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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 12, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EVAN H. JENKINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

INTRODUCTION OF A MARIJUANA BILL

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, for more than 70 years our government has followed the most spectacular failure in policy since the disastrous 13-year experiment with the prohibition of alcohol.

Forty-three years ago, the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse released a report, finding that the Federal ban on marijuana is unjustified and inappropriate. Yet, for most of that time, Federal policy has been frozen in amber.

Countless lives have been ruined for the use of a substance that a majority of Americans think should be legal; untold billions of dollars have been spent on a failed effort at prohibition; and still 25 million adults use it every month.

Despite a finding in Federal law that marijuana is a schedule I controlled substance with no therapeutic value, 213 million Americans live in 34 States and the District of Columbia where medical marijuana is recognized and legal in some form, and over a million people use it as medicine.

In 1996, voters in California marked a significant change in course when they legalized medical marijuana with a vote of the people, and almost three dozen States have followed. In the fall of 2012, voters in the States of Washington and Colorado approved the adult use of marijuana, and it should be noted that the sky didn't fall, big cracks didn't appear in the Earth, and problems with marijuana didn't get worse. In some instances, they became more manageable.

For the Federal Government, the tide continues to turn. Last session of Congress had six successful votes on the floor of the House to rationalize our foolish policies, including reining in Federal enforcement and opening opportunities for legal industrial hemp cultivation. Last fall, voters in my State of Oregon, looking at the evidence and experience like in Colorado, approved adult use by an even larger margin than in the previous States.

The marijuana reform train has left the station, and it is time for the Federal Government to redouble its efforts on developing policies that work. Congressman JARED POLIS and I will reintroduce this week our legislation to establish a Federal framework to end the failed Federal prohibition.

It will pave the way for States to chart their own course to legalize, tax, and regulate marijuana according to what individual States want to do—just like they do with alcohol. We will save tens of billions of dollars on failed enforcement, incarceration, and lost revenue. We will choke off a profit center for drug cartels that has been enriched by our failed policies, and we will make it easier to enforce laws to keep marijuana out of the hands of our children and have money for government services rather than waste money on failed policy, arresting people for something that a majority of Americans now thinks should be legal.

For those of us who have worked in this field for years, it is an exciting time. My legislation will deal with the taxation of marijuana, and we look forward to refining it, to being able to have the tax at a proper level to support government services but also reasonable enough to choke off black market supply.

It is time for us to enter a new era of marijuana policy for research, for protecting our children, for economic development and individual liberties. I strongly urge my colleagues to examine the legislation that we have advanced and be part of this long overdue effort at reform.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, back in December, President Obama gave a major speech regarding the United States policy towards Cuba. The President said:

> I do not believe we can continue doing the same thing for five decades and expect a different result.

In other words, the President is saying that, when something isn't working, we need to try a new approach.

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I wonder if the President and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle agree that we should apply that same standard to our Nation's education policy. As a former member of the Alabama State school board and as the former chancellor of postsecondary education for Alabama, I think it is time for a change.

For the last 50 years, Federal education policy has failed our students, especially our Nation's poor students, who need us the most. Just look at the statistics. Only 38 percent of high school seniors can read at grade level, and just 26 percent are proficient in math. Survey after survey shows that the United States is lagging behind other countries in terms of education.

We clearly need a new approach, and that is why I was proud to support the Student Success Act yesterday in our Committee on Education and the Workforce. For too long, the focus has been on the needs and wishes of Washington special interest groups instead of on the needs of those who matter the most—the students. It is time we change that. Immediately, two glaring flaws come to mind when looking at current policy:

First, our local teachers and administrators are drowning in paperwork and mandates. While only 10 percent of the funding for K–12 education comes from the Federal Government, the Government Accountability Office has found that 41 percent of the paperwork comes from the Federal level. That is unacceptable.

Second, title 1 funds, which are intended to support our Nation's most vulnerable, are picking and choosing winners by forcing money to some schools and by not allowing that money to others. The money should follow the student. We shouldn't allow students to remain stuck in failing schools. Every child deserves a fair chance.

Mr. Speaker, this top-down, heavy-handed Federal approach to education is not working, and, frankly, it is outdated. It is not the 1960s anymore: there are more than three television networks; we aren't all eating Wonder Bread; our phones aren't rotary phones tied to the wall; and our education system shouldn't be stuck in the sixties either. Instead of focusing on special interest groups, let's turn the focus to students, parents, and local leaders.

While the other side is always quick to point out the D.C. special interest groups, which stand by their failed approach, the Student Success Act is supported by the National School Boards Association, which is made up of more than 90,000 local school board members. These are the very people who are actually dealing with Federal education policy and how it actually works on the ground every day, and they want a new approach. Democrats and Republicans and these local school boards want a new approach.

Our teachers need the flexibility to innovate. That is why the Student Success Act reforms a patchwork of narrowly scoped grant programs and, instead, creates a Local Academic Flexible Grant, which allows local schools to spark innovation and use teaching methods that work best for their students.

During committee debate yesterday, my colleagues on the other side were so committed to these same old, failed education policies that they even defended the universally disliked highly qualified teacher requirement. While I agree we need the best teachers possible in the classroom, who are Federal bureaucrats in Washington to decide what makes you highly qualified? Teachers in southwest Alabama and all across our country agree that the highly qualified teacher provision is simply not effective. Yet my colleagues on the other side and their special interest buddies refuse to give up power and allow us to move in a different direction.

It is time for the Federal Government to get some humility. Washington bureaucrats don't know how to educate our children, but local superintendents, school boards, teachers, and principals do, so let's empower them. It is time we restored local control over education policy and put power in the hands of those who know our students best. Let's put the focus on the student for once, and that is exactly what this act does.

I think the President may be on to something. We shouldn't continue with the same, failed education policy that has failed us for decades. We should get away from this centralized approach to education, which has failed the students throughout America. Mr. Speaker, the Student Success Act offers that new approach.

I urge the leadership of this House to bring the Student Success Act to the floor for a vote, and let's empower parents and local education leaders. For once, let's put the students first.

LYNCH-JONES RESOLUTION TO DECLASSIFY THE 28 PAGES OF THE 9/11 JOINT CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

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

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, almost 14 years after the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the American public does not yet have all of the information available regarding the circumstances surrounding those attacks on our country, particularly 28 pages of the bipartisan Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 2001, which remain classified.

Since 2013, my colleagues, Congressman WALTER JONES of North Carolina, Congressman MASSIE of Kentucky, and I have been working together to craft and to garner support for H. Res. 14, which calls on the President to release the 28 pages of the 9/11 Joint Congressional Inquiry. I sincerely appreciate Congressman JONES' and Congressman MASSIE's willingness to collaborate on this concerted effort on this issue.

Over the past few weeks, calls to declassify the 28 pages have been in the spotlight due to recent allegations by convicted terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui, who conspired to kill American citizens and who will rightly spend the rest of his life in prison. Whatever the motivations for Mr. Moussaoui's recent accusation of complicity by foreign agents in the 9/11 attacks, his testimony does bring to light important questions. Most notably is the fact that, as a nation, we have not yet fully accounted for the sources of funding and logistical support that enabled al Qaeda to undertake those terrorist attacks.

We owe it to the families who lost loved ones on that tragic day to provide a complete accounting of the events and circumstances leading up to the tragedy of 9/11, and it is a grave injustice that 28 pages of the bipartisan, bicameral congressional inquiry remain classified 14 years after September 11. This was not a mere redaction of a few specific words or phrases but the wholesale excising and removal of a full section, 28 pages in length. It may have been a matter of national security to classify these pages back in 2002, but it is now a matter of public interest and good governance to release them in 2015.

I am in firm agreement with former Senator Bob Graham of Florida, who oversaw the inquiry, with my colleague WALTER JONES of North Carolina, with Mr. MASSIE, and with Members of both parties, who, like myself, have read the 28 pages and believe the disclosure will not jeopardize sources or methods used in gathering this information. I firmly believe that declassifying the findings is appropriate for a number of reasons.

As Thomas Jefferson said:

> An enlightened citizenry is indispensable for the proper functioning of a republic, and self-government is not possible unless the citizens are educated sufficiently to enable them to exercise oversight.

In other words, there can be no accountability without transparency. We must advocate for the need to make these pages public in order to shine a brighter light on the information contained therein and utilize it in framing our foreign policy going forward.

In addition, I have met with the spouses, children, siblings, parents of the 9/11 victims as well as with representatives from the 9/11 Families United for Justice Against Terrorism. They have provided powerful testimony and heartrending submissions regarding how important it is to seek the truth and to bring all those to account who were responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

□ 1015

Today, at a time when the world continues to face challenges from expanding terrorist organizations such as

ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra, Boko Haram, and al Shabaab, as well as al Qaeda and its affiliates, we must be mindful of the urgent need to bring their financiers and supporters to justice as well.

At an even more basic level, our commitment to one another as citizens in a society that values freedom and justice demands that we hold accountable those who aided and abetted the savage attacks on our homeland and murdered thousands of innocent Americans.

When that fundamental duty to protect American citizens has been breached, it is not enough to say that we will ''never forget.'' The military and civilian personnel at the Pentagon, the first responders and office workers in the New York office towers, the passengers and crew of those hijacked planes, and all those families whose hearts still ache, we owe it to them.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to not only take the time to review those 28 pages but also consider supporting House Resolution 14, as these families and the American people deserve to have their questions answered.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off with a positive note. Just recently, President Obama submitted the Federal budget on time for the first time since 2010. While I appreciate his timeliness, I, and the constituents in my district, don't appreciate, however, his disregard for fiscal responsibility.

The President sent a budget to Congress which starts the fiscal year with our country in the red. What organization starts off the fiscal year by saying they are going to purposefully spend more money than they take in? How many folks around a dinner table actually have their conversation at the start of the year saying, ''You know what? I want to start the year broke and I want to end broke.'' That is what the President's budget does.

The President presented to Congress a $4 trillion budget, and yes, you heard me right, that is trillion with a T. The proposed budget requests $4 trillion in spending but only provides—catch this—$3.5 trillion in revenue. I was not the best math student but I can see a problem here. That leaves the government with a half-trillion-dollar deficit.

Wait. Hold on a second. Let me go back and correct myself. I misspoke. That leaves the U.S. taxpayers with a half-trillion-dollar deficit because, let me remind you, the government makes nothing. Everything we spend comes from right here in my pocket, your pocket, and the pocket of everyone else in this country.

Now, I just checked, and the population of the United States is slightly over 320 million. So every man, woman, and child would have to add an additional $1,500 onto what they already owe in taxes—to include newborns—in order for this budget to even break even. And that is just for 2016.

The President's budget is a political document that reflects a very different view of fiscal responsibility than most people have.

Let's go through it and discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of this budget.

First, the good. Now it is true that our national deficit is shrinking. Is it because of the President's policies? No. It is because of the ingenuity and determination of the American people. The private sector is now growing—and has been for a while—even as the administration has attempted to stifle businesses with antigrowth policies like ObamaCare and other regulations that continue to put sand in the gears of American business.

Even in the President's own budget document he cites economic growth as helping accelerate the pace of deficit reduction. He likes to go around the Nation and do speeches on how the deficit has decreased to its lowest level in decades during his Presidency. The inconvenient truth is that he decides to leave out that the biggest drops occur after 2010, when the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives.

The Republicans were able to garner concessions on reductions in spending. Plus, sequestration entered the fray, which aided in the decrease of federal expenditures. While sequestration is not the budget tool Congress would have hoped for, the President is now trying to capitalize off of this budget negotiation side effect.

President Clinton likes to take credit for the budget surpluses in the nineties, which were a result of the Republicans' Contract with America. Now, President Obama wants to take sole credit for a decrease in the deficit, a reduction in spending that he has had to make do with.

The bad. The President wants to raise taxes on Americans at the worst possible time—as we are emerging from the financial crisis. President Obama's tax proposals target job creators and the middle class. One such proposal was so egregious that even the Democrats said, We can't go along with this.

The President had a tax proposal to cut tax benefits on college savings plans. The 529 college plans are a means by which close to 12 million families save for college, many of them middle class Americans. That comes at a time when student loan debt is approaching a trillion dollars.

Hidden deep in Obama's budget is a student loan program that recently has been discovered to have a $21.8 billion shortfall. His plan to subsidize student loans has now created a loss equal to the annual budgets of the Department of the Interior, EPA, and NASA.

The ugly. In President Obama's budget he discusses that by 2025 the Federal debt will have reached 73.3 percent of GDP. That is almost three-fourths of our Nation's collective wealth. The President defines the country's $18 trillion debt as being fiscally sustainable.

For him, 73 percent of our GDP is acceptable:

> The key test of fiscal sustainability is whether debt is stable . . . as a share of the economy, resulting in interest payments that consume a stable . . . share of the Nation's resources.

Figure that one out.

The most disheartening part is the President's numbers are incorrect. The Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan analytical wing of Congress, has stated that by 2025, the Federal debt will actually rise to nearly 79 percent of GDP, when the Federal debt would be $26.3 trillion. CBO states that our debt is currently 74 percent of GDP.

The question you are asking now is: What is causing this increase in government spending? I bet you know the answer but I am going to tell you anyway. The CBO lists many factors, all of which are contributing to a bust in our Federal spending.

With that, this budget is another example of what does not need to be.

REMEMBERING JIMMIE LEE JACKSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of Jimmie Lee Jackson.

Jimmie Lee Jackson was one of the foot soldiers who died to ensure that all Americans have the fundamental right to vote.

This 26-year-old Marion, Alabama, native was brutally killed at the hands of an Alabama State trooper on February 18, 1965, after attending a voting rights rally while trying to protect his mother and his 82-year-old grandfather.

The State trooper confronted the family at Mack's Cafe in Marion and shot Jimmie Lee Jackson at gunpoint range for simply shielding his family from the intimidation and retributions being carried out by law enforcement.

And to think that this occurred because of the audacity of this young man and his family to peacefully protest for their constitutional rights, which led to his brutal murder at the hands of law enforcement.

It was the senseless murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson that served as a catalyst for the voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama. Jimmie Lee Jackson deserves to have his proper place in American history as a true agent of change.

Likewise, the city of Marion is, rightly, the starting point of the historic road to voter equality that led marchers from Selma to Montgomery. I have sponsored efforts and look forward to the National Park Service adding the city of Marion to the historic trail from Selma to Montgomery.

The senseless killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson shocked the consciousness of the American public and galvanized local leaders to be even more resolved in their fight against the inequalities in voting.

Who was to blame for the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson? Dr. Martin Luther King professed, as he eulogized Jimmie Lee Jackson at his funeral, we are all to blame for his murder. Dr. King said it best:

> A State trooper pointed the gun, but he did not act alone. He was murdered by the brutality of every sheriff who practices lawlessness in the name of law.
>
> He was murdered by the irresponsibility of every politician, from Governors on down, who has fed his constituent the stale bread of hatred and the spoiled meat of racism.
>
> He was murdered by the timidity of a Federal Government that would spend millions of dollars a day to keep troops in South Vietnam and cannot protect the rights of its own citizens seeking the right to vote.
>
> He was murdered by the cowardice of every Negro who passively accepts the evils of segregation and stands on the sidelines in the struggle for justice.

Justice should be blind, Mr. Speaker, but in many cases it is not. Everyone knew who killed Jimmie Lee Jackson, but it wasn't until 40 years later, when Michael Jackson, Dallas County's first Black district attorney, reopened the investigation, that the wheels of justice slowly began to turn.

Yesterday, this august body unanimously passed H.R. 431, a bill that would award a Congressional Gold Medal to the foot soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final march from Selma to Montgomery. It is past due, Mr. Speaker, that these brave men and women take their proper place as agents of change in American history.

While Jimmie Lee Jackson did not live to participate in the march from Selma to Montgomery, he was there in spirit. It was his spirit that gave strength to the weak, that gave courage to the scared, and that gave hope to the hopeless.

To his family, I say this Nation owes his family a debt of gratitude which we can never repay. My hope is that this national recognition of the significance of the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson will spur a renewed commitment in all of us to continue to fight for justice and equality for all.

We, the beneficiaries of that struggle, must continue his fight. We must continue to stand together. We must continue to be united in the fight for justice everywhere it is needed. Jimmie Lee Jackson did not stand on the sidelines waiting patiently for justice to come, nor should we.

Dr. King once said:

> If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.

We must continue to stand together because our greatest and biggest fights are yet to come. We still need Federal oversight to ensure that every eligible voter in these United States is able to cast their ballot and that every vote matters.

Jimmie Lee Jackson recognized the importance of the vote. He recognized the power of the ballot box. We owe it to ourselves and to the memory of Jimmie Lee Jackson to continue his fight.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-K

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I come here today to the House floor to address an extremely important and timely topic for our Nation: investing in high-quality pre-K education. It is really imperative to the success of our children, schools, and communities.

Two years ago, in this Chamber, President Obama laid out his plan to provide universal high-quality pre-K for every child in America. Why did the President propose such a bold and audacious plan for our country? It is really simple. It has been proven that children who participate in high-quality prekindergarten programs are more likely to have greater academic and life achievements down the road.

The benefits of a high-quality pre-K education include increased eagerness and preparedness to learn; higher reading, writing, and mathematics scores; and increased cognitive and social abilities. Access to quality pre-K is a much better predictor of achievement than race, family income, or parents' education.

Research has demonstrated that access to prekindergarten programs have substantial long-term benefits. Children that have attended prekindergarten are 20 percent more likely to graduate from high school and 22 percent more likely to own a home. Additionally, these individuals are more likely to be employed and less likely to commit violent crimes.

I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that saddens me the most about my home State of Texas is that we are leaving a lot of really bright young people behind.

□ 1030

Nearly 550,000 preschool-aged children in Texas do not attend any type of pre-K program, despite what I laid out earlier about less likely to commit violent crimes, more likely to own homes. You would think it would be a no-brainer and we would be committing more towards pre-K education.

Leaving behind this many children, 550,000—over half a million—really does pose a serious, long-term economic effect to our great State and is something that needs to be addressed. It is apparent that high-level prekindergarten education produces individuals that are more prosperous and more likely to contribute to society in a positive way.

To help States like my own boost their pre-K education programs, President Obama and the Department of Education delivered on his State of the Union Address, and they released Preschool Development Grants. These grants will help expand high-quality preschool programs in targeted communities.

When the announcements were made in December—again, I have got to tell you, we do a lot of great things in Texas, and we often do it bigger and better—but I was really disappointed, Mr. Speaker, to learn that our State had lost out on $120 million of this grant funding to invest in our children and really, ultimately, our future—$120 million that the great State of Texas lost out on, over half a million kids being left behind. This was really a sad day in the Lone Star State.

This money would have been used to improve pre-K education and expand access to children in low-income communities who need these services the most, and losing out on this money should really be a wake-up call to Texas and the policymakers there, that we must create a plan to improve our pre-K system.

Texas failed to meet even the minimum requirements of this application to provide at least a 50 percent increase in preschool slots available, and that is just really unacceptable.

My State needs a comprehensive pre-K plan that works to increase access to high-quality programs, set higher learning standards, improve curriculum, and increase teacher training. All those really are very, very important keys.

The failure to invest in our young children is a failure to invest in our future. Here in Congress and back home, I intend to work tirelessly to provide for the best education system that our Nation can provide.

But there are some bright spots. I talked about how the State, because of the failed application policy that was just really handled poorly, how we lost out on $120 million and over half a million kids are suffering because of that, but I do think that it is important that I point out some of the positives.

There has been some bipartisan work along these efforts on pre-K, and I do want to thank one of my former colleagues in the State legislature, State Representative Eric Johnson of Dallas, and a lady that I did not serve with out of Georgetown, Texas—near Austin—Marsha Farney of Georgetown, to not only increase pre-K funding by $300 million, but also improve curriculum, teacher training, and lower student-teacher ratios.

In this global economy that we live in today and tomorrow, students won't be competing for jobs in the workplace with neighboring States but will be competing with kids and students from all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, let's do this for Texas. Let's do the right thing. Let's help these children.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 33 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

In these days, give wisdom to all the Members, especially as they consider the most serious matter of engaging in military activity. Bless as well those who inform them of the issues with honest frankness, knowing of the dangers implied and so many uncertain consequences.

Bless the men and women of this Chamber, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

OBAMACARE DATA SECURITY

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, last week, more than 80 million Americans lost personal information when health insurer Anthem was hacked. Almost immediately, Anthem customers started to receive suspicious email messages trying to con them.

Anthem, Target, Home Depot, Sony—the list goes on and on of major hacks in the last year. In many of these cases, those who had their information stolen did not receive notice of the compromise promptly—the best way for them to protect themselves.

Because of ObamaCare, Federal and State governments now host a massive trove of private information. In hearing after hearing last year, we heard about the vulnerabilities of these systems.

In order to protect consumers, the House passed my Health Exchange Security and Transparency Act, which would require the government to inform consumers of a breach within 2 days. This bill passed with an overwhelming veto-proof majority but went nowhere in HARRY REID's Senate.

I have now reintroduced this bill, a commonsense measure to protect consumers if ObamaCare is the next major target for hackers. Maybe this year the Senate will act.

