amend the Clayton Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act to provide that the Federal Trade Commission shall exercise authority with respect to mergers only under the Clayton Act and only in the same procedural manner as Attorney General exercises such authority (H. Rept. 113–658);

Second Annual Report of the Activities of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives During the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress (H. Rept 113–659);

H.R. 2751, to amend the Small Business Act to prohibit the use of reverse auctions for design and construction services procurements (H. Rept 113–660);

H.R. 2452, to amend the Small Business Act with respect to the procurement program for women-owned small business concerns, and for other purposes (H. Rept 113–661);

H.R. 2882, to amend the Small Business Act and title 38, United States Code to provide for a consolidated definition of a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 113–662, Part 1);

In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Alcee L. Hastings (H. Rept. 113–663);

In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Phil Gingrey (H. Rept. 113–664);

In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Judy Chu (H. Rept. 113–665); and

In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Tom Petri (H. Rept. 113–666).

Pages H9301–02

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Kingston to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H9047**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a voice vote. **Page H9048**

Filing Authority: Agreed by unanimous consent that all committees have until 5 p.m. on December 30, 2014, to file reports to accompany measures.

Pages H9049–50

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Soledad Canyon Settlement Act: H.R. 5742, to provide to the Secretary of the Interior a mechanism to cancel contracts for the sale of materials CA–20139 and CA–22901; **Pages H9050–53**

Protecting and Securing Chemical Facilities from Terrorist Attacks Act of 2014: Concurred in the Senate amendment to H.R. 4007, to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program; **Pages H9053–60**

Critical Infrastructure Research and Development Advancement Act of 2014: Concurred in the Senate amendments to H.R. 2952, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make certain improvements in the laws relating to the advancement of security technologies for critical infrastructure protection; and **Pages H9060–62**

National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center Act of 2014: S. 2519, to codify an existing operations center for cybersecurity.

Pages H9062–65

Suspension—Proceedings Failed: The House failed to agree to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Wednesday, December 10th:

Supporting America's Charities Act: H.R. 5806, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify and make permanent certain expiring provisions related to charitable contributions, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 275 yeas to 149 nays, Roll No. 562.

Page H9075

Recess: The House recessed at 2:07 p.m. and reconvened at 8:56 p.m. **Page H9284**

Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015: The House agreed to the motion to concur in the Senate amendment with an amendment consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–59, modified by the amendment printed in H. Rept. 113–655, to H.R. 83, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of action plans aimed at reducing reliance on

imported fossil fuels and increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resource, by a yea-and-nay vote of 219 yeas to 206 nays, Roll No. 563.

Pages H9065–75, H9076–90

H. Res. 776, the rule providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 83), was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 214 yeas to 212 nays, Roll No. 561, after the previous question was ordered. **Pages H9074–75**

Pursuant to H. Res. 776, H. Con. Res. 122 was adopted. **Page H9291**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Tuesday, December 9th:

John Muir National Historic Site Expansion Act: H.R. 5699, amended, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire approximately 44 acres of land in Martinez, California, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 361 yeas to 39 nays, Roll No. 564.

Pages H9290–91

Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.J. Res. 130, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2015. **Page H9291**

Announcement from the Chair: Pursuant to House Resolution 676, the Chair announced that a civil action was initiated on November 21, 2014, in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia relating to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. **Page H9292**

Requiring the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.R. 5803, to require the Secretary of the Interior to assemble a team of technical, policy, and financial experts to address the energy needs of the insular areas of the United States and the Freely Associated States through the development of energy action plans aimed at promoting access to affordable, reliable energy, including increasing use of indigenous clean-energy resources. **Page H9292**

Amending certain provisions of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.R. 2591, to amend certain provisions of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012. **Page H9292**

Central Oregon Jobs and Water Security Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 2640, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon.

Pages H9292–93

Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2014: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 1474, to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to eliminate the use of valid court orders to secure lockup of status offenders. **Page H9294**

Cybersecurity Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and pass S. 1353, to provide for an ongoing, voluntary public-private partnership to improve cybersecurity and to strengthen cybersecurity research and development, workforce development and education, and public awareness and preparedness. **Pages H9294–99**

Enhancing the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R.3329, to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, and increase individual savings. **Pages H10303–04**

Imposing sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation and providing additional assistance to Ukraine: The House agreed to discharge from committee and pass H.R. 5859, to impose sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation and to provide additional assistance to Ukraine. **Pages H10305–10**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 3 p.m. tomorrow, December 12. **Page H9299**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today and messages received from the Senate today appear on pages H9075–76, H9291–92, H9294.

Senate Referrals: S. 2822, S. 2785, S. 2828, and S. 1535 were held at the desk. **Pages H9076, H9291–92**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Four yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H9074–75, H9075, H9290 and H9291. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE ENERGY POLICY AND CONSERVATION ACT OF 1975: ARE WE POSITIONING AMERICA FOR SUCCESS IN AN ERA OF ENERGY ABUNDANCE?

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975: Are We Positioning America for Success in an Era of Energy Abundance?''. Testimony was heard from Adam Sieminski, Administrator, U.S. Energy Information Administration; and public witnesses.

THE FUTURE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Nuclear Energy''. Testimony was heard from Peter Lyons, Assistant Secretary, Office of Nuclear Energy, Department of Energy; and public witnesses.

BUSINESS MEETING; EVALUATING FEDERAL AND COMMUNITY EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a business meeting to approve the second annual activities report for the 113th Congress and a hearing entitled ''Evaluating Federal and Community Efforts to Eliminate Veteran Homelessness''. The second annual activities report for the 113th Congress was adopted. Testimony was heard from Lisa Pape, Executive Director, Homeless Programs, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Jennifer Ho, Senior Advisor on Housing and Services to the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Keith Kelly, Assistant Secretary of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, Department of Labor; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Friday, December 12

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3979, Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act, post-cloture.

If all debate time is used, there will be up to four roll call votes on or in relation to H.R. 3979, Carl Levin and Howard P. ''Buck'' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act, and confirmation of the nomination of David Nathan Saperstein, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, at approximately 3 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

3 p.m., Friday, December 12

House Chamber

Program for Friday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 3 p.m.

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