

this out, including the Presiding Officer, in the very first meeting of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

I encourage every Member of the Senate to vote for the Clay Hunt suicide prevention bill and make an investment in the future of the lives we will save of our veterans who return with mental health problems.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to begin by thanking Chairman ISAKSON for giving the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act the priority it needs and deserves. I know the Presiding Officer, as a veteran, understands and supports the vital mission of this legislation.

I also want to thank the veterans service organizations, particularly the IAVA, for the critical role they have played in heightening awareness and educating the American public about the scourge that veteran suicide reflects in our society, the unacceptable 22 veterans who commit suicide every day in the greatest, strongest Nation in the history of the world.

Our veterans all too often succumb to the invisible wounds and inner demons that come home with them. They lack the mental health care they need and deserve because the VA lacks the resources to provide that health care.

I know the VA is committed to do better. Senator ISAKSON and I have just returned from 3 hours at the VA, where we heard the Secretary, as well as his top-ranking staff, commit to using this act as a means of enhancing and increasing the quality and quantity of mental health care our veterans deserve. Far too many of our veterans have succumbed to suicide, including a friend of mine, Justin Eldridge, whose widow Joanna was my guest at the State of the Union.

She has struggled in the wake of his death with their children to survive this tragedy. Her courage and strength mirror those same qualities of bravery and fortitude demonstrated by Susan Selke who testified before our committee about her son Clay Hunt, for whom this bill is named. My hope is we can continue this bipartisan work together.

I thank Senator MCCAIN, the cosponsor of this bill, and hope we keep faith with all of our veterans and make the VA the pioneer and champion of mental health care so we end the scourge of veteran suicide in this great Nation.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this measure.

I yield the floor.

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

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

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask for a vote to be called, and I ask that it be a rollcall vote on the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act.

I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

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

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 50 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Reed
Booker	Hatch	Reid
Boozman	Heinrich	Risch
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sanders
Capito	Inhofe	Sasse
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johnson	Schumer
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Cassidy	King	Sessions
Coats	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cochran	Lankford	Shelby
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Sullivan
Corker	Manchin	Tester
Cornyn	Markey	Thune
Cotton	McCain	Tillis
Crapo	McCaskill	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Udall
Daines	Menendez	Vitter
Donnelly	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Enzi	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Kirk

The bill (H.R. 203) was passed.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:32 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, as we begin this debate on funding for the Department of Homeland Security, we

face some fundamental questions: Are we going to prioritize the safety and security of the American people? Or are we going to put the country at risk because of an ideological disagreement?

That is the choice I believe we face with this bill. We can either pass a clean bill that makes critical investments in our Nation's security or we can put this country at risk by playing politics with the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

We all know these are dangerous times that we live in. Every day, new threats emerge that endanger our citizens at home and our allies abroad. The Department of Homeland Security's role in protecting our country from these threats cannot be overstated, and its funding should not be controversial.

Right now, the U.S. law enforcement community is on high alert for terror threats after attacks in Sydney, Australia, and Ottawa, Canada, and in Paris. Just 2 weeks ago, an Ohio man was arrested when authorities discovered he was plotting to blow up the U.S. Capitol in an ISIS-inspired plan. I believe, as the Presiding Officer understands, the man was from Ohio.

ISIS has thousands of foreign fighters, including Americans, among their ranks who seek to return to their home countries to do harm—not to mention the barbarity of ISIS today in killing the Jordanian pilot whom they had in their custody.

These are very real threats—a clear and present danger to the homeland—and because they are so real, we need our counterterrorism intelligence community operating at full strength. We need the entire Department of Homeland Security fully engaged in keeping our Nation safe.

Last week, President Bush's two Homeland Security Secretaries, Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff, joined former DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano in a letter to Congress. The three of them wrote:

The national security role that the Department of Homeland Security plays . . . is critical to ensuring that our nation is safe from harm. . . . It is imperative that we ensure that DHS is ready, willing, and able to protect the American people . . . we urge you not to risk funding for the operations that protect every American and pass a clean DHS funding bill.

All three former Secretaries—two of whom served under a Republican President and one under a Democratic President—are warning us that the safety and security of our Nation are at risk if we hold up funding for Homeland Security operations.

Anything short of passing a clean funding bill will endanger important security operations and could very well put our citizens at risk. But because of the anti-immigration riders that have been attached by House Republicans, the bill we are about to vote on cannot become law. Senate Democrats are not going to support it. The President has already said he will veto it. And, furthermore, according to the nonpartisan