FUND DHS

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in urging the Republican leadership to advance bipartisan legislation that will keep the American people safe by continuing to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

On behalf of the dedicated men and women at the Department of Homeland Security—those who screen passengers traveling into and out of the country, those who ensure that our borders and shores are protected, and those who enforce the deportation of dangerous criminals—let's put aside partisan politics and come together on one thing we can all agree on: to prioritize the safety and security of the American people.

As the tragedies of recent events abroad have demonstrated, we can ill-afford another day of inaction by this Congress. The clock is running out. Sixteen days. Let's do our job. The American people expect better and they deserve better. Let's vote on a clean spending bill today.

UNSUSTAINABLE DEBT UNDER PRESIDENT OBAMA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in July 2008, then-Senator Barack Obama said that President Bush adding to the national debt was ''irresponsible'' and ''unpatriotic.'' In February 2009, President Obama warned congressional leaders that the rate of government spending was unsustainable and pledged to cut the deficit.

Clearly, his words did not translate into actions. The deficit has tripled since President Obama took office. Now, the President's recent budget last week provides for $8.5 trillion in new debt and does not ever balance. Republicans, led by Chairman PAUL RYAN, will produce a positive budget which balances.

The current rate of government spending is putting America's youth at risk with skyrocketing interest payments. I will keep working to promote policies that reduce our debt, cut wasteful spending, and create jobs while maintaining vital defense funding to promote peace.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

FUND DHS

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by reading a quote from today's Politico:

> A faction of House and Senate conservatives is pushing Republican leaders to take the battle over the Homeland Security Department to the brink, arguing the party would win the public relations war with Democrats if a standoff over immigration led to a shutdown of the agency.

A public relations war. This is about the war on terror. In 16 days, the people who protect us from that war will lose their jobs or have to work without pay. We are 16 days away from a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security and instead of planning how to protect us from our enemies, DHS is preparing contingency budgets in case this Republican Congress decides to shut them down.

To protect themselves from their political base in a fight on immigration, Republicans are willing to disrupt the protection of the American people in our communities, at our airports, our ports, and our borders.

Mr. Speaker, the bad guys have to be watching this and saying: Are you serious?

We should be serious about our homeland security and our economic security.

REMEMBERING DEAN SMITH

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, on February 7, the State of North Carolina lost a legend both on and off the court when former University of North Carolina basketball coach Dean Smith passed away.

During his 36-year tenure as head coach, Smith led the Tar Heels to 879 wins and 13 ACC tournament championships. His teams reached the Final Four 11 times and won two national titles. He also coached the U.S. men's basketball team to an Olympic Gold Medal in 1976.

But Smith was more than just a college basketball icon. He was a deeply religious man who placed a strong emphasis on education. More than 96 percent of his players received their degrees. An unwavering supporter of civil rights, he recruited the first Black scholarship athlete at UNC.

While he never sought accolades for his actions, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the Nation's highest civilian honor, in 2013.

Coach Smith was a remarkable man, and North Carolina was lucky to call him one of our own.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

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

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I am so honored to serve a second term as ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help Ventura County's veterans and veterans across America access VA health care and benefits and to break down bureaucratic barriers to care at the VA.

There is no commitment I take more seriously than to the men and women who have served our country. That is why I introduced the Veterans Health Care Improvement Act as my first bill in the 114th Congress. My bill would help guarantee adequate resources for veterans health care benefits by requiring the GAO to continue verifying the accuracy and adequacy of the VA's budget for medical care.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation with me.

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT LINCOLN

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the birthday of a man whose name is synonymous with my home State of Illinois, the Land of Lincoln. It is the time of year when we remember the great deeds of our Presidents and their important actions in times of crisis.

President Lincoln knew crisis. Generations note his firm resolve in the face of a ''House divided against itself''; his faithfulness in serving a country when half of it was bent and betting on his failure; and his growing faith in the ''gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us.''

Our Nation was on the verge of collapse, but he never wavered, he never tired, he never backed down from the challenge. He challenges us to rise to the ''great tasks'' before us and meet them head on.

GOP DHS TANTRUM

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my Republican colleagues to not let their immigration reform politics weaken border security, paralyze our ports, and shut down the Department of Homeland Security created in the wake of 9/11.

If we do not pass a clean funding bill, more than 20 percent of FEMA personnel will be furloughed, crippling our ability to respond to disasters; management and support of our entire homeland security infrastructure would shut down; and essential personnel would be forced to work without pay.

That is 40,000 Border Patrol agents and Customs officers risking their lives for free because of a political stunt. That is 50,000 TSA screeners who guard our nationwide travel, keeping the USA safe, yet going without pay because the Republican leadership is putting politics ahead of security. And it is more than 40,000 Active Duty Coast Guard officers standing guard on our shores, proudly serving a country whose political leaders don't seem to care if they get paid for their sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, the stakes are too high. The risk is too real. Republicans need to stop their anti-immigrant tantrum and end this dangerous game. Pass a clean DHS funding bill today to protect our great Nation.

A ''NO'' VOTE ON PRESIDENT'S AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

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

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, when we send our soldiers into harm's way, we have a solemn obligation to back them with the full might and resources that our country can muster and to give them the widest possible latitude for action. MacArthur was right:

> In war, there is no substitute for victory.

The President proposes something very different: war by half measure; war on the cheap; war with dangerous restrictions on our troops; war with no clear objective other than to pull out in 3 years.

I will not vote for the authorization that the President has requested. Given his obvious irresolution, I think the best immediate course for the United States is to assure that the regional powers currently engaged against the Islamic State have the material support they require.

DHS SPENDING BILL

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the Republican leadership to bring a clean funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security to this floor.

The Department of Homeland Security provides vital programs and services that ensure the American public's safety. This Congress must also ensure that DHS has adequate funding to continue its important and effective work protecting our borders, our ports, our aviation systems, and all of our communities across the country. Without funding, DHS will be forced to shut down critical counterterrorism and natural disaster programs that safeguard millions of Americans.

It is the height of irresponsibility for Republicans to hold DHS funding hostage for the sole purpose—and the dangerous purpose—of partisan politics. Instead of putting forth a clean DHS funding bill, Republicans put forward legislation that is littered with unrelated policy riders.

We all agree that withholding funding for DHS is bad for our Nation's safety and security, so let's pass a clean DHS funding bill and debate these separate issues on their own merits. It is time for the House to pass a clean DHS funding proposal and stop playing games with the safety and the security of the American people.

□ 1215

HONORING THE SERVICE OF CORPORAL C.G. BOLDEN

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of U.S. Army Corporal C.G. Bolden, a Clinton, Arkansas, native and veteran of the Korean conflict.

In January 1951, Corporal Bolden was taken prisoner of war in Korea; and at that time, his wife, Geraldean, and 3-year-old son, Larry, were notified that he was missing in action. Tragically, that same year, Corporal Bolden died of malnutrition under horrific conditions in a North Korean POW camp.

In 1993, his remains were among those returned to the United States, and through innovative DNA testing, scientists at the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command identified Corporal Bolden's remains and determined his cause of death.

On February 21, after decades of unanswered questions, Corporal Bolden will be laid to rest in his hometown of Clinton, Arkansas, and I am honored to join his family to remember him and welcome him home.

Corporal Bolden gave the ultimate sacrifice for his country, and his life is an example for all Americans and all

Arkansans. I thank him and his family for their service and their sacrifice.

REPUBLICANS ARE PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME OF CHICKEN WITH AMERICA'S SECURITY

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

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, 16 days—House Republicans are playing a dangerous game of chicken with America's security, threatening to shut down the Department of Homeland Security unless we give in to their extreme demands on immigration; threatening to force DHS employees on the front lines who keep us safe—people in the Border Patrol, TSA, the Coast Guard—to go to work and risk their lives while they are not getting paid; threatening to furlough DHS workers who support the frontline folks by training new agents, purchasing new equipment, and collecting intelligence.

Republicans are wasting our time on an unnecessary and dangerous showdown when they should be focusing on economic growth, creating new jobs, and increasing hardworking Americans' paychecks, so that we can preserve and expand the middle class in this country.

I call on my colleagues in the Republican Party to abandon these unacceptable tactics, pass a clean DHS funding bill for the remainder of 2015, and start focusing on creating new jobs and increasing Americans' paychecks.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, workers and small businesses all across the country have suffered greatly in Obama's economy. Over 90 million people are not participating in our workforce, and wages have remained stagnant, creating a squeeze on the middle class.

Expanding the size of government by raising taxes and increasing regulations will not help America recover; instead, working Americans are counting on us to make it easier and not harder to find opportunities so that they can earn a steady paycheck and provide for their families.

I ask my colleagues to support America's Small Business Tax Relief Act, legislation that the House will vote on tomorrow, sponsored by Congressman TIBERI. I know, from traveling my district in Indiana, that small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and this bill will allow job creators to deduct expenses and investments for new equipment the year that they are purchased, making it easier for businesses to grow.

This legislation could help produce tens of thousands of jobs and add billions of dollars in economic output.

Tomorrow, let's stand for common sense and pass a bill that will help kick-start our economy and make it easier for small businesses and workers to succeed.

THE RECKLESS AND IRRESPONSIBLE LEGISLATIVE JOYRIDE

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, in 16 days, House Republicans are prepared to shut down the Department of Homeland Security.

Once again, you are taking the American people on a reckless and irresponsible legislative joyride that is destined to crash and burn. You are taking the American people on a collision course that will damage the safety and security of the American people at a time when terrorists all across the world are determined to do us harm.

Why would you contemplate shutting down the Department of Homeland Security at this time—or at any time—simply in order to satisfy the extreme rightwing of your party?

The American people want us to focus on bigger paychecks, they want us to focus on good-paying jobs, they want us to focus on strengthening the middle class, but you are determined to shut down the Department of Homeland Security. It is reckless and irresponsible.

Let's get back to doing the business of the American people.

END SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, this Congress must address the defense sequester with the urgency that is warranted. Our men and women in uniform are fighting bravely around the world, and they depend on the certainty of knowing that they have got everything they need to accomplish their mission.

The way to achieve that certainty is made increasingly difficult because of sequestration and the indiscriminate cuts that are affecting our men and women in uniform. I respectfully remind my colleagues today that as we start this budget and appropriations process, that we have the opportunity to replace sequestration in the months ahead.

Last year, House Republicans passed not only a budget in a timely manner, but we incorporated increased defense spending to ease the burden of sequestration.

Regardless of which side of the aisle we are on today, we all have a deep obligation to pass on the blessings of liberty and freedom to future generations. In order to accomplish that, we can no longer allow Federal budget policy to be dictated by a process that neither side intended to go into effect.

I encourage my colleagues to make ending sequestration the top priority in the 114th Congress.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY SHUTDOWN THREAT

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

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, national security—protecting our Nation's borders, airports, and computer networks—should be a priority.

Making sure the Department of Homeland Security, created with bipartisan support in the wake of September 11, has what it needs to protect our Nation from terrorism and other threats is a no-brainer, but the Republicans are jeopardizing all of that just for the opportunity to tell millions of hardworking, aspiring Americans that they are not welcome here.

This tactic of ''my way or no way'' is dangerous and serves the interests of a few at the expense of the many. Holding our top national security agenda hostage because the Republican majority is unhappy with the President's executive action on immigration is illogical and counterproductive.

In fact, former DHS Secretaries from both parties have warned that this approach will actually weaken—not strengthen—our borders.

The American people deserve better. They expect us to set partisan politics aside and ensure that government has the resources it needs. I urge my colleagues to listen to the needs of the American people and bring a clean DHS funding bill to the floor.

WHY MARRIAGE MATTERS

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

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of National Marriage Week. It is an honor to promote an institution that has been the cornerstone of society for centuries, and I am blessed to celebrate this week with my husband of 30 years, Lowell Hartzler.

When a man and woman join together in holy matrimony, they are not only starting a life together and creating a family, they are also establishing the foundation of a healthy society.

Researchers document many benefits to marriage: better health, greater personal happiness, enhanced financial stability, and positive impacts for children. Boys and girls raised at home by a mom and dad perform better in school, have less addictions, experience lower rates of teen pregnancy, and see less trouble with the law.

At a time when some question the future of marriage, I think it is wise to

reflect on the unique benefits the intact, married family provides. Social science clearly tells us that marriage leads to greater wealth, health, longevity, and happiness. It is something to aspire to, to treasure, and to fight for.

Not only does society benefit but, most importantly, so do the men and women who commit to a lifetime of love, laughter, faithfulness, and future generations.

FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, there are only 16 days left until the Department of Homeland Security runs out of money. How did we find ourselves in this situation?

Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues decided to play political games with our national security. They decided to pass a DHS funding bill they knew the Senate would not approve and the President would not sign. They decided deporting DREAMers and the parents of American children was more important than funding the Department that helps protect the American people.

Thankfully, there is an easy solution to this manufactured crisis. The Republican leadership could bring up a clean bill this afternoon, and it would pass with strong bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, our most critical responsibility as Members of Congress is to ensure that the men and women charged with protecting our Nation have the resources to do their jobs.

It is time for the Republican leadership to stop playing games and start living up to this basic obligation by bringing a clean DHS funding bill to the floor.

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise as a son, a husband, a father of two daughters, a brother of three sisters, and I am proud to stand with 1 Billion Rising Lake County to end violence against women and girls everywhere.

One woman in three will be abused in her lifetime, totaling 1 billion across our globe. Mr. Speaker, 1 Billion Rising gives mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, neighbors, and friends who have suffered from abuse the opportunity to be heard and to join a supportive community.

Together, we must be the voice of those who cannot speak up and to take action to help those who are asking for help. We must take the lead on this issue and set an example for the world, ensuring that women everywhere can live and thrive without fear of becoming a victim of violence.

I am committed to taking action to stop abuse, no matter what form it takes, and I ask everyone to join me and rise with 1 Billion Rising to stand strong against these disturbing crimes.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, last week, America got some great economic news. Businesses added over 267,000 jobs in January, extending the longest streak on record of consecutive private sector job growth to 59 months.

We also set another record when the House, led by the Republicans, voted for the 56th time to repeal the Affordable Health Care Act.

Our economy added 3 million private sector jobs in the last 12 months, including over a million jobs in the last 3 months alone; yet instead of capitalizing on this success in order to help grow the middle class and add more jobs, the majority just continues to vote to take away health care.

Enough is enough. Thanks to President Obama and the Democrats, this economy has recovered from the worst recession on record. As you can see, the blue shows when President Obama took office, and then we grew out of the loss of jobs and have been gaining jobs.

□ 1230

HONORING MIKE COLLINS

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of Mike Collins.

Mike Collins epitomized what a true public servant is. Mike was a marine, a city councilman, mayor, police officer, and he epitomized that public service of never putting yourself above the people you represent. He always put the people he represented first. With his passing, northwest Ohio has lost a great leader.

Mr. Speaker, with his funeral today, I want to extend my deepest sympathies to his wife, his daughters, and his family.

FUNDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the importance of funding the Department of Homeland Security. Playing partisan politics with DHS for ransom because you are unhappy with the President's executive order on immigration is inappropriate.

There are only 16 days—more importantly, there are only 6 legislative days—remaining before the Department of Homeland Security runs out of money. This is America's security at stake.

The events in Paris recently showed us that terrorism remains a threat around the world. It is also a domestic threat.

Why in the world would we want to put American citizens at risk, in harm's way?

Yet the majority seems to be content to risk our national security by defunding Homeland Security. It is either my way or the highway. The opposition insists that Congress dismantle the administration's immigration priorities, but they have yet to offer or bring a solution to the floor to fix our broken immigration system. If you have a better approach, then bring it to the floor for debate and we will vote on it.

In the valley that I represent, the San Joaquin Valley, this bill would have a devastating effect on farmworkers, farmers, and farming communities.

I ask us to come together. Let's fund Homeland Security and put the American people first.

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise as cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus in order to recognize February as National Career and Technical Education Month.

With my friend and cochair, JIM LANGEVIN of Rhode Island, the CTE Caucus remains focused on ensuring individuals have access to high-quality career and technical education programs.

In the previous Congress, a bipartisan CTE Caucus was successful in highlighting the need for robust funding for the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. As we begin working on funding for fiscal year 2016, again our priority will be focused on ensuring adequate funding for CT programming across the country.

Now, more than ever, our young people need assurances that the skills that they attain will lead to good-paying, family-sustaining jobs. CTE programming can make those assurances.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate National Career and Technical Education Month, I encourage all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us as members of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my good friend and colleague, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, in recognition of Career and Technical Education Month. As cochairs of the Congressional CTE Caucus, we are absolutely committed to ensuring that every student has the ability to achieve his or her career goals.

Mr. Speaker, it is long past time to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. I certainly look forward to working with all my colleagues on this important legislation.

This year the CTE Caucus will also focus on expanding apprenticeships and employer-educator partnerships, as well as helping school counselors to provide students the information necessary to make informed career decisions.

To that end, I encourage all of my colleagues to join us on the Congressional CTE Caucus and also to cosponsor the bipartisan Counseling for Career Choice Act that we will introduce later this month that will ensure that school counselors have all the job training information that they need to understand in order to advise their students about the good-paying jobs that will be available to them in the future.

I want to thank, again, my good friend and colleague, Mr. THOMPSON from Pennsylvania, for being such a strong partner on these issues.

COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING WEEK

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

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hundreds of court reporters and captioners in the Granite State and around the country as we prepare to celebrate National Court Reporting and Captioning Week next week.

Since the beginning of our Nation's history, beginning with the scribes during the Continental Congress and the drafting of our Declaration of Independence and Constitution, the act of transcribing events and important documents has always been a pillar of our democracy.

In fact, after their high school graduations, my own parents met at court reporting school and later went on to start their own court reporting business. Fifty years later, my mother still is in the business.

Court reporters are ever present right now in this very Chamber, in committee hearings, in capturing the spoken word and debate between Members of Congress, including Michele York, formerly of Candia, New Hampshire.

The court reporting and captioning industry continues to grow, estimating 5,000 new jobs over the next several years. To the hundreds of court reporters and captioners in New Hampshire and around the country, thank you for all you do. And to the future reporters and captioners, thank you for continuing a legacy so paramount to our democracy and our country.

FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, there are 16 calendar days and only 6 legislative days until the Department of Homeland Security shuts down on February 28. Let me repeat that. The Department charged with keeping America safe is set to run out of funding in just 2 weeks, all because the Republican majority insists on pandering to anti-immigrant extremists in their party. In fact, when asked if they were going to take up a new DHS funding bill, the Republican response was: Well, why do we have to?

Well, to my brazen colleagues across the aisle who refuse to govern, here is why: because keeping American families safe should be the first responsibility of this Congress. At a time of increased threats around the world, holding the country's national security hostage for the sake of a partisan stunt is the height of irresponsibility. Without funding, DHS would be unable to manage and support the homeland security infrastructure that was built following the 9/11 terrorist attacks to keep our country safe.

Mr. Speaker, this is not leadership. The American people deserve much better than this. We must continue funding the Department of Homeland Security immediately.

HONORING LOLIS EDWARD ELIE

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

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Lolis Edward Elie, one of the Nation's preeminent civil rights attorneys.

Elie, a native of New Orleans, attended Howard University, Dillard University, and later earned his J.D. from Loyola Law School. Following graduation, Elie started the law firm of Collins, Douglas, and Elie, which became the most noteworthy firm in Louisiana for racial equality.

In 1960, the New Orleans chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, or CORE, asked Elie and his firm to represent them following a sit-in. Elie and his firm defended CORE chapter president Rudy Lombard and three others who were arrested for staging a sit-in protest at the lunch counter of the McCrory five-and-ten-cent store. They appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court, which, in its decision, declared the city's ban on sit-ins unconstitutional. Later in his career, Elie was one of seven supporters of the Freedom Riders who met with Attorney General Robert Kennedy in 1961 when Kennedy encouraged them to shift their efforts to registering Black Southerners to vote.

His son, Lolis Eric Elie, is a prominent writer and filmmaker.

Lolis, Sr., still calls New Orleans home and mentors the younger generation through his training program for new Black attorneys. Through Lolis Elie's example, many young Black men and women are able to achieve much more than they ever thought possible, myself included.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 12, 2015 at 9:09 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 295.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 644, FIGHTING HUNGER INCENTIVE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 636, AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 101 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 101

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 644) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–5 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) 90 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–6 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) 90 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLE. On Tuesday, the Committee on Rules met and reported a rule for consideration of two important pieces of tax legislation, H.R. 644 and H.R. 636.

The resolution provides a closed rule for consideration of each bill and provides for 90 minutes of debate equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means on each bill. In addition, the rule provides for a motion to recommit on each bill.

Mr. Speaker, most of my colleagues will remember the House's consideration of H.R. 5771, the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014, in December of last year. At that time, more than 50 individual tax extenders were retroactively extended for the 2014 tax year, giving businesses just 12 days to make complicated investment decisions. That is no way to run a business.

Every time I am at home I hear from Oklahomans who either work for or own small businesses. Without fail, they tell me that certainty is what they need most from Washington. But too often Washington tells Americans who operate and work in small businesses to ''trust us.'' We promise to extend X or Y or Z tax provision indefinitely.

Unfortunately, those Americans can't take that to the bank. They can't take our word that we will actually be able to deliver on the promises made by Congress. The only thing they can rely on is the law. If our tax laws expire every year, it injects an uncertainty into the business environment that inhibits economic growth.

Even though we were able to retroactively extend those tax provisions at the end of last year, they are already expired again. Instead of continuing this cycle of uncertainty, it is important to put these tax cuts in place early so that we don't end up in a situation like we did last year.

I applaud Chairman RYAN for beginning early with provisions we all agree on.

□ 1245

This rule will provide for consideration of permanent extension of seven different tax provisions, provisions like section 179 expensing and provisions like extending the deduction of IRA distributions to charities. All of us, Republicans and Democrats, have supported these measures in the past, at least on a temporary basis. These are tax provisions that we retroactively extended less than 2 months ago. Why shouldn't we make these popular tax provisions permanent and do it now, not retroactively late in the year?

Mr. Speaker, some have criticized this legislation because it ''isn't paid for.'' I think Chairman RYAN said it best in the Rules Committee on Tuesday. These are provisions of the Tax Code which we routinely extend, year after year. They are effectively part of the existing Tax Code. Permanently reauthorizing them reflects the policy this country has maintained for years, under both Republican and Democratic administrations and Congress. And doing so provides business with the certainty that they desperately seek.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few moments to note that just as we have had to examine and pare back the discretionary side of the budget, we need to examine and pare back the tax side of the budget. There are over 200 tax expenditures—or spending on the ''tax side'' of the ledger—that, if all are extended, will cost the Federal Government more than $12 trillion over the next 10 years. Many of these provisions are worthy, but many others should clearly be eliminated. The sheer complexity of the Tax Code and associated regulations should push us towards reforms so that our Tax Code works for us all in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Chairman RYAN for beginning this process in earnest and look forward to the consideration of additional measures at the appropriate time.

I urge support for the rule and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today we are considering two pieces of tax legislation under closed rules. These mark our 10th and 11th closed rules in the first 6 weeks of the 114th Congress. Sadly, this has become the standard operating procedure in the Republican House.

In 2011, when Republicans took the majority, Speaker BOEHNER promised ''the right to a robust debate in open process.'' He promised many open rules. Instead, we have just ended the most closed Congress in history. And if these past 6 weeks are any indication of where we are headed, this leadership seems intent on breaking its own record for denying open debate on the House floor.

I also want to point out that the Department of Homeland Security runs out of money February 28, 16 days from now. Press reports indicate that the Republican leadership is scrambling to gather the votes necessary to pass a bill.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have some advice for my friends in the majority. Instead of yelling, instead of pouting and swearing, bring to the floor a clean Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill, the bipartisan negotiated compromise that has been ready to go since last November. This is a bill that could and should be sent to the President as quickly as possible, especially considering the international and national homeland security situation facing the U.S. and the world at this very, very moment.

So I have to say that I am a little perplexed as to why the majority has chosen this week to bring to the floor a package of tax breaks that are not paid for, that are going nowhere, 5 legislative days before the Department of Homeland Security is going to be forced to shut down because of Republican dithering.

And I say going nowhere because Senate Republicans have said quite clearly that these bills will not likely be considered in committee or by the full Senate. Let me repeat that. These bills are going nowhere because of the Republicans in the Senate. They have made it pretty clear.

So the clock is ticking on funding our Homeland Security programs, Mr. Speaker. Are the Republican leaders planning to let the clock run out, planning to create another crisis?

We should be debating a clean Department of Homeland Security bill right now. We ought to vote in a bipartisan way to pass it, have the Senate do the same thing, send it right to the President, and actually accomplish something.

I am also concerned, Mr. Speaker, with the partisan approach taken by the Republicans on the Ways and Means Committee in advancing these particular tax measures. We went through this same exercise last year

with a similar set of bills, only to pass in the final weeks of the 113th Congress a 1-year comprehensive ''tax extenders'' package. The Republican leadership in the House is setting the stage for a similar confrontation this year, instead of working in a productive and bipartisan manner on comprehensive tax reform.

That is something that the American people, Democrats and Republicans, all want. They want us to be working on it, and they want us to pass a bipartisan comprehensive tax reform bill.

The seven tax provisions before us today, packaged into two bills, will add more than $93 billion to the deficit. There was a time when my Republican friends actually cared about the deficit. I guess those days are gone.

While I support the goals of many of the provisions contained in these bills, I cannot vote for legislation that targets only a handful of tax provisions, chooses to elevate them and make them permanent at the expense of other tax priorities, and then refuses to pay for them—absolutely refuses to pay for them.

This Republican package does nothing, absolutely nothing to address key priorities, like the work opportunity tax credit and the new markets tax credit. It fails to address the long-term status of the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit that work to reduce poverty.

If these tax provisions are allowed to expire in 2017, as currently scheduled, many working poor families would lose their child tax credit, and many low-income married couples and larger families would see a cut in their EITC. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that if the EITC and the CTC provisions were to expire, ''more than 16 million people in low-income working families, including 8 million children, would fall into—or deeper into—poverty.''

The piecemeal, deficit-spending approach taken by this majority puts these working family tax provisions at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to see members of the Republican leadership at D.C. Central Kitchen the other day talking about hunger. D.C. Central Kitchen does incredible work to feed the hungry and help people get back on their feet.

But count me as a little skeptical because time after time after time after time, Republicans have targeted poor people and the programs that help them.

If my friends on the other side of the aisle are serious about ending hunger, they need to do much more than encourage donations to food banks. First and foremost, they should stop targeting SNAP, the Nation's premier antihunger program. They should stop treating SNAP as an ATM machine for other programs.

Instead, they should work with us to increase the minimum wage or at least give us a vote on increasing the minimum wage. They should work with us to expand job training programs and make child care more affordable. They should work with us to fix the major flaw in our social safety net; namely, that when someone gets a job that doesn't pay very much, they tend to lose all their benefits and end up struggling, once again, to put food on the table, find day care for their kids, keep their house warm, and pay the rent.

We need desperately to have a serious and thoughtful discussion about the long-term sustainability of our safety net programs.

The Fighting Hunger Incentive Act makes permanent the enhanced deduction for contributions of food inventory. I strongly support our food banks and charitable organizations that work each and every day to feed the hungry in this country. I support efforts that provide incentives to donate food to these organizations. But one tax break does not constitute a plan to address hunger. And it certainly does not make up for the cuts to SNAP and other safety net programs that have been proposed and enacted by this Republican majority.

So in closing, again, I would urge my colleagues to pay attention to today's National Journal Daily, the headline: ''So Far, a Congress About Nothing.'' That is what this Congress is becoming known as, ''a Congress about nothing.''

Well, work with us in a bipartisan way to change this headline, and you could do that by allowing a clean Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill to come before us. We can pass it in a bipartisan way, and we can meet the national security needs of our country and actually do something before we go home on another break.

With that, I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

My good friend from Massachusetts covered a lot of ground. I am not going to try to deal with every single issue that he raised in my response. But let me point out a couple of facts.

First, my friend is concerned about the deficit, and I appreciate that. But this is a rather new, novel idea for Democrats. When the Republican majority actually took power, the deficit was $1.4 trillion a year. It is under $500 billion, which is still way too high. But this majority has taken deficits extremely seriously and has lowered them every year.

Second, my friend is worried about the cost of these tax cuts. That is amazing to me because when they were in the majority, they routinely extended these same tax credits without paying for them year after year after year. So the sudden conversion to paying for tax cuts is new and remarkable and probably worth some consideration.

Third, my friend is worried about this coming to the floor under a closed rule. Frankly, tax legislation always comes to the floor under a closed rule. It is pretty hard to make calculations otherwise. And that was true with Democrats. It is true with Republicans. In this particular case, I am informed that the minority was offered a chance to submit an alternative proposal in the form of an amendment and chose not to exercise that right. That is certainly their right. But if they wanted an alternative, it could have been made in order. They chose not to do that.

My friend raised the issue of Homeland Security. And on this, frankly, we all are concerned. I think all Americans are worried. I think where we disagree is, this House has acted. It has fully funded and passed, and we are waiting on the Senate to do something.

Now, what is happening in the Senate? My friend alluded to the fact that the Republicans were somehow responsible for this in the Senate. As he well knows, the Republicans on three occasions have tried to bring the bill that we passed in this Chamber to the floor for consideration. The Democratic majority on all three occasions have kept them from reaching the 60 votes that Senate rules require. Why? Because they simply don't want to vote on anything.

We lived through 4 years of a Democratic majority that never brought appropriations bills to the floor. They have already had more votes under the Republican leadership in the other body in a matter of weeks than they had all of last year. The Democratic majority in the Senate didn't want a vote. The Democratic minority in the Senate evidently does not want a vote either. And that has frustrated, frankly, both sides and has kept legislation from coming to be. That is just simply the reality of it.

We will wait to see what the Senate does. I would not expect them to pass exactly what we pass over here. If they would simply allow consideration for a bill, something would emerge. We would go to conference. We would hammer out our differences, and we could move on and fund the Department of Homeland Security.

But right now, this is a Senate issue. This is not a House issue. And this is a question as to whether or not Democratic Senators will allow their own body to function. That is in their hands, not in ours.

Frankly, I think that we will, unfortunately, see a lot of this in the course of this session. We will send legislation over. Democrats will try to keep it from being considered. I think they will be offered the opportunity to consider that legislation over and over again. I hope we don't see this pattern repeated time after time after time.

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

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

Again, I urge my colleagues to read the National Journal Daily today and pay close attention to this headline,

''So Far, a Congress About Nothing.'' And that is basically what we are doing here today.

The tax provisions that we are talking about here today, the Republicans over in the Senate are saying that they don't intend to bring any of these before the relevant committees or bring them to the floor. They are trying to work on a more long-term comprehensive tax reform bill, as we should be here. So we can't blame the Democrats for that. It is the Republicans in the Senate who have said they aren't going to take this up.

So then the question arises, why are we doing this? Why aren't we doing something that is more urgent and more pressing, like passing a Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill?

And let's be clear about what the problem is. There is a bipartisan bill that Democrats and Republicans agree on on funding the Department of Homeland Security. What some of the more extreme elements in the House of Representatives on the Republican side have done is they have loaded it up with all kinds of anti-immigration provisions.

□ 1300

They have decided that that is where they want the debate on immigration, so all of a sudden, this bill has been loaded up with extraneous issues that don't belong on this bill. Quite frankly, we think that that is wrong, and Democrats in the Senate think it is wrong. What we are saying is actually bring before both bodies a clean bill.

What is so wrong with that? If you don't like what the President is doing on immigration, bring up a separate bill or sue him again because that seems to be what my Republican friends like to do all the time, but don't hold up a Department of Homeland Security bill for a political battle on an issue, quite frankly, that does not belong on an appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, again, there are only 16 days left until the funding of the Department of Homeland Security expires. It is 16 days, but 5 legislative days only. If it expires, it would shut down many of the crucial operations that keep our country safe.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule that will allow for consideration of a clean Department of Homeland Security funding bill. With such serious consequences, it is time to put politics aside in order to strengthen our homeland and protect American families.

To discuss our proposal, I will yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), the distinguished ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge this House to immediately take up and pass the bipartisan negotiated clean funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

By defeating the previous question on the pending rule, we can immediately make in order the bipartisan, clean, negotiated Homeland Security bill and stop the theatrics over the President's use of executive orders.

My colleague Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and I made a similar attempt yesterday, which was unfortunately defeated on a party-line vote. It is my sincere hope that my friends on the other side of the aisle have further discussed this issue amongst themselves and that they are now prepared to end this standoff.

Mr. Speaker, as of today, we are 135 days into what should have been the start of the fiscal year. The situation this House has caused is completely unacceptable.

We simply cannot wait 1 day longer—1 more day—to do the right thing, the responsible thing, and fund these critical agencies tasked with protecting this Nation.

As the ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee, I was involved in bipartisan, bicameral negotiations on the omnibus spending bill that passed the House and the Senate and was signed by the President last December.

That package could have contained all 12 annual spending bills because all 12 were negotiated in conference and every one of them was ready to go. We thank Representative PRICE for his role in negotiating the Homeland Security bill last Congress.

But an unfortunate decision was made by the leadership of this body to omit the Homeland Security bill—not because there were outstanding issues or continued disputes. That bill was stripped from the omnibus because some in this body were upset by the President's executive order on immigration.

They even admitted the President's actions had little to do with the Homeland Security Appropriations bill, yet that was the choice that was made on how to proceed.

The Homeland Security Appropriations bill was forced to operate under a continuing resolution instead of having a full-year bill. Ironically, it meant the Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement—two of the agencies tasked with defending our borders and enforcing our immigration laws—had to do without the nearly $1 billion increase they would have gotten under the full-year bill.

Delaying the full-year bill limits the Department's ability to advance the Secretary's unity of effort initiative designed to improve coordination in our security missions, limits the ability of the Secretary to move ahead with the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign, creates uncertainty regarding ICE's capacity to detain and deport dangerous criminals, complicates the Department's ability to deal with another influx of unaccompanied children at our border stations, delays implementation of the new security upgrades at the White House and hiring increases of the U.S. Secret Service, and delays terrorism preparedness and response grants for State and local public safety personnel.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle feel quite strongly about the President's use of executive orders on immigration policy, but I am compelled to remind those colleagues that they have every tool at their disposal to pass legislation changing the President's proposal.

This stunt has gone on too long. It is time to admit these immigration policy decisions have little to nothing to do with the appropriations process. The Homeland Security bill should never have been held hostage in this fight.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I put a statement by Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD because I thought it was so important for my colleagues to read.

In it, the Secretary laid out the consequences of operating under a continuing resolution and summed up the dangerous situation we face with a sobering message.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Mrs. LOWEY. ''Border security is not free.''

I couldn't agree more.

Yesterday, as a result of the party-line vote in the House on bringing up a clean bill, many of my majority colleagues insisted it was the Senate's turn to act, but it is clear for all those watching that the Senate cannot pass a Homeland Security bill with the House's extraneous riders attached. Further, the President has made it abundantly clear he would veto the bill if these riders remained.

I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: What now? Hasn't this gone on long enough? Isn't it time we abandon the failed strategy and pass a clean bill funding the Homeland Security Department?

To that end, I urge this whole House to join me today in defeating the previous question so that my colleague Mr. MCGOVERN can offer an amendment to provide a clean, full-year appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

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

Let me return the focus for a moment at least to the matter at hand, the legislation in front of us.

In response to my good friend from Massachusetts' concerns, remember, the provisions in the tax legislation that we are considering have been routinely enacted for years under both Democratic and Republican Congresses and Democratic and Republican administrations.

They are so automatic that they are essentially part of the existing Tax

Code. Frankly, I predict once we get to the legislation, probably we will have dozens of my friend's colleagues vote in favor of these. That certainly was the case last year when similar provisions were brought to the floor. There will be a lot of Democratic votes for the very bills that are under consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with my friend. We do need a larger overhaul of the entire tax system. He is totally correct at that. We made some progress in that regard last year. I have no doubt that is exactly Mr. RYAN's intent.

The reason to act on these measures and others like them now that will be part of any final package is to simply give our fellow Americans—businesses, workers, and people that want to make charitable contributions—tax certainty early in the year, so they can go ahead and make their actions knowing that this legislation is in place.

I am not convinced that none of these will be taken up by the other side in the other Chamber. We will see. It is an unpredictable body, but we will see.

Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my friend from New York, the gentlewoman who is the ranking member on Appropriations. We have gotten 95 percent or so of government funded in large part due to her efforts in conjunction with our colleague, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and she was a big reason that that got done and got done in a bipartisan manner.

We passed legislation across this floor with the gentlelady's help, quite frankly. So all of us, myself included, owe you a debt in that regard.

I do point out that the legislation on homeland—we have acted on that. Now, my friends have said, Well, perhaps you should sue the President. That is a good suggestion. About 30-odd States are doing that right now.

He is in court because the action he took, in their view, is going to cost them millions and millions of dollars. My personal view is perhaps the House should somehow associate itself with that lawsuit. That is not my decision to make, but I think that is an appropriate thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, this was an action that was extraordinarily provocative by the President. The President has a long history of using immigration as a political issue rather than viewing it as a problem to be solved.

When he ran for office in 2008, he said he would have an immigration bill on the floor within 100 days. We had a Democratic Senate and a Democratic House, and we never saw the bill.

Then we didn't hear much about it for 2 years because he was busy running for his own reelection. Then later, we heard a lot about it. The President said he was going to act before the election. Then he pulled back from doing that because he thought, Well, electorally, this may not be advantageous.

But the minute afterwards when he thought it was to his political advantage, he rolled it out again. So let's be real here about how serious this effort is, but it will be challenged in court.

In terms of this body, again, it has passed appropriate legislation on funding. It has done exactly as my friend from New York suggests, use some of the tools that are legitimately at its disposal. That bill now rests in the Senate.

If the Democratic minority in the Senate will allow it to be brought up, I would not expect it would come back exactly as this House fashioned it. They simply just need to do their job, send something back, go to conference, and we can act on it. They have had lots of time to do this. This was moved over there weeks ago—or a couple of weeks ago.

The real problem here, Mr. Speaker, is the United States Senate, because of the obstruction of the minority, is simply choosing not to act. As soon as they act, I think we will probably move pretty expeditiously, find some common ground, and address my friend's concerns because I think they are very legitimate concerns and very appropriate in terms of getting the Homeland Security bill done.

It is a good bill. The underlying bill that my friend was part of negotiating was an excellent piece of bipartisan, bicameral compromise. If the Senate would simply take up the bill in front of them, I think we could get to the point we could have an agreement in rather short order.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to hope that the Senate actually does its job.

In the meantime, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to a few of the points that the gentleman has made in his speech on the floor here.

First of all, about the process—these are closed rules that we are dealing with here today. Yes, while it has been traditional to give tax provisions closed rules, there were Members who actually brought amendments to the House Rules Committee to help pay for some of these that I think might have been able to earn bipartisan support because I think there are some Members on your side of the aisle who would like these paid for and do not want to add to the deficit, but they were not made in order in the Rules Committee.

There may be other ideas on how to pay for this so we can truly have a bipartisan vote on this and not add to the deficit, but we will not have that opportunity because of the rule.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these provisions that we are talking about would add $93 billion to the deficit over the next 10 years. Yes, maybe Republicans and Democrats in the past have extended these without pay-fors, but that doesn't make it right. It just means we both added to the deficit. Maybe we ought to get serious about Pay-As-You-Go.

My friends on the other side of the aisle insist that emergency unemployment benefits have to be paid for, but when it comes to any kind of tax cut, they don't believe anything has to be paid for, so we should have a more open process on this.

My friend talks about certainty, that all we are trying to do is give people certainty, but that is not the case. It is not the case because the President has said that he would threaten to veto these bills if they weren't paid for. It is what Republican leaders in the Senate have said.

ROY BLUNT, our former colleague in the House, made it very clear. He said:

> As long as the Finance Committee in the Senate feels there is an opportunity for overall tax reform, I think you are going to not see a quick response to individual bills coming over here. We may deal with them later on down the aisle, but there is no sense that the Senate is going to act on this any time soon.

When we talk about providing people certainty, that is not what we are doing here. This is about just kind of going through the motions for the sake of going through the motions.

Finally, on the Department of Homeland Security bill, yes, the House acted and attached all these radical anti-immigrant riders to the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill.

MITCH MCCONNELL, the Senate majority leader, told reporters on Tuesday:

> I think it is clear we cannot go forward in the Senate, so the next move, obviously, is up to the House.

□ 1315

Today is Thursday. Tomorrow we leave for a break, and it doesn't seem like Republican leaders feel the same sense of urgency that we do over here that we need to get this business completed.

Republicans are obviously refusing to admit the reality of this kind of dangerous anti-immigrant grandstanding. In fact, when reporters asked House Majority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY whether the House would take up a new DHS funding bill, he said, ''Why do we have to?''

Let me respond to the majority leader. The reason why we have to is because our primary job here is to protect the people of the United States of America. By letting this bill lapse, we are failing in our responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD).

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question on the rule so it can be amended to make in order House consideration of H.R. 861, the clean, bipartisan Homeland Security Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015.

As we have been reminded by previous speakers, today is February 12, 135 days into fiscal year 2015, and there are only 16 days remaining until the current CR expires. Of these days, the House is scheduled to be in session only 5. If some of my colleagues have a sense of deja vu when they hear that, I

can sympathize. I get the same feeling when I wake up each morning and find that Congress is still spinning its wheels on a full-year funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

I know some of my colleagues believe the onus to act now lies with the Senate, as we have heard. I agree, the Senate should act. While it has had multiple failed attempts to bring up the House bill containing the poison pill riders, the Senate Republican leadership has not tried to bring up the clean, bipartisan funding bill.

I feel confident that a majority of the Senate would support the bill without the poison pill riders added to the House on the floor. There is only one way to find out.

The real question is why isn't the House Republican leadership willing to bring the clean Homeland Security bill for a vote? Why wait? Why not take the initiative and make H.R. 861 in order today? We can quickly resolve the funding dilemma facing the Department of Homeland Security, and the House could then work its will on immigration policy and border security by debating the legislation reported to the House by the authorizing committees. That is the way our process was intended to work by our framers.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the clean full-year DHS funding bill was negotiated in good faith on a bicameral, bipartisan basis, and it addresses the most pressing needs of the Department to protect this country from harm. The President would sign that bill today, and we should send it to him.

I urge my colleagues to put the safety of our country first and defeat the previous question to make in order the consideration of H.R. 861, the clean Homeland Security funding bill.

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

Again, let's go back over a couple of points in the process where my friends and I disagree.

Again, tax legislation normally comes here under a closed rule—almost always. Democrats do it; Republicans do it.

The second point: I bet you that these provisions that we are discussing here today will at some point this year, if not in this legislation, almost certainly—as a matter of fact, certainly—be extended and placed. All we are trying to do is move them early so people know for sure it is going to happen and can plan and act accordingly—and, frankly, dozens of my friends who will vote for this, almost certainly, when it is actually considered on the floor. Nothing unusual or extreme here. It is just simply a way to try to give a break and a little advance notice to hardworking men and women that run small businesses all over America.

On the Homeland Security issue, again, this is now in the Senate. This body has acted. The Senate can literally do whatever it chooses to do. We have had several suggestions of what Republican leaders can do or what Democratic leaders can do.

Right now, the Democratic minority has chosen not to allow debate to occur, not to act on the bill. If they simply act on the bill, I suspect it will change. It will not look exactly like what we sent over. All they need to do is actually legislate.

Now, this is the oldest book, evidently, in the minority party on the other body's playbook, because, again, they did it when they were in the majority. They just simply refuse to vote on things. We don't have a broken House. We certainly have differences of opinion in the House, but at least we act and actually move legislation across the floor and put it in the other Chamber.

All we are asking of Democrats and Republicans alike in the other Chamber is just do your job. Just send us something. We will go to conference with you. We will hammer out a compromise, and we will go on from there.

So this sort of deja vu all over again, I agree with that. We saw a Democratic majority in the Senate blocking action on almost any legislation, didn't pass a single appropriations bill last year. We now see a Democratic minority trying to do, in the same body, essentially the same thing.

So, hopefully, that lesson will be learned at some point over there and they will just simply pick up legislation and begin to move it. If they do, I think we can find a lot of common ground on a lot of important issues.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, I am going to urge my colleagues to vote against the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will bring up an amendment that will allow for there to be a clean vote on the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. No controversial anti-immigrant riders, just the bill that a bipartisan group of Members and the Appropriations Committees agreed on in an up or down vote.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, while I have great respect for my friend on the Rules Committee, and I sometimes get frustrated by the Senate as well, the fact of the matter is, at least in the Senate, they are voting on a lot more amendments than we are in the House. We don't have an open process here. We have one of the most closed processes, if not the most closed process, in history. That is where a lot of the frustration comes from.

On these tax provisions, I think there is broad bipartisan support on the policy. I support, I think, mostly all of them. If we worked in a bipartisan way to make sure they were paid for, I think you would get a unanimous vote here in the House.

But for some reason, this notion of working in a bipartisan way is something that my friends on the other side of the aisle just refuse to do. It is their way or the highway. It is one political message vote after another, after another, after another. I think people are getting sick of it.

I go back to the headline in the National Journal Daily: ''So Far, a Congress About Nothing.'' The reason why it is about nothing is that this Chamber is not working.

There is no bipartisanship here when it comes to legislation; there is no give and take. Routinely, we are being forced to vote up or down on bills that, quite frankly, with a few tweaks and some improvements, would pass. And the bills that we are talking about here I think would pass overwhelmingly if we just open up the process a little bit, a little give-and-take.

Let's also be clear, we are not providing anybody with any certainty about anything. The Senate leaders of the relevant committees that would take up this tax legislation have said clearly they are not going to take it up, not any time soon. So it is not urgent that we be debating and doing these bills here today. What is urgent is the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill.

For the life of me, I don't understand why the Republican leadership can't override the views of a handful of extremists in their party who are insisting on maintaining these anti-immigration riders, holding the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill hostage, and thereby jeopardizing the security of the people of the United States of America.

We have 5 legislative days left to deal with this, and we are leaving tomorrow for a break. Again, we go home and tell our constituents when they ask, ''What have you accomplished?'' the answer is, ''Nothing.''

We have done nothing. Yes, we have had debates, we have had votes, but on things that are going nowhere. Not only because the President has threatened vetoes on most of the legislation, but because the House Republicans are saying: The stuff you are sending over to us is too extreme.

What have we done? We voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act for the 57th or the 58th time, another waste of taxpayer money going nowhere. We voted on the Keystone bill twice, closed rules, and voted on a bill to basically deny women essential reproductive rights that was so over the top and so extreme that the Republican leadership had to pull it and substitute it with something else.

So that has been the total amount of work that has been done here. I don't know how my Republican friends go home and brag about, or even talk about, what we have been doing here when it has amounted to nothing.

Let's do something. Let's defeat the previous question. Allow me to bring up an amendment that would allow for a clean vote on a Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. We can come together in a bipartisan way, pass it overwhelmingly in the House, pass it overwhelmingly in the Senate. You will all be invited down to the White House when the President signs it into law. We all can agree on it and show our constituents, Democrats and Republicans alike, that we can work together and we can get something done, that we are not a Congress just about nothing.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let's go back to the beginning of this debate and make sure that folks are very clear about what we are talking about. We are talking about extending tax breaks that have routinely been extended for years—that Democrats have extended, that Republicans have extended—that, frankly, have not been paid for in the past, and that will most certainly be part of any overall package that is enacted.

We are simply saying let's make sure people that have a benefit bestowed in these areas know and can calculate and make business decisions accordingly early in the year instead of scramble at the very end. It simply makes sense, and it is simply fair to the American taxpayer. That is important to remember.

Also, it is important to remember that the underlying legislation is extremely bipartisan. The only part of this process that will be partisan is the normal procedural part, where it is almost a sort of shirts and skins game where Democrats all vote against a Republican rule—we do exactly the same thing when we are in the minority—and our people mostly vote for that rule, and I think probably certainly will today; and then we will actually have a vote on the underlying legislation, and many, many, many Democrats will join almost all Republicans and vote for it.

So we think it is a good piece of legislation, and we also think it is part of an incremental effort. We think Mr. RYAN will bring other bills like this to the floor but also will, in time, make an overall proposal on tax reform. Then we will see if our friends are really serious about engaging in that debate. I am not questioning my friends on this side of the aisle, but I do have some serious questions about how serious the President is about tax reform. But, again, we will see.

Finally, we have had a great deal of discussion about Homeland Security. And, again, just to be clear, this House has acted and fully funded Homeland Security. The Homeland is done. It is funded through the end of this month. We have got legislation that we have agreed on.

The President, in my view, provoked a crisis by acting unilaterally. That view, by the way, is not just a narrow view by a few people. He is in court defending his actions. Over 30 States are involved in a lawsuit against him because of what he did. He knew it was going to be controversial. He waited until after the elections to try and pick a fight and I think probably try to cover up a little bit for how poorly his side did in that particular election, anything to change the topic.

□ 1330

So now we are here.

The House has reacted to that, I think, in an appropriate form and has sent it to the Senate. In the Senate, the Democratic minority has simply refused to allow any debate. They can do that under the Senate rules—and I respect that process—but let's be clear about who is stopping the funding of Homeland Security. It is actually Democratic Senators, who won't allow a measure to even come up for debate.

Now, if that measure came up for debate, what this House passed, I would suspect that it would be changed in some ways. I do not expect the Senate will do exactly what we suggest and think they should do. They very seldom do that. If they will just do that, we will arrive at, I think, a common agreement; we will go to conference; there will be the normal give-and-take in politics; and we will reach an agreement.

My friend is concerned about the openness of the process. Again, I point out that, when we deal with this kind of legislation, it is normally a closed rule, and this has been pretty routine stuff. I commit to my friend on this point: we will actually be much more open in the appropriations process than my friends were when they were in the majority. They almost never brought bills to the floor, and when they did, they actually, for the first time, brought them under closed rules. We will bring our bills to the floor under open rules, and that is normal in the appropriations process. I think, if you actually look at the record of the two majorities side by side, you will find that there were a lot more amendments made available to Members of both sides under a Republican majority than has been the case when my friends were most recently in power.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, again, I want to point out that the legislation in question is routine, and it should be enacted on a bipartisan basis. We have the potential, if the Senate will act, to actually put it on the President's desk. I don't think he would actually veto it if we did, but, again, that would be his call.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 101 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

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

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 861) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 861.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend

the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the 7 Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York) at 2 p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 644, FIGHTING HUNGER INCENTIVE ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 636, AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 101) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 644) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of the adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 232, nays 164, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 77]

YEAS—232

Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emmer
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—164

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brady (PA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu (CA)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle (PA)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu (CA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—36

Abraham
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Cartwright
Courtney
Cramer
Duckworth
Eshoo
Esty
Fitzpatrick
Fortenberry
Garamendi
Gibson
Hinojosa
Huelskamp
Kaptur
Lofgren
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Miller (FL)
O'Rourke
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Peters
Price (NC)
Roe (TN)
Ruiz
Ryan (OH)
Sinema
Swalwell (CA)
Titus
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Welch

□ 1428

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

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

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 77, I was attending the Clay Hunt SAV bill signing at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 233, noes 163, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

AYES—233

Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emmer
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—163

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brady (PA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu (CA)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle (PA)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu (CA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—36

Abraham
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Cartwright
Courtney
Cramer
Duckworth
Eshoo
Esty
Fitzpatrick
Fortenberry
Garamendi
Gibson
Hinojosa
Huelskamp
Kaptur
Lofgren
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Miller (FL)
O'Rourke
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Peters
Price (NC)
Roe (TN)
Ruiz
Ryan (OH)
Sinema
Swalwell (CA)
Titus
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Welch

□ 1438

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 78 I was attending the Clay Hunt SAV bill signing at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, on the Legislative Day of February 12, 2015, a series of votes was held. Had I been present for these rollcall votes, I would have cast the following votes: rollcall 77—I vote "nay," rollcall 78—I vote "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to attending the President's Bill Signing Ceremony of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, I missed the following rollcall votes: No. 77 and No. 78 on February 12, 2015. If present, I would have voted: rollcall No. 77—On Ordering the Previous Question, "aye," rollcall vote No. 78—H. Res. 101—The rule providing for consideration of both H.R. 644—Fighting Hunger Incentive Act of 2015, and H.R. 636—America's Small Business Tax Relief Act of 2015, "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, on February 12, 2015, I missed two votes because I had the honor to be at the White House for the bill signing ceremony of H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt SAV Act. I missed recorded votes No. 77–78. I would like the record to reflect how I would have voted if I were present. On rollcall No. 77, I would have voted "yea," on rollcall No. 78, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, today, February 12, 2015, I was not present for call votes number 77 and 78 due to attendance at the White House bill signing ceremony for the Clay Hunt SAV Act. If I had been in attendance, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 77 and "yea" on rollcall vote 78.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 77 and 78 I missed the votes to attend the signing of the Clay Hunt SAV Act into law, a bipartisan law that will reduce veteran suicides. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on 77 and "yea" on 78.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 12, 2015 at 1:42 p.m.:

Appointments:

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China.

National Council on the Arts.

United States Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki).

Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

President's Export Council.

United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

FIGHTING HUNGER INCENTIVE ACT OF 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 101, I

call up the bill (H.R. 644) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 101, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–5 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

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

H.R. 644

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 ''America Gives More Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF CHARITABLE DEDUCTION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS OF FOOD INVENTORY.

(a) PERMANENT EXTENSION.—Section 170(e)(3)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking clause (iv).

(b) INCREASE IN LIMITATION.—Section 170(e)(3)(C) of such Code, as amended by subsection (a), is amended by striking clause (ii), by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (iv), and by inserting after clause (i) the following new clauses:

''(ii) LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of such contributions for any taxable year which may be taken into account under this section shall not exceed—

''(I) in the case of any taxpayer other than a C corporation, 15 percent of the taxpayer's aggregate net income for such taxable year from all trades or businesses from which such contributions were made for such year, computed without regard to this section, and

''(II) in the case of a C corporation, 15 percent of taxable income (as defined in subsection (b)(2)(D)).

''(iii) RULES RELATED TO LIMITATION.—

''(I) CARRYOVER.—If such aggregate amount exceeds the limitation imposed under clause (ii), such excess shall be treated (in a manner consistent with the rules of subsection (d)) as a charitable contribution described in clause (i) in each of the 5 succeeding taxable years in order of time.

''(II) COORDINATION WITH OVERALL CORPORATE LIMITATION.—In the case of any charitable contribution allowable under clause (ii)(II), subsection (b)(2)(A) shall not apply to such contribution, but the limitation imposed by such subsection shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the aggregate amount of such contributions. For purposes of subsection (b)(2)(B), such contributions shall be treated as allowable under subsection (b)(2)(A).''.

(c) DETERMINATION OF BASIS FOR CERTAIN TAXPAYERS.—Section 170(e)(3)(C) of such Code, as amended by subsections (a) and (b), is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) DETERMINATION OF BASIS FOR CERTAIN TAXPAYERS.—If a taxpayer—

''(I) does not account for inventories under section 471, and

''(II) is not required to capitalize indirect costs under section 263A,

the taxpayer may elect, solely for purposes of subparagraph (B), to treat the basis of any apparently wholesome food as being equal to 25 percent of the fair market value of such food.''.

(d) DETERMINATION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.—Section 170(e)(3)(C) of such Code, as amended by subsections (a), (b), and (c), is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(vi) DETERMINATION OF FAIR MARKET VALUE.—In the case of any such contribution of apparently wholesome food which cannot or will not be sold solely by reason of internal standards of the taxpayer, lack of market, or similar circumstances, or by reason of being produced by the taxpayer exclusively for the purposes of transferring the food to an organization described in subparagraph (A), the fair market value of such contribution shall be determined—

''(I) without regard to such internal standards, such lack of market, such circumstances, or such exclusive purpose, and

''(II) by taking into account the price at which the same or substantially the same food items (as to both type and quality) are sold by the taxpayer at the time of the contribution (or, if not so sold at such time, in the recent past).''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the amendments made by this section shall apply to contributions made after the date of the enactment of this Act, in taxable years ending after such date.

(2) LIMITATION; APPLICABILITY TO C CORPORATIONS.—The amendments made by subsection (b) shall apply to contributions made in taxable years ending after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. RULE ALLOWING CERTAIN TAX-FREE DISTRIBUTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES MADE PERMANENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 408(d)(8) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking subparagraph (F).

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to distributions made in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

SEC. 4. SPECIAL RULE FOR QUALIFIED CONSERVATION CONTRIBUTIONS MADE PERMANENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) INDIVIDUALS.—Subparagraph (E) of section 170(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to contributions of qualified conservation contributions) is amended by striking clause (vi).

(2) CORPORATIONS.—Subparagraph (B) of section 170(b)(2) of such Code (relating to qualified conservation contributions) is amended by striking clause (iii).

(b) CONTRIBUTIONS OF CAPITAL GAIN REAL PROPERTY MADE FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES BY NATIVE CORPORATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 170(b)(2) of such Code is amended by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D), and by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

''(C) QUALIFIED CONSERVATION CONTRIBUTIONS BY CERTAIN NATIVE CORPORATIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Any qualified conservation contribution (as defined in subsection (h)(1)) which—

''(I) is made by a Native Corporation, and

''(II) is a contribution of property which was land conveyed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act,

shall be allowed to the extent that the aggregate amount of such contributions does not exceed the excess of the taxpayer's taxable income over the amount of charitable contributions allowable under subparagraph (A).

''(ii) CARRYOVER.—If the aggregate amount of contributions described in clause (i) exceeds the limitation of clause (i), such excess shall be treated (in a manner consistent with the rules of subsection (d)(2)) as a charitable contribution to which clause (i) applies in each of the 15 succeeding taxable years in order of time.

''(iii) NATIVE CORPORATION.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'Native Corporation' has the meaning given such term by section 3(m) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 170(b)(2)(A) of such Code is amended by striking ''subparagraph (B) applies'' and inserting ''subparagraph (B) or (C) applies''.

(B) Section 170(b)(2)(B)(ii) of such Code is amended by striking ''15 succeeding years'' and inserting ''15 succeeding taxable years''.

(3) VALID EXISTING RIGHTS PRESERVED.—Nothing in this subsection (or any amendment made by this subsection) shall be construed to modify the existing property rights validly conveyed to Native Corporations (within the meaning of section 3(m) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act) under such Act.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contributions made in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

SEC. 5. MODIFICATION OF THE TAX RATE FOR THE EXCISE TAX ON INVESTMENT INCOME OF PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4940(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''2 percent'' and inserting ''1 percent''.

(b) ELIMINATION OF REDUCED TAX WHERE FOUNDATION MEETS CERTAIN DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 4940 of such Code is amended by striking subsection (e).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 90 minutes, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 45 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 644, the Fighting Hunger Incentive Act of 2015.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Here is what we are trying to accomplish with this legislation today: we are trying to provide some more certainty.

Small businesses, they have to be able to plan for the future. Charities who are serving those in need, they also have to plan for the future. Families need to know whether there is going to be help for them at the local food bank. A lot of them look to the Tax Code, ironically, when planning for the future. They need a tax code that is easy to understand. But that is not the Tax Code that we have today. Whether we make the Tax Code more complicated—well, if we do that, we are

making their lives more unpredictable. That is a disservice to the people we are trying to serve.

What would really help would be to fix our broken tax system. And ultimately, our goal is to get to a tax code that is simpler, that is flatter, that is fairer for everybody. But we have still got work to do on that front, and life doesn't wait for Washington. In fact, Washington has a really bad habit of letting really important provisions expire, only to renew them retroactively. This has got to stop, and we are trying to fix this.

So this bill would make several of these provisions permanent. Number one, it would encourage charitable giving. Number two, it would help people contribute to charities from their IRAs, Individual Retirement Accounts, tax-free. Number three, it would let people deduct food bank donations from their taxes, and it would make other changes that make giving less expensive.

The quick to the short, Mr. Speaker, is these are provisions in the Code that we know—because it has been demonstrated—make a big difference.

□ 1445

It is so important that we have a vibrant civil society, that space that stands between ourselves and our government, which is where we live and we lead our lives, that it is vibrant and that that space is there to help people in need. Private charity is the glue that keeps our communities together.

In so many instances, private charities thrive on the good will and the donations and the generosity of other people, of businesses, and those businesses are affected by the Tax Code. What we have to do is provide certainty to those businesses who want to be generous and to those people who want to be generous, but to these charities who need some predictability, so they can plan their charitable endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, knowing that this is a bipartisan notion, knowing that the good work that is done by these groups is absolutely essential to healing people in our communities, to getting people on to lives of self-sufficiency, getting them to where they want to be in life, the least we can do is provide some certainty so more of this can happen.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, we waited until the end of the year to extend these provisions retroactive to the first of the year but only for that year—oh, and by the way, last year, we waited until December 11 to tell all of these charities, these donors to charities, Okay. Now, here is the benefit for the past year, but guess what, it already expired the beginning of this year.

I know that it sounds kind of complicated. The point is this is no way to run a railroad. We need to provide families with certainty. We need to provide charities with certainty. That is what this bill does.

The part that we are going to have a debate here, Mr. Speaker, is nobody seems to have a problem when we do this 1 year at a time. Nobody seems to have a problem suggesting that we ''pay for it'' which is, in my opinion, another way of saying raise taxes on other people just to keep them the same when we do it 1 year at a time, but when we say, Let's make this thing permanent, this thing that we do once every year that everybody is fine with, instead of doing it once every year and sometimes retroactively, let's just do it permanently so people in families and businesses can plan, then all of a sudden, there is a big problem.

I personally don't understand that. It makes no sense because who we are serving is not Washington, who we are serving are the people who are trying to survive, are the people who are the beneficiaries of these charities or the charities who are doing the good works. That is why we are bringing this legislation to the floor. I am very excited to be a part of this.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the Members on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in this area, and with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the issues here are not the merits. That isn't the issue. The issue is whether we proceed this way. Proceeding this way is the opposite of bipartisanship—its very opposite. The chairman has said he wants to find common ground on common aspects.

What this does is essentially pull terrain out from under common ground. It is the opposite of a search for common ground. The President has said he will veto. We have the messages right here once again. It is the opposite of bipartisanship.

It is also, if I might say, the opposite of certainty for taxpayers. We went through this last year. These bills will not become law, period. If they were to pass the House and the Senate, they would be vetoed. That happened last year. It did not become law. It will not become law this year.

These provisions will be continued if we don't pass tax reform. Mr. Chairman, you control the schedule. If you don't want to wait until December, do it earlier if tax reform doesn't become a reality.

That is another problem with this bill and these bills. They are the opposite of tax reform. You don't do tax reform in a piecemeal fashion. Dave Camp, to his credit, understood that, so he came up with a comprehensive package.

In the Senate, Republicans understand this. Senator BLUNT said last week:

> As long as the Finance Committee feels there is an opportunity for overall tax reform, I think you are going to not see a quick response to individual bills coming over.

What could be clearer? What could be clearer?

This is also the opposite of fiscal responsibility.

You have here three opposites—really four, and four opposites make a big minus.

Fourteen billion is the cost of this bill and 79 billion, the next bill—that is 93. We marked up just a few hours ago in Ways and Means two more bills, one 42 billion and another one 177 billion—that is 219. And you add up those, over $310 billion in terms of adding to the deficit.

There has been some talk about helping the middle class. Action is the opposite of platitudes. Where is the action on the child tax credit? Where is the action on the EITC also affecting working and middle class families? Where is the action on the work opportunity tax credit? Where is the action on the minimum wage? The answer is we are now several months into this session.

A reporter said to me, What is bill number one?

I said, I have no idea.

How about other bills that really address the needs of the middle class of this country?

As expressed in Ways and Means, so many of us are very opposed to what is really a counterproductive path here. The merits, again, are not the basic issue.

The basic issue, do we want to fly in the face of bipartisanship, fly in the face of certainty for taxpayers, fly in the face of tax reform, and fly in the face of fiscal responsibility? We should not be doing that. We should not be doing that.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), the distinguished member from the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak very well about H.R. 641, the Conservation Easement Incentive legislation. I get confused sometimes by the discussion on the floor.

If I understand it, if you do it for a year or 2 years and you don't pay for it, that is good policy, that is good legislation, that is good for America, but if you go beyond that time, it is not good.

This is a piece of legislation that came up in 2006. In fact, my colleague Mr. THOMPSON brought it up. He and Chairman Camp did it. He and Mr. Gerlach, who retired last year, did it. This just makes good sense.

I can tell you something about this. It is not only bipartisan, it is bicameral. It is in the President's budget. If you are talking about trying to work together to get somewhere, isn't this it? Isn't this it?

Sometimes, we always try to bend the rules for something else, but this is about conservation. This is about allowing a landowner to set property aside. So I don't care if you are a farmer or a rancher, I don't care if you are a hunter or a hiker, I don't care if you

like to look at birds or hunt birds, there are over 65 associations around the country that say, Please do more of this, set this ground apart.

Now, if you are a farmer or a rancher, you can still work that ground. All you are saying is this is a set-aside, this ground can't be developed, we can't lose this ground.

This is so basic who we are as Americans. We are saying, Let's preserve what we have. Let's just keep what we have. Let's make sure that our kids can hunt, hike, and swim. Let's make sure that they can fish. Let's make sure they can do all those wonderful things that this land affords us to do.

Then it becomes, Gosh, this is about politics. It is not about policy. It is good policy. It has never been paid for. I just don't understand why, all of a sudden—now—why is it paid for?

I am only starting my third session here; but, my God, you would never do this back home. I wouldn't do this. I am an automobile dealer.

I couldn't do this to a customer and say, Yeah, it is okay now, but do you know what, later on, you are going to have to pay me for it.

And they say, Wait a minute, I thought you gave it to me.

No, no. We are going to take it back.

Mr. Speaker, there are millions of acres that have been set aside now. Why not give some permanency to this? We talk about tax reform. Let's give it some permanency. Let's do what makes sense for all of America.

Let's talk about preserving America's ground and making sure it doesn't go under development. People can still farm it, and they can still ranch on it. It just makes good sense.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am just asking our friends on the other side, let's think about what is good for the people we represent and not what is just good for the moment.

We have always done this in the past. It has only become a problem now because it is not a 1-year extender or a 2-year extender. Now, all of a sudden, we say, Well, let's just let people know this is the way it is always going to be from now until all time.

But, no, that is a bad idea to do that. You don't want to give anybody certainty. You don't want to give anybody permanency.

There is no time in my life that I would ever say to my friends, my family, or anybody I represent, This is just a temporary thing for me. Tomorrow, I may have a change of heart.

I just ask my friends, H.R. 641—Mr. THOMPSON is on this piece. Let's make sure that we move forward for America. Let's make sure that we set ground aside for the future.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), our distinguished whip, who is going to supply, if the gentleman will wait here, for a very clear answer.

Mr. HOYER. The ranking member didn't write my speech, so I am not sure what my answer to the distinguished gentleman's comments is, but I will say this to my friend, I am not for 1 year. I may vote for 1 year, but that is not what we ought to do. It ought to be paid for if it is 1 year, 2 years, permanent. There is no free lunch.

You are in the automobile business. People come into your automobile store, and they would say, I would like to have that car for $10,000.

And you say, Now, look, I paid $20,000 for that car. I can't sell it to you for $10,000.

There is no free lunch. Unpaid tax cuts are a free lunch, a pretense that somehow it is just free, but I will tell my friend it is not free.

The chairman, who was the chairman of the Budget Committee, offered a budget which cuts food stamps $125 billion. This bill is called the Fighting Hunger Incentive Act—$125 billion cut in food stamps. I tell you my friend voted for a $40 billion cut in food stamps in the farm bill.

I am not for free lunches. I am for a lot of these tax cuts, but I am not for taking it out of the mouths of children, I am not for taking it out of NIH, and I am not for taking it out of our national security. We have got to pay for what we buy, and I vote that way.

The chairman and I were one of 18 people one time that voted against a very popular bill that had to do with Social Security. We thought it was not paid for and not fiscally responsible, and he and I were one of 18 people in this House that voted against it.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I don't have much time, but maybe we can get some more. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I could not be in better or more agreement with you. I have watched for 6 years—an opportunity in a country with the greatest assets in the world—watched our working class, our middle-income people, our lower-income people suffer the greatest harm they have ever had in their life.

If this is truly about getting America back to work, putting food in the mouths of our children and being able to do all these things, the only one way to do that is to have a dynamic and robust economy. That is what I think we need to do.

I have watched it for 6 years. It is appalling what we have allowed to have happen in a country that has been blessed with so many things. It is just bad policy. We can't get beyond the politics. That is what is hurting our people.

It is not the fact that this is not being paid for because we are not manipulating it for a year or 2. The whole purpose of why we should be here is let's raise all America. Let's get everybody looking up, being able to feed everybody. We shouldn't have to have programs for people who can't take care of themselves because, by their very nature, they can do that. We have all of that potential.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I used to have a magic 1 minute. I don't have that now. I would be glad to participate in debate. We have had bad policy, I tell my friend.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I agree.

Mr. HOYER. Terrible policy.

I don't know about you, but I am for Simpson-Bowles. The problem with Simpson-Bowles for some people is it paid for what it did, just like the Camp bill. The Camp bill made tough choices, and it was a zero-sum game in the sense that it cut taxes and it paid for them—a zero-sum game—just like you had to run your business because, if you didn't run your business that way, you would have gone bankrupt.

Now, I fought for that for a very long period of time and voted that way, as I say, one of 18 with my friend from Wisconsin, but I tell my friend, yes, we are following bad policy.

This bill, you can argue for the merits. I get that. The next bill, you can argue for the merits, and the bill after that and the bill after that and the bill after that, and you have then caused $600 billion in deficit spending that your kids and my kids will have to pay for because we are too old to be around long enough to pay for it.

□ 1500

So I rise against this bill not because I am against fighting hunger. Everybody ought to be against fighting hunger.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. But when you talk about fighting hunger, don't cut food stamps $40 billion. Don't suggest the way we pay for this tax cut is to cut $125 billion from food stamps over the next 10 years, as the chairman did.

I disagree with that policy, and I respect the chairman.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. No, I can't yield any more because I am running out of time.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of two bills that we are considering on the floor this week to make tax cuts permanent, and it is unfortunate that neither of these bills is paid for 1 year or permanently. Together, they would increase the deficit by $93 billion. Nobody is suggesting we are going to pay for that, so our kids will pay for it.

Democrats support extending many of the preferences we are talking about, but we are also deeply concerned about America's fiscal future. And I voted that way, not just talked that way.

I hear a lot of talk from my friends in the majority about the debt, but

that talk too often fails to translate into fiscally responsible policy. It didn't in 1981 when we cut taxes deeply and increased the national debt from the time I came in under Reagan 189 percent, more than any President that has been President during my term in the last 34 years.

We have seen these two tax bills before—when Republicans brought them to the floor last Congress, along with several other permanent tax cuts, which, together, would have ballooned the deficit by more than $600 billion. That is twice what we will spend on medical research at NIH and 10 times what it would cost to expand community college access.

I also hear a lot of my friends on the other side of the aisle talk about a broken tax system. I tell my friend, that system is going to remain broken. That system is going to remain broken unless we do what Camp did.

Did I agree with everything that Camp did? No. But I respected him for putting together a package of tax reform that gives what Mr. RYAN says we need, and I agree with him—certainty. People need to know. These ought to all be permanent. The R&D tax credit ought to be permanent so people can plan.

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

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

Mr. HOYER. America's businesses and families deserve the certainty that comes from tax reform, not partisan piecemeal reform bills that undermine—undermine—tax reform. That is what ROY BLUNT was talking about.

ROY BLUNT has already been quoted, so I won't repeat the quote. But what he said is, as long as the Finance Committee feels there is an opportunity for overall tax reform, I think you are not going to see a quick response to individual bills coming over.

That is why this is bad policy; because you are not going to get from here to there unless you have a comprehensive bill that makes the tough tradeoffs and summons the courage of this Congress to pass meaningful, permanent, paid-for tax certainty for our citizens.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to say I truly, sincerely want to say this.

I very much respect the majority whip. We have had a great relationship over the years. I very much respect the gentleman. He is a class act legislator. I look forward to his support of our coming work from the committee if he wants to be part of tax reform.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield to the gentleman.

That was the longest magic minute I think I have seen.

Mr. HOYER. No, I have done longer when I had the minute, believe me.

I want to tell the gentleman, in all sincerity, I look forward to being able to support a bill that is comprehensive, paid for, and gives our citizens and individual taxpayers the certainty they need to have the confidence they need to grow our economy.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I just want to keep on my time.

Let me ask about the time allotment, by the way. Who is where.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 37 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 33½ minutes remaining.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, normally, I don't try to get into these baseline issues because it is kind of arcane budget issues. But here is where I think there is an inconsistency or a problem, and so people listening to this debate, there is a lot of confusion here.

If we were talking about a spending bill—let's just say the highway trust fund or TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families—and it expired and we said, well, let's just extend this bill, this law, and the spending in it at its current levels for another 5, 6 years, we wouldn't have to ''pay'' for that. It wouldn't cost anything. It is already in the baseline. So if we were basically talking about a spending bill here, none of these kinds of criticisms would hold merit, would be usable.

So here we are talking about taxes, and so I think people are getting the impression from this debate that we are talking about a tax cut here, that we are talking about doing something to businesses or individuals and cutting their taxes. These are laws that are already on the books. Charities, that is what we are talking about here in this particular bill. All we are saying is don't raise their taxes. That is what we are saying here.

The choice before us is fairly obvious. Either we raise taxes on small businesses and individuals with respect to charitable giving, or we keep them where they are today and just go raise taxes on somebody else, or we acknowledge reality for what it is: they have these benefits, they have had these benefits, we all agree they ought to keep these benefits, and every year we renew these benefits.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

But we do it in such an awful way. We wait until the end of the year, then we do it retroactively or we do it 1 year. Nobody knows what is going on. Nobody can predict the Tax Code. Nobody can make decisions. As a result, these charities, these families, these small businesses suffer. That is what we are trying to fix here.

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

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

I would just say so much has been said I am not sure I will need 3 minutes.

Obviously, I am here to speak in support of a measure that I introduced in this body last July that passed by a 2 to 1 majority. That means nearly every Republican and tens and scores of Democrats, a whole host of Democrats that passed by a 2 to 1 majority, voted for almost identical language contained in this bill.

Now, the negotiation in the agreement between the House and the Senate to make this more permanent fell apart, and so we did what we have always done, which is extend it for another year.

Just a few months ago—just a few months ago—Republicans and Democrats came together in this body to vote on identical legislation to extend it a year at a time. In fact, this piece of legislation has been extended four times since 2006 under the same proposal that we are submitting here, just not a year at a time but, rather, permanent, the same pay-fors or lack thereof, written almost identically.

So what is at stake? What is at stake is how much the people of our respective districts are going to benefit and whether they will benefit.

Back in my district, the head of the Galesburg Community Foundation says that, when he is meeting with donors, if they can give to their IRA, as this bill will allow, they give, on average, four times the amount of goods and services that they would otherwise give without the IRA donation provision—four times.

This isn't about the donor; it is about the recipient. And so I would just simply ask: Why don't we give the certainty not to the donor but, rather, give the certainty to the recipient, whether it be food and shelter, whether it be education benefits here in our country and around the world, a benefit from this provision, give them the certainty, do what we have always done, but do it early and do it now?

Rather, I would ask anyone who stands up to oppose this: 10 months from now, where will your vote be on a 1-year extension? Where will your vote be on a 2-year extension? What is wrong with making what we have been doing since 2006 1 year and 2 years at a time permanent?

It is important for us to give the certainty to the beneficiaries and to the communities who benefit from this provision. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this. And I hope, once again, as we did last July, this body will pass this bill with an overwhelmingly 2 to 1 majority.

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

The answer to the gentleman is you pay for certainty. If you make something permanent, you should pay for it. And that is essentially what our chairman did when he chaired the Budget Committee. His budget never assumed these provisions were permanently in the baseline or he would never have

been able to say he balanced the budget in 10 years. That is the reality.

If you want to add hundreds of billions of dollars to the budget, you have got to face up to paying for them; otherwise, you squeeze out other necessary programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is now a pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a member of our committee, a very active member.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, certainty, we are told, is the key factor here—first words from Chairman RYAN in support of this bill. I think the first certainty we have here is the knowledge that this bill is part of a package that, approved through today, is certain to borrow $317.5 billion. That is basically a request to this House and this Congress that we approve the borrowing of $317.5 billion. And when you look at other measures they have approved in the past, they are really on a pathway to borrowing almost $1 trillion to finance these tax cuts.

I believe that certainty is important to taxpayers. I think that when someone pays for Medicare and Social Security, they need to be certain that it will be there. They need to be certain that the water that they drink and the air they breathe is not contaminated. They need to be certain that the food that they put on their family's table is safe, that it has been inspected by a meat inspector or another type of health inspector. They need to be sure when they drive home, they need to have the certainty that the bridge that they drive over is not going to fall down, as it did in Minneapolis a few years back. They need to be certain that there is educational opportunity, quality education, for their children. They need to be able to do all this without just having to rely on charity.

This bill certainly selects a subset of tax provisions that benefit a few Americans and gives them preference. And I like some of these provisions. In fact, I am a cosponsor of some of these provisions, like the conservation easement. But they are measures that can and should be fully paid for instead of asking for another IOU. And because they are select provisions, they exclude many working and middle class American families.

For example, the American Opportunity Tax Credit, which is based on the principle that we want all Americans to be able to get postsecondary education in a college or a trade school, but a choice that they make and get $2,500 directly off of their tax bill to pay for tuition and books; the child tax credit that so many American families claim to help with their children; the earned income tax credit that even President Reagan said was a key factor in getting people out of poverty, those are key provisions that were left over on the side and not selected for borrowing or for anything else.

It is certain that many Americans have been left out of this very costly package. Working families do need to depend on more than charity. They need to be able to depend on this Congress to respond to their needs.

Now, there is seldom a week that goes by in the area of medical research that there is not a group here on Capitol Hill concerned with Alzheimer's research, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, Parkinson's, cancer, AIDS, or any number of dreaded diseases, basically saying: Find a cure for my family member or my neighbor; find a cure before I get this dreaded disease. There are groups that come here after the tough droughts we had here last year saying the Forest Service and the weather service need more resources in order to deal with the natural disasters associated with climate change.

□ 1515

We have been unable to find the funds for our crumbling roads and bridges. We do not have the investment we need from pre-K to postgraduate in education.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. DOGGETT. When you dig another hundreds of billions of dollars—or maybe $1 trillion—into debt, it provides an excuse for many of those who don't believe in those programs to say: Gee, we would love to help you with education for your children, and, yes, it would be good if we had another meat inspector, but we just can't afford to do that.

So we get to the point that Mr. RYAN has raised: Why is it we should raise taxes on some in order to maintain and renew some expired tax credits for others? I think there are two reasons.

One is that some people are still not paying their fair share. We have got some multinational corporations that don't pay as much as a percent of their income as the people who clean up their offices. The second reason is that it is for the same reason that we say, if we need additional money for our national defense or for our educational and retirement security at home, we have to come up with the revenues to pay for that if we are to maintain any sense of fiscal responsibility.

There are some good provisions in this bill, but we need the certainty that we will not be digging ourselves deeper into debt, preventing our ability to meet other vital national needs for our families.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds to say: I wonder what the reaction would be if we chose to change the way that the spending baseline is treated, such that, if any program in its authorization expired, then it would expire on the baseline, and you would have to offset the spending for renewing any program. I would be curious to see what the reaction would be for that.

I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. PAULSEN. I thank the chairman for his leadership on leading the effort to simplify the Tax Code and give some confidence and certainty to those who use it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, the America Gives More Act. This legislation is absolutely about helping those who are most in need. Those are our charities and our foundations across the country, which are working day in and day out to help those who are most in need.

There are a number of important tax rules that we have already discussed that are governing charitable donations and charitable organizations, but they have always been temporary. We have already had these provisions in law, and they have already expired, so here we are, acting under retroactivity already. It is time to get rid of these short-term fixes and embrace long-term solutions. This legislation simply makes the provisions permanent.

It encourages companies to donate food to help feed the hungry. It makes it easier for individuals who might want to use their money in their IRA retirement funds and give that money to charitable organizations to help others of all varieties. It incentivizes landowners to help protect and preserve our environment for future generations through conservation easements.

I want to just address one other provision that is in this bill, which I actually authored with my colleague, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, to help simplify the Tax Code for private foundations. He has been a very strong advocate in leading this effort.

I think we would all agree that private foundations make a world of difference in our communities. We all have them in our States. I know, in Minnesota, we have 1,400 different foundations that donate about $1 billion annually to all of those who are in need. Across the country, there is something like 86,000 foundations that give tens and tens and tens of billions of dollars. Now, these are really impressive figures, but the truth is those figures could actually be a lot higher, and here is why.

The foundation community has come to us, and they are telling us that the Tax Code is discouraging them from actually giving large donations. Today, these institutions face a really complex, cumbersome, two-tiered system of taxation that requires them to pay either a 1 percent or a 2 percent excise tax on their investment income, but in order to qualify for the low rate in any given year, they have got to go and donate an amount greater than the average of their 5-year rolling average from the previous 5 years.

This, actually, creates a very perverse disincentive for these foundations to not make any donations of large amounts in times when we might have a natural disaster, when there are economic tough times. Absolutely now, this is because a large donation in

these times would significantly increase a private foundation's 5-year average and make it difficult for them to actually qualify for the lower rate. It also makes sure that they are not going to get the low rate for the next 4 years. We are eliminating this disincentive by replacing a very complicated, two-tiered system with a simple, flat, 1 percent excise tax on all private foundation investment income.

It is important to simplify the tax planning process especially for smaller foundations, because they are the ones who are spending money on accountants and lawyers to navigate the Tax Code when those are valuable resources that could actually be used to help give grants to others who need those resources. This bill simply makes sure that charitable giving decisions are going to be based not on the Tax Code but on the needs of our communities.

The bottom line is: every dollar that these organizations are paying in taxes is one less dollar that they are giving to those who truly need it. I ask my colleagues to join in supporting this legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is now my real pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California, NANCY PELOSI, our distinguished leader.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership on helping to have a budget that produces growth to reduce the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, today, we are talking about issues on which we are very much in agreement in terms of the policy toward charitable giving. In fact, some of this legislation has been introduced by Mr. LEVIN and Mr. THOMPSON on the Ways and Means Committee, in fact, in offering an amendment in Rules last night, which was rejected by the Rules Committee, to go forward in a way that was fiscally sound and was paid for.

Here is the problem that we have. We all want to have comprehensive tax reform, where we can close loopholes and we can lower the tax rate and we can have transparency in our Tax Code. In order to go to the table to do that—and I know there is bipartisan interest in doing so—we should go to the table with as much freedom as possible and not constrained by taking rifle shots on the floor of the House for certain pieces of the Tax Code. The whole package that the Republicans are putting forth is about $800 billion. That is a lot of money.

It is important for people to know that, in our budget every year, we have a part of the budget that is called tax expenditures. They are well over $1 trillion. Some of them are worthy, and we want to protect them—certainly, charitable deductions fall in that category—but many of them are not. Many of those tax expenditures, which means giving a tax break whether it is special interest loopholes in the Tax Code to special interests, do not create growth. They increase the deficit, and they are just like spending. They are called expenditures because they are giving a tax break to certain special interests.

Okay. How does that fit in here?

We want to go to the table—put everything on the table—and subject it to agnostic scrutiny to say: What works for growth? What is fair about transparency? How do we proceed in a way that lowers the corporate rate? increases the revenue to the budget? that has fairness, simplicity, and transparency?

What the Republicans are proposing this week is totally in opposition to our being able to do that effectively. What they are saying is let us take $800 billion—permanently, unpaid for—out of the mix, and then we have less to negotiate on in terms of what we can do on the other side of the budget, which are investments into the future.

I have always said—and I think that most economists would agree—that nothing brings more money to the Treasury or reduces the deficit more than investments in education—early childhood education, K–12, higher ed, postgraduate—lifelong learning. That is about growth. That is about bigger paychecks, confidence to spend, demand injected into the economy, jobs created, revenue produced. It is all part of how we can go forward with a budget for the future that creates growth and reduces the deficit.

So we have this obstacle, which sounds very good. How do you vote against these provisions, which are good provisions, about nonprofits and conservation and all of these other things? We agree—as I say, our colleagues have introduced them—but then you say that they are permanently unpaid for. Again, mixing some of the good with the not so good is like a Trojan horse moving in. It looks good, but wait a minute. There is a lot in the gut of that horse that is not good for growth or for reducing the deficit.

All we are saying to everyone today is we can come to agreement on some of the principles about tax deductions for charitable organizations. It is curious to hear our colleagues talk so movingly about providing food for hungry people when very few of them want to vote for food stamps, but that is a whole other issue. It just shows some inconsistency in all of this.

Just remember this one thing: if we want to have comprehensive tax reform—if we want to reduce the deficit, if we want to have balance in terms of investments plus how we produce revenue—we have to do it in a comprehensive way. That is what a budget is about. What we are doing today is to throw up, to just stack the deck against any investments in growth, because we have already taken $800 billion off the table if we go down this path.

What we are doing today is to say other tax reforms that we want to make for fairness are already in jeopardy because of some of what is in this. As I say, some are positive and some are not. Let's be discerning in how we make the judgment. You can't be discerning by saying: I am going to vote for permanent, unpaid-for tax expenditures—which, as I say, have a blend of positive and negative in them, but it is hard to make a distinction without seeing the whole, big picture of it.

I urge my colleagues to say: While I support some of what is good in all of this, I do not support permanently taking it off the table for consideration and not paying for it at this time.

In order to talk this through and have a clear instead of this drive-by approach to tax policy—an antideficit exploding spree that our Republican colleagues are on while they profess to be deficit hawks—and while we are working this out and having a discussion about this, we, in our motion to recommit, will have a 1-year extension of the provision that we are talking about here so that, okay, in the course of this time, we will go forward with a tax extender for 1 year.

Hopefully, in that time, under the leadership of the Budget chair, who is also from the Ways and Means Committee—he understands these issues very well. In fact, his own budget would not be consistent with what he is putting on the floor today as he is the former chair of Ways and Means, now of the Budget Committee. No. It is the reverse, but it is related. They are so related because how we produce revenue is so essential to how we do our budget, and the gentleman knows that because his own budget would be inconsistent with what is on the floor today.

So I say to my colleagues: Hold on. Vote ''no'' on this. Vote ''yes'' on the motion to recommit, which gives us a year to talk this through but to do so in a way that reduces the deficit, produces growth, makes bigger paychecks from that growth to increase more revenue, and we would have these provisions go forth in a way that is fair, that is paid for, and that is part of comprehensive tax reform.

With that, again, I thank the gentleman for his exceptional leadership and the members of the Ways and Means Committee for their courage in opposing something that has popular appeal. There is a reason why. They are not bad policies. It is just that they are not paid for, and they are permanent. We should do this, but we should do it right. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the bill and ''yes'' on the motion to recommit.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I want to say to the gentlewoman, the minority leader, that I appreciate the tone and the temperament of her remarks. I thought that was well done.

□ 1530

I disagree with the basic premise on baseline. I won't get into the details. I talked about that a little bit before.

So I have some differences of opinion on the facts as she laid them out. I see it quite differently. But I thought that was a good tone and temperament that speaks well to the need for tax reform that is comprehensive. We believe that this helps move us in the right direction toward tax reform.

I won't go to the baseline issues again, only to say I think this is a positive step in the direction toward comprehensive tax reform, which clearly the gentlewoman—meaning both parties—agree is something that we have to tackle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank Chairman RYAN for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from California said that we needed to use agnostic scrutiny when we are evaluating these. I think it is a little bit ambitious to have a roomful of agnostics when we are all true believers. We all come in with an agenda.

An agnostic, Mr. Speaker, would look at the four things in the bill that we are contemplating today and would say of all four of these things: Surely these are not going to get caught up and swept away in tax reform; surely, it is not going to be how we are treating food charities; surely, it is not going to be how we are dealing with conservation easements; surely, it is not how we are treating IRA contributions to charities; and surely, it is not trying to make private foundations and give them a sure footing. Surely, these are the things we can all agree on based on agnostic scrutiny.

Did you notice something, Mr. Speaker? There is nobody on the other side of the aisle who has stood up today and said: The food charity thing? Disaster. I'm against that. Or: Conservation easements? Ridiculous. Look into that a little bit more. Or: The IRA contributions? Be careful there. Or: Private foundations, getting them all squared away? I'm against it. Not one person said that.

So what was their argument? They wrap themselves up in process. But by wrapping themselves up in process, they have opened themselves up to criticism, because if we had gone a different route, if the chairman had taken a different path, they would have said: Chairman RYAN, why don't you start on things where there is bipartisan agreement? And here the chairman is bringing bills to the floor that have been enthusiastically, actively supported, Mr. Speaker, by our friends on the other side of the aisle. Why have they supported them? Because they are good ideas. This is where there is an incredible amount of common ground.

There have been some false arguments made on the other side that are just not that persuasive, and the argument by the gentleman from Texas created the impression that if you vote ''yes'' on this, then we are not going to be able to afford meat inspectors. We are not going to be able to have bridges or a cure for cancer. It is somehow out of our reach. Spare me.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded at times like this of a letter that Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1790 to a man named Charles Clay. I am going to give you three lines from this letter that I have committed to memory because I think it deeply resonates where most Americans are when they look at our House today.

Thomas Jefferson wrote this to Charles Clay. He said:

> The ground of liberty is to be gained by inches. We must be content what we can get from time to time and eternally press forward for what is yet to get. It takes time to persuade men even to do what is for their own good.

Mr. Speaker, that is Jefferson's admonition—no stranger to vision, no stranger to the big picture as the author of the Declaration of Independence.

We don't walk away from tax reform, the aspiration that we all have, but it is to say: Look, if we are going to be agnostically scrutinizing these things, even an agnostic would say this ought not to be caught in the crossfire.

We ought to vote ''yes'' for this bill and move it along.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Essentially, what the gentleman from Illinois says is: Well, let's do tax reform by picking and choosing a piece or a few at a time.

That is the opposite of tax reform. He described it. That is the difference.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), a very distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the Democratic lead on the conservation easement bill and to very regrettably say that I rise in opposition to this bill that I think so highly of.

I don't disagree with the policy. I don't disagree with the need for certainty, something that has been referred to many times today. And I don't disagree that the way the Republicans did it last year—in the last 2 weeks and doing it retroactively—I don't disagree that that was the wrong way to do it.

I have worked for permanency on conservation easements ever since Chairman Camp and I passed the big expansion in 2006. I have been the Democratic lead in every Congress to make conservation easements permanent.

Conservation easements are good public policy. They protect open space. They protect important ag lands. They protect important wildlife habitat. They are essential for clean air and clean water. They are essential for locally sourced good, healthy food. They are important to hunters, to fishermen, to conservationists.

They are important to people who live in rural areas and they are important to people who live in urban areas. Nowhere is that more apparent than what happened in New York. We were able to save New York City from having to spend $8 billion in building a water filtration system because we were able to protect their watershed area, in large part through conservation easements.

We all know that these are important. Every one of us knows it is important. That is why every Congress, when we introduce this bill, we get upward of and sometimes over 300 bipartisan coauthors on the bill, but the problem is this bill isn't paid for, as you have heard a number of times.

Sadly, I offered an amendment that would have totally offset the cost of the conservation easement portion of the bills that we are taking up today. It was an offset with no tax increases. It didn't increase anybody's taxes, didn't put the taxes on the back of somebody else, didn't shift the cost to anyone else. As a matter of fact, it focused on scofflaws who have been able to avoid paying their taxes because of a short statute of limitations. We offered to extend that statute of limitations. We could have paid for this whole thing. Unfortunately, my friends on the Republican side of the House rejected that amendment.

So instead, we are here with this bill, not paid for. Instead, today, we are going to vote on $93 billion worth of unpaid-for tax bills that will add $93 billion to our deficit.

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

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

Mr. THOMPSON of California. If you add that to what our Republican colleagues did in the Ways and Means Committee this morning when they passed $225 billion of unpaid-for tax expenditures, that means that just today the Republican side of this House spent $320 billion that we don't have, directly shifting the cost to our deficit and our debt.

This is not tax reform, Members, and this is not paid for. It is not a good way to proceed, and I ask for a ''no'' vote.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished member from New York (Mr. REED), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. REED. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the underlying bill, the America Gives More Act of 2015. In particular, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about a bill that is near and dear to me, and that is the Fighting Hunger Incentive Act, which is a subpart of this underlying bill.

The ranking member and I had a conversation the last time this legislation was before the House for consideration. We got a large bipartisan vote in support of the fighting hunger provisions.

And I know the ranking member, the gentleman from Michigan, has worked extensively on this legislation for years and years and years. I know in our last debate and conversation here that the ranking member had some concerns that I questioned whether or not he cared about the people that were going to be helped by this act.

I want to make it clear here today, Mr. Speaker, I understand the ranking member cares about those individuals, just as I do—just as all of us, as Democrats and Republicans, should be focusing this debate not necessarily always about the arguments of D.C. but about the people that we came here to represent and help.

Fighting hunger is a bipartisan issue. We unite as Americans when our fellow citizens are suffering. When you look at the millions of Americans who are going hungry every day, Mr. Speaker, we shouldn't be divisive. We shouldn't be arguing about the details of what my opponents on the other side are putting forth today.

We should stand for those millions of Americans, where we say this tax policy is going to result in tons and tons of food not going into landfills, not going into the garbage, but going onto the tables of our fellow Americans that could use that food the most: the hungry, the poor.

And we can argue whether there are other ways to do it and there are other things that we can do to help them, but we can agree that this is one piece of a solution to this problem that we could pass today and move the needle and care for our fellow Americans.

That is why I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation. We don't want food going into landfills. We want food to be put on the table of the people that need it most.

We have concerns about the debt on both sides. I get it. But here is an opportunity for us to come together. I am concerned about the debt. My colleagues are concerned about the debt. But here is an opportunity for us to show the American people that sent us here that we care about them, we are listening to the American people, and we are willing to do something about it in order to make sure that this policy results in that food going to our fellow citizens who need it most.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, if could I ask how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 22½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) has 21½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), another distinguished member of our committee, the chairman of our Caucus.

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

I think we should clarify something. Every day, Americans donate food, clothes, and money to charities. Millions of Americans do that all the time. Most of those Americans don't expect to get something in return. They do it because it is the right thing to do, and it makes them feel like they are part of the American community. So every day Americans are giving.

Now, the Tax Code happens to also try to encourage us to do more giving, which I think all of us agree is good. So let's remove that from the debate because I think we are confusing folks who might be watching this.

This isn't about trying to give people an incentive to give because Americans are doing it whether or not the Tax Code says to them: We want you to do this.

The issue is this. Under the Tax Code, some Americans—not a majority of Americans, not even a third of Americans, but a fraction of Americans—can take advantage of the provisions in the Tax Code that give them tax breaks for having given something.

You have heard a discussion about food. If you gave canned goods because the boy next door put up a bag and you put canned goods in there and you gave them away, this provision isn't about that. No. There are a fraction of American taxpayers, mostly companies, restaurants, and so forth, who can take advantage of that. You can't. Americans can't take advantage of that provision.

Say you have an IRA, or Individual Retirement Account. Some Americans have an IRA. The majority of Americans don't, but some do. You want to be charitable. Say you have done fairly well. You want to give some of your IRA to a charity. The Tax Code says: We want to incentivize you to do that.

□ 1545

The Tax Code right now says you can give up to $100,000 in your IRA to charity. Guess what? That won't be recognized as income.

How many Americans make $100,000? Not too many—but say you make $100,000. How much are you going to pay in taxes? How many of you have $100,000 in your IRA that you give away to a charity? Well, there are some people who can, and there are some people who do. Guess what? They get a tax break for doing that.

It is a pretty big tax break if you think about how much you would pay in taxes on $100,000 of your income. They get to give that money away. Guess what? They don't get taxed a cent on that $100,000 that they just gave out of that IRA that they can do.

By the way, you don't get to just do it once in your lifetime. Every year, an American can give away $100,000 out of your IRA and get the tax break.

How many Americans do that? A tiny, tiny fraction—but guess what? When you take that IRA rollover tax break and you take that other tax break for those companies that can give away food and you take the other tax breaks for those who have land that they could give away to a charity, guess how much it adds up to?

It adds up to what we, today, provide in funding to do research against breast cancer and all the research funding we put in to do Alzheimer's research, the same amount of money.

When people say, You don't have to worry about the cost of that, you don't have to pay for this—well, we could spend twice as much money to find a cure for breast cancer, twice as much money to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease, if we weren't giving away these tax breaks to somebody who can afford to give away $100,000 in their IRA every year to do good.

By the way, that wealthy American could give $100,000 out of that IRA today, but they get a tax break for doing it. Would that stop them from giving away $100,000 just because they don't get the tax break? I don't think so.

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

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

Mr. BECERRA. I don't think so because you don't have to be wealthy in America to give. We all want to give. In fact, the folks who give the most are the folks who earn the least. They give what they can.

How many times have you been invited to someone's home who you know it is hard for them to put food on the table, and they invite you to eat at their home, and they don't expect you to give them a thing?

We give because we think it is the right thing to do. The Tax Code wants to incent that, and that is good because we want to help charity.

To say that it doesn't have to be paid for, when we have to pay for all the cancer research, for breast cancer, when we have to pay for the research to cure Alzheimer's disease, when we have to pay for those food inspectors to make sure that the food that gets on our table is free of carcinogens and diseases and microbes that could endanger us—absolutely, we have to pay for those things. As it was said earlier, there is no free lunch.

All we are saying is this: Let's do good. If we are going to give someone who is wealthy a chance to do good, let's pay for it. Let's figure out a way to do that because we want to be charitable, but let's not play this game that it doesn't cost somebody in America for this tax break to go mostly to wealthy folks.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the distinguished House majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and the chairman for yielding.

I have to pause for a moment. We debate a lot of things on this floor, and they are worthy debates, and they are interesting debates, but let's first, Mr. Speaker, tell the American people what we are debating today. Fighting Hunger Incentive Act, that is what we are debating.

Lots of times, I question why we have debates on the floor certain times. Right now is one of them. I really wonder if the American people tuned in today and said: You were really having an argument against Fighting Hunger Incentive Act?

Let me walk through what we are debating because, just a couple of days ago, I just went down the road here to the D.C. Central Kitchen. It is a nonprofit, feeds a lot of homeless, also helps people build jobs.

You know how it was created? Because a small businessman saw people who were hungry, then he saw an inaugural for the 41st President of the United States and said: Should that food all be wasted?

He took the leftovers and found someone who needed it. Then he went further and he goes: You know what, these people coming to eat, what they really need is they need a job, so why don't I create a culinary school?

Ninety-nine classes have gone through this culinary school. And you know what? I met this young man who went through class number two. Early in his life, he did some things wrong, and he was incarcerated for more than 20 years.

But you know what his life is today? He is the supervisor for 8 years. He has a 5-year-old daughter, and he has a college fund for that daughter. That is because the current Tax Code allows it to happen.

Mr. Speaker, when I listen to the other side, you would think we are creating a whole new bill. We are taking a Tax Code and extending it, instead of having a problem when someone wonders: Will I still get that donation?

So I asked them, I see how many people you feed here and the number of volunteers—if you want to volunteer at the D.C. Central Kitchen, you have to sign up, and the opening is in May because people want to give back.

They say 60 percent of all the food they get is donated. They get fish that would actually go into a dump beforehand. But you know what? It is not easy, if you are a small farm somewhere else, to donate it.

This incentive allows it happen. Why? Because one person saw a need—he didn't go to government to do it, but he used the system to actually enhance and build it up.

I don't have to just go to D.C. to see this. I see this in my own community. My wife and I go down to the mission in Kern County. I see lives changed. I see people fed.

But you know what? I see all walks of life. I was down to feed the mission one day, and a person that was just a couple of lines behind it in there to get food went to the same elementary school as me and the same junior high and the same high school. That is the greatness of this country, that we are willing to help one another.

Mr. Speaker, I just don't understand. If we are willing to help each other, why do we have to fight to make it allowed to do that?

There are worthy fights on this floor, but this is not one. We are better than this, Mr. Speaker. I will tell you this: What I am most amazed and dumbfounded by, this bill has a veto threat.

This bill to help hunger, to help the next Dawain, to help the next individual be fed, has a veto threat.

You know what? I read the veto threat. The administration doesn't oppose the provision because it is already in law.

So many times, people say: Why do you wait till the last minute in this House? Well, we are not now. We are taking it up early, so nobody has a problem.

But you know what the administration, Mr. Speaker, the President said? He is threatening to veto this bill because Congress didn't pass other bills the President wanted and because the President might oppose future bills that the House could pass.

Seriously? That is just wrong. Mr. Speaker, I believe in this country. I believe in mankind. I believe in the goodness of all of us. It is not about party. It is about helping one another.

We are fighting for the incentive to end hunger and encouraging others to do it. We shouldn't have to debate about it. We should celebrate it.

I look forward to this bill passing with a large majority and the President signing it and all of us, as Americans, coming together to help the most precious because it is in every single one of our communities, hunger.

Let's put our political games aside, Mr. Speaker, and let's rise to what people expect of this House, to help the common good.

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

I think the majority leader is leaving the floor, but I want him to hear me. I am an original if not the original sponsor of the provision regarding food donation. I have a son and daughter-in-law who are working on this very issue.

The issue is this: the majority leader helped lead an effort to cut food stamps by $40 billion. The argument was we could not afford it. Now, they come forth here with a provision that they don't want to pay for, added to other provisions that will cost $200 billion, $300 billion, going to $700 billion or $800 billion.

That puts a bad name on the notion of commitment. Commitment needs to have some consistency.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I have long supported the tax incentive for businesses to deduct charitable contributions of food inventory. Indeed, I have a bill to expand the deduction for non-C corps, as does the bill under consideration.

The food inventory deduction allows us to help stock America's food banks and feed the hungry. Importantly, we need to address the food inventory deduction because, unlike other business tax extenders, the food deduction provision cannot be useful if extended retroactively. If it expires, our hunger relief organizations miss out on potential donations of food.

In Chicago, where I live, one in six people, including children, do not know where their next meal is coming from.

In addition to advancing charitable and S corps tax provisions, this committee should be prioritizing the permanent extension of the earned income tax credit to help the working poor afford food and other basic needs for their families.

We should be prioritizing the new market tax credits to help distressed communities so that the hungry can have jobs so that they can purchase their own food and not rely on food banks.

Although I strongly support incentivizing charitable donations of food inventory, I do not support passing unpaid for, permanent, and piecemeal tax breaks while the needs of other vulnerable citizens go unmet.

We should be considering the EITC, AOTC, new market tax credit, work opportunity tax credit, tuition and fees deduction, teacher tax benefits, Promise Zones, and hundreds of other tax provisions that help our communities and our people.

One of the things that I have learned—if I know nothing else—is something that Frederick Douglass was known for saying, that in this world, you may not get everything that you pay for, but you most certainly will pay for everything that you get, and if you don't pay one way, then you will definitely pay another way.

The price of increasing the deficit, not providing a broad, comprehensive tax reform effort, is something that we ought not be paying for. The principles and concepts in many of the provisions, obviously, we agree, but we do not agree that you can go on paying for what it is that you need.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote ''no'' on these provisions.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER).

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fighting Hunger Incentive Act of 2015.

Roughly one in 10 Minnesotans live in poverty. Sadly, this means that many Minnesotans, including children, lack access to the food and resources they need to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.

This morning, I had an opportunity to tour and make sandwiches at Martha's Table, an organization here in D.C. that reaches more than 18,000 people through their programs. I saw firsthand the need for legislation like this.

This legislation will permanently extend the enhanced charitable deduction for all businesses that donate food to charities and food banks. This will encourage more businesses to chip in and help in the ongoing fight against hunger.

We have an obligation to help those around us, and this is a nonpartisan, bipartisan way to make a big difference.

□ 1600

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), our ranking member on the Committee on the Budget so dedicated to these issues. If he needs more time, he should just ask.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend from Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, things are not always what they seem, and this is one of those cases. It is unfortunate because tax incentives for charitable giving are the kind of issues we should be handling in a bipartisan way. We should be working together in a bipartisan manner to reform our Tax Code and this as part of that.

Unfortunately, we are not doing that today, and this bill along with the series of other bills that will be coming to the floor in the days to come will add $350 billion to our deficit over the next 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, most of the bills that are coming next are permanent extensions of tax breaks to major corporations. In the process, they don't pay for any of that. They don't close a single corporate tax loophole to provide those tax breaks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am holding in my hand the budget that Republicans passed in this House just a year ago. Now we have the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means—he was chairman of the Committee on the Budget, a good friend of mine. In their budget last year, they said they would not do what they are doing today. They passed a budget saying they would not have tax extenders that added to the deficit. I am reading right here from the budget that I think passed unanimously with Republican votes. It says they will only do these tax extenders if such measures would not increase the deficit for the period of fiscal years 2015 to 2024.

Here we are, less than a year later, throw their budget out the door. Why did it matter? Because last year they wanted to pretend their budget was in balance after 10 years, and they knew that if you had these tax extenders that were unpaid for, they wouldn't have a balanced budget. It wasn't balanced anyway, but no matter, that is why they did it.

Now, why does this matter beyond the fact that the Republican majority did one thing last year and is doing something different today? It matters because when you increase the deficits, our Republican colleagues are going to come right back around to us and say: You know what? The deficits are going to go up, and so we have to cut some of the investments that are supposed to help vulnerable people—the very people our Republican colleagues say they want to help today. They are going to say: Deficits are going up. We have got to cut those programs.

You know how we know that? Even before they increase the deficit like they are doing today, they were cutting those investments last year. In fact, while they are claiming to fight hunger today, here is what the budget from last year did: it would have cut the food and nutrition programs by 20 percent, $137 billion. That would have ended nutrition assistance for 3.8 million Americans.

Now, I heard one of my friends and colleagues, Mr. ROSKAM from Illinois, saying Democrats are opposing this.

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

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I heard some of our colleagues saying we are opposing this on the basis of process. Really? Cutting nutrition assistance programs for 3.8 million Americans is process?

You know what else their budget did? It cut the category of spending that we use for the Women, Infants, and Children program to the point that 200,000 women, infants, and children would have been cut off of supplemental nutrition assistance under the Women, Infants, and Children program. Process? Really? I thought our colleagues were saying they wanted to fight hunger.

That budget last year, the one I am holding in my hands that passed here, you know what else it did? It did not extend tax credits for vulnerable people. It did not extend the earned income tax credit bump up. It did not extend the child tax credit. At the same time, they had a budget, and I suspect they will again this year, that cuts the top income tax rate for millionaires. That is what they do.

We can do a lot better, Mr. Speaker. That is what Democrats are saying. We can make these reforms to the Tax Code. We can make the charitable deduction permanent, but we can do it in a way that doesn't hurt other programs for hungry people. We can help hungry people through one mechanism without hurting those same people through another mechanism. That is why the President said he was going to veto this bill, not because it helps the deduction for charitable giving. This is a bill that says we are going to help some hungry people. But you know what? We are going to do something else in our budget that actually hurts those same hungry people even more, much more.

Now, I am also holding in my hand the Democratic budget that was presented last year. You know what we do? We permanently extended this charitable deduction—permanently—just like this bill. But you know what we did not do?

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

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend.

So I just want to be clear. In our budget, we extended permanently this charitable deduction to fight hunger, the fighting hunger incentive. We did that.

But you know what we did not do? We did not cut the food and nutrition program, SNAP, by 20 percent. You know what we did not do? We did not cut the part of the budget that funds the Women, Infants, and Children program so that 200,000 people would not have the benefit of that.

You know what we did do? We cut a lot of the corporate tax breaks. We said we should not have a Tax Code that actually rewards American companies that move American jobs and capital overseas, so we would cut down on those. In that way, we were able to pay for them. That way, Mr. Speaker, we were able to extend the charitable deduction permanently, but we were also able to avoid cutting the Women, Infants, and Children program and avoid cutting the food and nutrition programs. That is what we are saying.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today, what they are saying is, by increasing the deficit, yes, we are going to extend this program to fight hunger; but, on the other hand, when their budget comes around next year, they are actually going to pass stuff that hurts those same people even more.

What we are saying is we don't have to help people by hurting people. We can do it all if we are willing to cut some of those corporate tax breaks, tax expenditures, spinning the Tax Code for major corporations that are put there because they have good lobbyists in Washington.

So let's do this the right way. That's the way we did it in the Democratic budget last year. That is the way we will do it in the Democratic budget again this year. Let's not help people by hurting other people or even hurting the people we are trying to help.

Mr. Speaker, I regretfully urge that we reject this bill and do this the right way.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT).

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I have gotten to sit during this debate, and for the last hour or more I got to listen to nobody arguing, nobody wondering that this is a bad idea, nobody saying that this is something we shouldn't do.

When you walk around your district—and me being a freshman, I get to hear all my friends. You know, you never ask your friend whether you are a liberal or a conservative or a Democrat or Republican. You just talk to your friends. Friends always ask me: Why don't you get something done?

As a State legislator in California, it was difficult for us to get some things done. I was always frustrated about that. I never liked to hear the term ''ABC''—Anywhere but California. But the reason that term came up was because of certainty, was because businesses didn't know what we were going

to do from year to year. That is exactly what we are talking about today—certainty. ''Certainty'' is just not a word that we throw around. ''Certainty'' is something that has meaning. If we are going to extend this for, now, 7, 8 years in a row, it is obviously a good idea.

Going back and forth and volleying back and forth saying that this is a great idea, we all agree, we just want to do it on a 1-year basis, doesn't give certainty, doesn't give that reliability that this is good policy, we all believe in it, and we can get what we desire out of it.

When we go back to our districts and we go to our food pantries or we go to places that are helping the needy and helping the people that need it, feed people that need to be fed, wouldn't you like to go back there and say: ''You know what? This is not something we are going to kick back and forth next year or the next year. This is something that is going to be on the books. We have sheer certainty about this''?

So listening to this debate and listening to what is happening of these four measures is what I draw out of this. What I draw, what we can get today: bipartisan, moving this forward, getting certainty for these measures that we seem to all agree upon.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

As I have been sitting here, I have to admit, my thoughts have changed back and forth. My mind has changed. My speech has changed dramatically.

It occurred to me: I think my friends on the other side of the aisle are asking the wrong question. The question should not be: What is this going to cost the taxpayers? The question should be: What will the cost to the taxpayers be if we let these deductions expire?

Then it occurred to me, in listening to some of the speeches, that there is not a lack of sincerity in the desire to feed hungry people, not on their side, and certainly not on our side. I grieve when somebody's sincerity is questioned in this way. But I think what the question is is: Who do you trust to deliver the solution to people's needs, to people's hunger? What about college education? What about women's shelters? Who is best prepared to deliver those resources and those services?

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, it is charity. It is charity. The Sermon on the Mount wasn't communicated to the Congress; it was communicated to the congregation. It wasn't delivered to the democracy; it was delivered to the disciples. Our Tax Code ought not punish charity; it ought to lift it up.

I think we are asking the wrong question: Who is best prepared to deliver these services?

I think the other wrong question is we are arguing over what is not in the bill sometimes as opposed to what is. I wish there was more in it. I wish that we could include life income tools and the charitable IRA rollover. The chairman knows that. I hope to get to that. But I also know that incremental change is better than no change. Incremental progress is better than no progress. I hope we can get to comprehensive tax reform. I am confident we can. But today I am asking our colleagues, let's do what we can do. What we can do is this bill that is in front of us. I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), another member of our committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding me this time.

It is unfortunate we are here today, once again, in a situation where I think the overall intent sounds very good: charitable giving, helping the poor, helping the hungry. Quite often that is something you hear from our side of the aisle. In fact, all last year we had done the food stamp challenge. We had done a number of things to bring focus and attention to the plight of the hungry in the United States, and it is a bit raw to hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle speak about their solution to this issue as a tax bill unpaid for that adds more than $14 billion back on to our national deficit and to our debt, ultimately.

The President announced that he would cut the deficit in half within 4 years. He has now reduced the deficit by over a trillion dollars, from $1.4 trillion to a little bit over $400 billion.

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

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Not perfect. We still have a ways to go. But isn't that remarkable? A Democratic President that reduced the deficit, was handed a deficit of over a trillion dollars by his Republican predecessor, and now this President can lay claim—and I think rightfully so—to having reduced the deficit, yearly deficit, by over a trillion dollars.

Yet here are my Republican colleagues. Once again, they see an opportunity to add on to the deficit again here in this particular measure by $14.3 billion. It doesn't sound like much, but when you add up the whole package, it is well over $300 billion you want to add back to the Nation's deficit. I think it is wrong. I think most Americans think that is wrong. Democrat, Republican, it matters not. We are making progress. You are putting that on the back of future generations. The hungry that you pretend to be taking care of today are going to have to try to pay for these bills in the years to come. I think this is wrongheaded. I hope that my colleagues on this side do not support this measure.

□ 1615

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, one thing that is particularly of pride for organizations and individuals in southeastern Pennsylvania is the success of the Chester County Food Bank and many other food banks.

Fighting food insecurity is something that you wouldn't think is a real problem in the more wealthier enclaves of this country, yet there are those who wake up every morning not knowing where their meal is going to come from. Food banks provide a very valuable service. The Fighting Hunger Incentive Act aims to assist our food banks and assist organizations and individuals to help fight hunger. That is what this bill is about. We should pass it, and we should move on in a bipartisan fashion.

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

We have heard a lot of discussion about many of these programs, maybe most of all about food programs. But really, let's look at it beyond the rhetoric. Essentially when it comes to food programs, what the Republicans are doing is giving with one hand while they take with another. And there is much more that they take than they would give.

The food provision here comes to $2.2 billion. They have chopped $40 billion from food stamps; that is 20 times more. As the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) pointed out, when you add in WIC and other programs, they have cut way over $100 billion. And they say they had to do that, in part, because they could not afford it.

So they come forth with bills that are going to add to the deficit, and that shows what this is all about, because they pass these bills adding to the deficit, and then they come back and they say, Sorry, when it comes to other needed programs, we don't have the money.

Indeed, not only do they give with one hand and take with another, and much more, but they give an empty hand, an empty hand like this—nothing in it—for the Child Tax Credit, for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, for the New Markets provision that really matters, for the EITC. And then they say, Well, we can't afford it, yet they won't close the tax loopholes. It is so inconsistent.

I think in terms of the impact on human beings, it is not only inadequate but it is impersonal.

So we come here fortified. We are determined to do the right thing when it comes to tax reform. We are going to do the right thing when it comes to other important issues, including fiscal responsibility. And we are going to make sure that there are the funds available for needed programs because we have paid for things.

I strongly urge a ''no'' vote. That really is standing up for the right thing

when it comes to bipartisanship, to tax reform, and to fiscal responsibility.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I guess I will just try to summarize this debate in a couple of ways. What I am hearing is, to paraphrase: We like this policy. We think there is a need. We just want to raise taxes.

Let me put it a different way. If there was a popular spending measure that came here to the floor that extended the same policy from last year to this year because it was expiring, I don't think we would be hearing these concerns.

In fact, with Trade Adjustment Assistance, something that is very popular among this committee and the Members on the other side of the aisle, that is exactly what happened in December. The law expired. A straight extension of the law, of spending, continued. It didn't cost anything. Why? Because that is how the baseline treats spending.

I didn't hear all the hues and cries about deficits when we extended the Trade Adjustment Assistance law, that spending program. So we hear all of these cries about it.

Actually, let me take that back. We don't hear all these hues and cries about the deficits when we extend these tax provisions for 2 years. We don't hear these concerns when we extend current law tax provisions for 1 year. And we don't hear these concerns about deficits when we retroactively extend it from last year, going forward. We only hear these concerns when we are giving people the certainty.

So the real actual question before us is: Do we have to raise taxes on other hardworking Americans just so that we can keep them where they are for everybody else? Do we take money away from charities and people giving donations or raise taxes on other hardworking Americans? Or, just like Trade Adjustment Assistance was extended this last year, do we treat these important provisions the same, which is: they are in the Code; they have been in the Code; we want them in the Code; we agree they should be in the Code—let's keep them in the Code. That is the decision here.

So the newfound concern about deficits, I find, is really more of a thinly veiled attempt to raise taxes. I think what this baseline argument is really all about is: Do we just want to have a Tax Code that raises more and more and more taxes? Do we want to put ourselves in this position of just always raising taxes? Or do we want to give taxpayers a break? We are not even saying give them a break. We are saying, just don't raise their taxes; just keep them where they are.

So this isn't costing anything, in that we are not lowering someone's taxes. We are just keeping their taxes where they are, and we are preventing them from going up. So let's just make it really clear.

I guess the new definition of preventing tax increases from hitting hardworking Americans is now a big tax cut. That is basically what we are hearing here.

We don't buy that logic. We don't want to raise people's taxes. We want to reform the Tax Code. And we want these kinds of provisions that are very important, that we know will stay in the Tax Code even with tax reform. We want people to know that they are there so they can plan accordingly.

We are doing 179 tomorrow. We want farmers to be able to buy tractors before December 11 in the year. We want people to make decisions to donate food to charities. Maybe you are doing well in retirement and you have got a little bit of money out of your Individual Retirement Account and you would like to donate it to a charity, we think you ought to be able to do that. We want foundations to be able to make donations for the greater good in their communities. Those are the things we are getting here and, more importantly, we are giving them the certainty they need to make long-term plans so they can do more of it. That is why we should pass this bill. That is why I think everybody should vote for this bill. That is why I think Democrats and Republicans should vote for this bill.

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill.

It's not because I don't support providing additional assistance to benefit charities. I do.

It's because this bill is a trick to actually cut funding for groups like food banks and homeless shelters in the long term.

The reason is, the cost of this bill is not paid for, meaning the entire cost of these tax breaks will be added to the nation's deficit.

$14.2 billion will be added to the deficit.

This after President Obama has already slashed the deficit by ⅔ from the trillion dollar deficits he inherited from his predecessor George Bush.

So what will be the result of these new larger deficits that my Republican colleagues are creating today?

We all know.

Republicans will soon turn around and cry crocodile tears about the budget and demand deeper cuts in spending.

And that means less Federal grants towards homeless veterans shelters, food banks, senior centers and other organizations that help people in need.

I ask, has the Republican austerity program benefitted charities so far?

Have the budget cuts known as sequestration benefitted local charities and nonprofits?

The answer is a resounding no.

It is the charities themselves who have said the painful budget cuts forced on them have put charities in a situation where more than 50 percent of nonprofits report that they are unable to meet demand for their services.

So why are our charities, our schools, our communities suffering under the Republican majority?

Because my Republican colleagues claimed to be so concerned about deficits—many of which were caused by the trillion dollar Bush tax cuts that did nothing for our economy or to create jobs—that they have demanded steep spending cuts without ever asking the wealthiest American to pay more.

Yes, my Republican colleagues have used their so-called concerns about the deficit to justify cutting spending to social programs that serve children, seniors, and other vulnerable populations—shifting the burden to already-stressed nonprofits. This is a vicious cycle that needs to stop and it needs to stop today.

Funny thing is we could have stopped this process of adding to the deficit, while still benefitting charities, if the Republicans simply allowed a vote on a Democratic amendment to pay for the costs of these tax cuts.

The Republicans refused to even allow a vote in Congress.

Republicans will argue that tax cuts pay for themselves.

But everyone who has been forced to live under the austerity program over the past few years know otherwise.

Republicans argue there is wasteful spending that needs to be cut in order to mandate new spending. Sometimes they are right.

But let's be clear there are wasteful tax programs out there that should be repealed to pay for more beneficial tax cuts as well.

We can find common ground here.

Let's go back to the drawing board and pass these tax cuts, but in a fiscally responsible manner.

So I reluctantly oppose this bill as it will just add to the deficit and lead to more painful spending cuts for the charitable groups that we are claiming to help today.

I urge a no vote on the underlying bill.

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, I wish to highlight an important bill that is being considered by the House today—the "America Gives More Act of 2015 (H.R. 644)." This legislation contains a package of four charitable giving incentives: the IRA charitable rollover; the enhanced deduction for donating food inventory; the simplification of the Private Foundation Excise Tax; and the enhanced deduction for donating conservation easements, the last of which is of critical importance to Montana.

Since 2006, the enhanced tax incentive for qualified conservation easement donations has opened the door to voluntary, landowner-led conservation on millions of acres across the country. This provision allows Montanans, particularly our ranchers and farmers, who donate the development rights on their land to deduct a larger portion of their income over more years. It is common sense that modest income donors with highly valued lands should be allowed the same tax deductions they would have been entitled to if their incomes were larger.

These donations are extraordinary in many ways. One of which is the time they take and the money they cost the donor. Decisions to give away what is often a family's most valuable asset routinely take more than a year and require hiring an attorney and an appraiser at considerable cost. Having this incentive expire after a year guarantees that most of the people who would most benefit from it will never even begin the process of considering it.

I support this bill, especially when it benefits constituents like Dan Lilja. About 35 years ago he moved to rural western Montana after graduating from the University of Montana. He married a local, Sally, and started Lilja Precision Barrels in Plains, Montana, in 1985.

Dan's interest in bench shooting inspired him to design some of the world's best rifle barrels. Lilja barrels are used in rifles by the U.S. Army, the U.S. Army Rangers, Navy SEALs, Coast Guard, the FBI, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Canadian Special Forces, among others. These customers demand the best and Lilja Precision Barrels delivers a quality product.

Dan and Sally own property in Sanders County along the scenic Clark Fork River. They entered into a conservation easement with the Montana Land Reliance to protect this property from inappropriate subdivision and to provide critical winter and spring habitat for elk and big horn sheep.

In a way that is both patriotic and conservation-minded, Dan and Sally have contributed to the health and preservation of western wildlife habitats and the security of our country. This is just one of the many stories of how conservation easements are preserving our rich heritage, and I call upon the House to support this bill for the betterment of not only Montana, but our country.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, because I was traveling to attend the President's cybersecurity summit in California, I was not present when the House voted on H.R. 644, the Fighting Hunger Incentive Act of 2015.

While I support goals of the tax provisions in this bill and recognize the value of extending them permanently, I am concerned that H.R. 644 does not pay for them. I have long been a supporter of improving and streamlining charitable donations to make it easier for individuals to donate food, but this one-sided approach of passing bills that offer tax reductions without increasing revenues is unsustainable.

H.R. 644 will add $14.2 billion to the deficit over 10 years. By bringing this and similar tax extender bills to the floor for votes, Republicans continue to demonstrate that they are not serious about deficit reduction. It is long past time for Congress to have a reasonable and informed debate on comprehensive tax reform. These piecemeal, unbalanced extender votes are not the way to approach real tax reform.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about H.R. 644, the America Gives More Act.

The bill before us today contains provisions that I strongly support, but it is with much frustration that I will vote against today's bill. Rather than tackling comprehensive tax reform, House Republicans are once again doing just the opposite. It seems like Congress has given up on comprehensive tax reform only six weeks into the year. The American people deserve better.

I feel like I'm starting to sound like a broken record on this, but we need a tax code that is simple, fair, and provides certainty to all taxpayers. Watching the Republicans cherry pick a few bills while leaving countless other deserving, historically bipartisan bills in the dust is not how to run this committee or this country.

I have been proud to support local food banks in Los Angeles for many years. The work that they do is truly invaluable. Countless families in my district, and across Los Angeles County, are able to put food on the table and send their kids to school on a full stomach because of our local food banks.

Yet year after year we let our local charities down by kicking the can down the road, sometimes kicking the can backwards, when can only muster retroactive policy. Our federal tax code is like a spider web. If we tinker with one provision, others provisions are affected. That is why we must tackle comprehensive tax reform to provide true certainty to both tax payers and charities.

I strongly support the individual charitable provisions before us today, but this is not how to run a country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 101, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

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

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. NEAL. I am opposed to the bill in its current form, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Neal moves to recommit the bill H.R. 644 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 7. NO INCREASE IN DEFICIT OR DELAY OF COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM.

Nothing in this Act shall result in—

(1) an increase in the deficit, or

(2) a delay or weakening of efforts to adopt a permanent extension of the provisions of this Act, so long as it is accomplished in a fiscally responsible manner.

SEC. 8. SHORT-TERM EXTENSION WHILE COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM IS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, any temporary provision of law the application of which is otherwise made permanent under this Act shall be hereby only extended for 1 year.

SEC. 9. TAX BENEFITS DISALLOWED IN CASE OF INVERTED CORPORATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxpayer which is, or is a member of an expanded affiliated group which includes, an applicable inverted corporation, the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied and administered as if the provisions of, and amendments made by, this Act (other than this section) had never been enacted.

(b) APPLICABLE INVERTED CORPORATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the term ''applicable inverted corporation'' means any foreign corporation which—

(A) would be a surrogate foreign corporation under subsection (a)(2) of section 7874 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 if such subsection were applied by substituting ''80 percent'' for ''60 percent'', or

(B) is an inverted domestic corporation.

(2) INVERTED DOMESTIC CORPORATION.—For purposes of this subsection, a foreign corporation shall be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if, pursuant to a plan (or a series of related transactions)—

(A) the entity completes after May 8, 2014, the direct or indirect acquisition of—

(i) substantially all of the properties held directly or indirectly by a domestic corporation, or

(ii) substantially all of the assets of, or substantially all of the properties constituting a trade or business of, a domestic partnership, and

(B) after the acquisition, either—

(i) more than 50 percent of the stock (by vote or value) of the entity is held—

(I) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic corporation, by former shareholders of the domestic corporation by reason of holding stock in the domestic corporation, or

(II) in the case of an acquisition with respect to a domestic partnership, by former partners of the domestic partnership by reason of holding a capital or profits interest in the domestic partnership, or

(ii) the management and control of the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States, and such expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities.

(3) EXCEPTION FOR CORPORATIONS WITH SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRY OF ORGANIZATION.—A foreign corporation described in paragraph (2) shall not be treated as an inverted domestic corporation if after the acquisition the expanded affiliated group which includes the entity has substantial business activities in the foreign country in which or under the law of which the entity is created or organized when compared to the total business activities of such expanded affiliated group. For purposes of applying section 7874(a)(2)(B)(iii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the preceding sentence, the term ''substantial business activities'' shall have the meaning given such term under Treasury regulations in effect on May 8, 2014, except that the Secretary of the Treasury may issue regulations increasing the threshold percent in any of the tests under such regulations for determining if business activities constitute substantial business activities for purposes of this paragraph.

(4) MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.—For purposes of paragraph (2)(B)(ii)—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe regulations for purposes of determining cases in which the management and control of an expanded affiliated group is to be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States. The regulations prescribed under the preceding sentence shall apply to periods after May 8, 2014.

(B) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—Such regulations shall provide that the management and control of an expanded affiliated group shall be treated as occurring, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States if substantially all of the executive officers and senior management of the expanded affiliated group who exercise day-to-day responsibility for making decisions involving strategic, financial, and operational policies of the expanded affiliated group are based or primarily located within the United States. Individuals who in fact exercise such day-to-day responsibilities shall be treated as executive officers and senior management regardless of their title.

(5) SIGNIFICANT DOMESTIC BUSINESS ACTIVITIES.—For purposes of paragraph (2)(B)(ii), an expanded affiliated group has significant domestic business activities if at least 25 percent of—

(A) the employees of the group are based in the United States,

(B) the employee compensation incurred by the group is incurred with respect to employees based in the United States,

(C) the assets of the group are located in the United States, or

(D) the income of the group is derived in the United States,

determined in the same manner as such determinations are made for purposes of determining substantial business activities under regulations referred to in paragraph (3) as in effect on May 8, 2014, but applied by treating all references in such regulations to ''foreign country'' and ''relevant foreign country'' as references to ''the United States''. The Secretary of the Treasury may issue regulations decreasing the threshold percent in any of the tests under such regulations for determining if business activities constitute significant domestic business activities for purposes of this paragraph.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the terms ''domestic corporation'', ''foreign corporation'', and ''expanded affiliated group'' shall each have the same meaning as when used in section 7874 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to this bill in its current form.

I want to remind my colleagues that this amendment to the bill will not kill the bill or send it back to committee if adopted. It will simply allow us to proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Wisconsin, Chairman RYAN, spoke a few moments ago about the notion of goodwill and confidence. But he used a peculiar term as a substitute. He called it the ''baseline.''

What about a baseline of some goodwill and confidence building and a measure that acknowledged that, in terms of procedure, this is a violation of the confidence that we have all tried to establish as we proceed to tax reform?

Some of us who have been around for a long time and have participated in actual tax strategy, we would offer the following: the last time that the Tax Code was changed in America, the Internet had not been invented, Ronald Reagan was the President of the United States, and Tip O'Neill was the Speaker of this House.

Now, in terms of procedure, why we object is the following: if you recall, the gentleman from Michigan, Chairman Camp, waited until tax reform last year was completely dead and then asked us to go through the motion. And that, in the end, is exactly what it was, to have gone through the motion of trying to pass some permanent extended tax bills.

Well, in New England 2 weeks ago, we were talking about deflated footballs. Now we are talking about deflated tax reform expectations.

Six weeks into this Congress, and we are doing this procedural instead of substantive achievement that might lead to some tax relief, as the President has acknowledged, for American corporations or tax relief for individual and family filers?

□ 1630

We are doing this with the argument that, somehow, Democrats don't support charitable giving? Our objection today is based on the following: Fiscally, this is reckless; procedurally, it violates the notion of goodwill in the House; and lastly, and just as importantly, I think it pushes apart the two parties from getting to tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, this is a positioning amendment: How might we embarrass the minority? Do you know what? They are saying here, as they go forward in this argument, that this keeps everything the way it is, it extends charitable giving.

You have to borrow the money eventually to pay for this. That adds to the deficits. Mr. Speaker, that is the argument that we are having here today. We want to know how this is paid for. We are not objecting to the thrust or mission of what is being offered. Under different circumstances, these bills would pass without any problem with broad support.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have any personal quarrel with the merits of this policy, but when it is unpaid for, it means more borrowing. We all support the work of public charities and private foundations in our communities. We support the good works of charitable communities, and we strive to provide these charities with the resources that they need to carry out their mission.

Let me ask you this: Why would they try to masquerade this notion that somebody from Massachusetts is against charitable giving?

Universities, hospitals, and foundations, they abound throughout my State. Like the rest of our Caucus, I favor charitable giving and object to the procedure in which this is being offered today. We object to the procedure.

Why are we taking up this time debating these bills? We should be coming together on tax reform, as promised, for middle class families that grows the economy. If the goal of Mr. RYAN is to eventually remove all deductions, preferences, and exclusions in the Code to get to a lower rate, that should be stated, but not to do it this way.

We are debating bills that the administration has already said they will veto and the Senate has given us no indication they will take them up.

So to fix this moment, our motion to recommit offers the following: a 1-year bridge to tax reform. By the way, my predictions of this in terms of the extenders have been far more accurate over the years than their proposals on the extenders.

We are suggesting here a proposal that does not add to the deficit and addresses the longstanding problem of corporate inversions. By the way, why are companies inverting? Because of the tax system in America.

We are suggesting today that there is a difference and a distinction to be drawn between tax evasion and tax avoidance. They are avoiding taxes in some cases and evading them in the others.

We have an opportunity to do something about this Tax Code that would help bring that about. We pay for our provision. It gives, I think, a measure of comfort for the Democratic minority today to vote for this motion to recommit, and I urge Republican support for this provision.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of the point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the gentleman's motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. My friend got a little animated.

Mr. Speaker, there was a lot there. I will just say this. Here is the question before us: Do we want to give businesses and charities certainty or not? If we would pass this motion to recommit and it went into law, then we will be right back here at the end of the year with the same old problem. We will be right back here. We will be right back here in the same old problem.

They are saying, Let's just do 1 year. Let's just say it takes a few months to pass through the Senate and all of this, then we are back here at the end of the year saying, Oh, my gosh, all these charities are going to be in jeopardy in January.

Let's get off this merry-go-round, Mr. Speaker. It is ridiculous. We all know this is good policy. We all know this is the right thing to do, and we all know that businesses and charities need the kind of certainty that we are providing, and most of us believe that not raising taxes is not the same as cutting taxes.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum

time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 168, nays 245, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 79]

YEAS—168

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle (PA)
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu (CA)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle (PA)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu (CA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—245

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Becerra
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emmer
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—19

Cartwright
DeLauro
Duckworth
Eshoo
Hinojosa
Honda
Kaptur
Lee
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Pearce
Price (NC)
Roe (TN)
Ruiz
Rush
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Veasey

□ 1659

Messrs. LOUDERMILK, WESTERMAN, LATTA, GRIFFITH, BILIRAKIS, and AMODEI changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. COHEN and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 279, nays 137, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 80]

YEAS—279

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Boyle (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emmer
Esty
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Keating
Kelly (PA)
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quigley
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—137

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chu (CA)
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeSaulnier
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle (PA)
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Higgins
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kind
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Levin
Lewis
Lieu (CA)
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Cartwright
DeLauro
Duckworth
Eshoo
Hinojosa
Honda
Kaptur
Lee
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Pearce
Price (NC)
Roe (TN)
Ruiz
Speier
Swalwell (CA)

□ 1707

Mr. CARSON of Indiana changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1715

HONORING WALTER GROTZ ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 90th birthday of Walter Grotz of Delano, Minnesota.

Born on February 10, 1925, Walter is a World War II veteran with a remarkable life of service, both to his community and to his country.

Shortly after graduating from Delano High School in 1943, Walter was drafted into the U.S. Army Air Force. When his plane was shot down over Germany, he spent 6 months as a prisoner of war of the Nazis.

After surviving this brutal experience, Walter came back to Minnesota, serving as Delano's postmaster until his retirement 34 years later. ''Freedom is a very special thing,'' he reminds Delano students through his scholarship essay contest. ''You take it for granted because it's always been there and always will be.'' But will it?

Thank you for your service, Walter. Happy birthday.

SEND THE PRESIDENT A HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the Congress has 5 legislative days left until February 27. We have 5 days to meet and send the President an appropriations bill that he can sign to keep the Department of Homeland Security from shutting down.

The Republican leader in the Senate says the House ought to act. The Speaker says the Senate ought to act. Somebody needs to act. Somebody needs to act like an adult. Somebody needs to fund the security and safety of the American people. Their own Senate colleagues disagree with their strategy of holding national security hostage to their political goals on immigration.

We face, as all of us know, very real threats, which is why we cannot let the Department's funding lapse. If Republicans want to debate immigration policy, then bring an immigration bill to the floor. Don't hold our security hostage.

I ask my Republican colleagues to end their games and instead work with us to keep America safe.

NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK

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

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, this week marks National Marriage Week. This is the time for Americans to recognize, to celebrate, to honor this time-honored institution and the critical importance of a man and a woman committing to each other and to the children of their loving union.

The plain and simple truth is this: marriage is vital to our economic success, cultural well-being, and our children. And sadly, it is being trampled upon as we speak. Unelected judges from all across the country are forcing their personal feelings and biases against traditional marriage upon the American people. This judicial activism has thrown the social and legal status of marriage into chaos.

Since the question of marriage is now before the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress must act now to right this wrong. That is why today I am reintroducing the marriage protection amendment to affirm the true meaning of marriage is between one man and one woman and to provide a clear policy for our Nation, especially for our children.

ANNIVERSARY OF CRASH OF FLIGHT 3407

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today marks the sixth anniversary of the crash of Colgan Air Flight 3407 in western New York, which forever stole the lives of husbands and wives, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers.

Since that tragic day, the families and friends of those taken banded together as a new family to give others what their loved ones didn't have: a safe flight home. They descended in red by the dozens on Capitol Hill, turning pain into persistence, purpose, and progress.

They saw success in the passage of the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act, which establishes the ''one level of safety'' standard. This ensures that all commercial airlines, regardless of size, are held to the same high-quality training and rest requirements.

Still, there is no rest for the brave families. Last week, I joined them on Capitol Hill to support reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration bill and to speak out against recent industry pushback on safety qualifications.

With heavy hearts we remember the people of Flight 3407 and their courageous families. The flying public is safer today because of their work and persistence.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind every American that February is Heart Month.

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the most common form of mortality among both men and women. In fact, one out of every four deaths in this country is cardiac-related. And yet many of these deaths are preventable.

Small changes in diet and exercise can have an enormous and positive impact on your heart health and lifespan. We must not forget America's amazing medical researchers and practitioners who are also doing their part by pioneering innovative treatments that save lives every day.

So, please remember to love your heart this Valentine's Day, and every day.

SUPPORT PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO DEFER ON DEPORTATION

(Mr. SMITH of Washington asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the President's decision to defer the deportation of some of the 11 million undocumented immigrants who are in this country.

This is a decision that every President has made, to one degree or another. We do not have the resources to deport everybody, so he makes a decision about which ones should go and shouldn't. There is nothing illegal about that, and the House should not be holding up the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill because of that policy issue.

First of all, it is a policy issue best addressed by a policy committee, not by holding hostage an appropriations bill. There is an authorizing process to go through to have that fight. Secondly, and more importantly, the President's decision was the right one. There are millions upon millions of undocumented immigrants in this country who are valuable members of our community. They are wives and husbands. They are fathers. They are working productively and paying taxes. Tearing apart families and communities is not something that is going to help this country.

I think the President made the right decision. We should support it. And we certainly shouldn't be shutting down the Department of Homeland Security in a misguided attempt to go after that policy.

ENHANCE MILITARY SUPPORT FOR THE KURDS

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, the international campaign to defeat ISIL depends in great part on the strength and effectiveness of trusted partners in the Middle East—trusted partners such as the Kurds.

The Kurdish Peshmerga is a moderate and capable force. They are showing determined courage in fighting ISIL, and they are winning a number of strategic victories. The Kurds are also defending the values of tolerance and pluralism, sheltering hundreds of thousands of Christians, Yazidis, and innocent Muslim people who have fled ISIL's onslaught. They deserve robust support.

Driven by a twisted form of Islam, ISIL's militants are eighth century barbarians using 21st century weaponry. The recent videotaped immolation of a caged Jordanian pilot is a horrific reminder of their brutality. They are now responsible for the deaths of four American hostages, including Kayla Mueller, a 26-year-old humanitarian worker who was captured while assisting refugees in Syria.

Confronted by such acts, the United States, Sunni Arab nations, and key allies, including Germany, France, and Britain, should enhance military support for the Kurds.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AL LEWIS

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to honor the life of Al Lewis, a selfless and larger-than-life community leader who truly embodied the aloha spirit of my home State of Hawaii. He was a husband, father, friend, organizer, mentor, and so much more to so many. If you knew Waimanalo, his hometown, you also knew ''Uncle Al.''

He found his passion helping those in need and led through servant leadership, never too busy or too preoccupied with himself to take action to better the lives of those around him. He helped our children—keiki—succeed by working with youth groups like the Waimanalo Teen Project.

In founding the Friends of Waimanalo, he helped create a literary program, purchased uniforms for schoolchildren, and donated to Kailua High School. Every single year he brought the community together from all parts at the Waimanalo Community Carnival.

A respected and loyal community advocate, Al Lewis, better known as Uncle Al, will be remembered and missed by his friends, family, and Hawaii.

PASS THE HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, today, once again, we find ourselves on the verge of a shutdown—because Congress can't do its job and pass funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, over a year ago, the Senate passed a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform plan—a commonsense plan—that the House failed to pass. The House has failed to pass anything to address immigration reform, forcing the President to act.

And now, Congress is playing politics, trying to roll back the President's reforms and threatening to force the American people to pay the price for Congress' inability to agree on funding to protect our homeland.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot risk American jobs, lives, and the national security of the United States. We need to pass the Homeland Security Appropriations bill. We face many threats around the world. We cannot play games here.

To my colleagues I ask you: Is it more important to score political points, or is it more important to safeguard our national security?

Mr. Speaker, I am urging you today to bring a clean appropriations bill to the floor so we can fully fund the Department of Homeland Security. I urge my colleagues to join this effort.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which is having our Special Order hour today to talk about the Nation's need for infrastructure—the fact that we need to keep serious investments in infrastructure not only to keep our roads and bridges and other important parts of our country together but also to help the good, family-supporting jobs that come along with these important investments in our infrastructure.

I serve on the Budget Committee, and we were talking one day with Dr. Elmendorf from the Congressional Budget Office, our nonpartisan agency that we deal with to talk about budgetary matters.

Specifically, I asked the question of Dr. Elmendorf about the Recovery Act that we passed in this country a number of years ago. Dr. Elmendorf said that, thanks to that Recovery Act, over 3 million jobs were saved or created because of the investment we put into our Nation's infrastructure.

In my State of Wisconsin, I was at the State legislature at the time and I chaired our budget committee. We had a report from the road building industry and the vertical construction industry that said 54,000 jobs just in Wisconsin were saved or created because of the Recovery Act.

As much as that helped provide a boost to the economy and help fill our infrastructure needs, we still have so many more to take care of. We have been given a grade of D-plus by the very engineering society that grades our Nation's infrastructure. We have been told that we have 100,000 bridges in this country, or 16 percent, old enough that they can qualify for Medicare.

□ 1730

As we know from recent disasters that we have seen in different parts of the country where bridges have fallen and people have literally been killed, we need to reinvest in that infrastructure so that we have a country that operates, that businesses can function.

Also, we need to help create those jobs now for people who are still out of work. As the economy is coming back, we know that wages have been stagnant, and these are good, strong, family-supporting jobs that can provide it.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus will soon be putting out our version of the budget, just as we will among the Democrats and the Republicans, but we will put out our version

of the budget—just as the President has—with a deep investment in our infrastructure needs because we know that that investment is one of the pillars of the strong economy.

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

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank my colleague, Mr. POCAN, for yielding back and giving me this opportunity to address the people of the United States of America.

I am new around here, and so I like to generally listen and evaluate before I speak, and I only try to speak when I might have something to add of value.

If you drive through my district, which is the 12th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey and includes a lot of highways, byways, and bridges, you will see this iconic sign in the capital of New Jersey that says, ''Trenton Makes, The World Takes.''

It is a sign that points out the legendary industrial past of our community. However, this industrial revolution, it has passed us by, and it is a reminder of the employment that the city used to have.

Yes, the city of Trenton was once the place that you found employment. The Trenton Iron Company produced the wrought iron beams for the dome on this U.S. Capitol Building where we stand today. Trenton's John Roebling's Sons Company produced wire rope that was used to build the Brooklyn Bridge, the now-famous George Washington Bridge, and the Golden Gate suspension bridge in California.

Trenton was also known for its potterymaking, and even today, Trenton pottery can be found on display in museums around the world because of its artistry and superior craftsmanship.

Trenton's booming industry is responsible for the invention of even the oyster crackers, pork roll, Bayer aspirin, and felt-tipped markers.

Yet, today, Trenton, New Jersey, has a 15 percent unemployment rate. The city of Trenton's legendary industrial past does little for the thousands of unemployed workers searching for work today. The city has had a turn for the worse since the manufacturing sector has left and took with it great-paying jobs.

We are not alone in that problem and this crisis. The same can be said for Cleveland, Ohio, or Detroit, Michigan, or Gary, Indiana, or Philadelphia—to name just a few—towns which were once thriving centers of commerce where jobs were plentiful and unemployment was rare. Today, these same towns face an unemployment crisis where securing work that enables a mother or a father to support a family is an elusive proposition.

At the same time we experience this employment crisis, we also have a crisis in our infrastructure. New Jersey has 39,213 total miles of road. We are small, but we have a lot of concrete, but 35 percent of the major roads are in deprived condition.

New Jersey has 6,566 bridges, but 36 percent of which are underfunded, considered structurally deficient, or functionally obsolete. Over 200 million trips are taken daily across deficient bridges in the Nation, but in total, one in nine of the Nation's bridges are rated as structurally deficient.

You may recall, in 2007, the I–35W Mississippi River bridge in Minneapolis—which had been categorized as structurally deficient—collapsed, killing 13 and injuring 145 people.

Mr. Speaker, our bridges are crumbling, and we need to invest in building and fixing them. The Nation's estimated 100,000 miles of levees can be found in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. The reliability of these levees is unknown in many cases, and the country has yet to establish a national levee safety program.

In 2005, New Orleans' levees failed to hold back the floodwaters of Hurricane Katrina, claiming the lives of more than 1,800 people and causing at least $125 billion in economic damage. Public safety remains at risk from these aging structures, and the cost to repair or rehabilitate these levees is roughly estimated to be $100 billion by the National Committee on Levee Safety.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers are reflective of what America has become. I take a look at our communities today, and I see the vestiges of our past.

I ask that we, as Congress, stop playing games, that we get to work for real this time, that we recognize that here we will have the opportunity to not only create safe infrastructure, not only to create safe bridges, not only to protect communities that are subject to flooding from levees, but we will also be able to create jobs.

There is no more meaningful social action program than a good job, and we know that government has a history for creating those jobs in times of need that help not only to build the strong infrastructure of this great Nation, but to put families back to work, to make sure that they are earning a wage for which they can take care of their children, help provide opportunities for their families, take care of their elderly, ensure that their children have access to quality education, and ensure that our future is strong and stable, based upon the fact that they have had good, predictable, dependable, decent-paying jobs with decent wages.

I look to our Congress, as many people do in this country, and I know who we really are, and I know that if we put our foot to the pedal, that if we decide that we are going to put this country back on a strong footing—metaphorically, as well as literally—I know that if we are understanding that if we build out and support that middle-income layer, those people, the working people of this Nation, that we will create an economy that will grow and prosper everyone from the very, very top to the very, very bottom.

That is what we need to do right now in this country, from a bipartisan perspective, is to introduce, to advocate for, to debate, discuss, design, and develop an infrastructure bill with bipartisan support that signals to the working families and all families in this country that, A, we want to make sure that you are safe as you travel our highways and cross our bridges, that you are safe when you live near waterways and need to be protected with levees, and that you are given the opportunity to give back to your country, to build it, make it the strong country that it should be and, at the same time, create the kind of jobs that we need in order to grow our economy for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak to the American people today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE SAM JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, 42 years ago today, a POW came home from Vietnam.

This Special Order was put on by Mr. DOLD from Illinois. He will be here shortly.

A man I love came home that day 42 years ago. He is our colleague, SAM JOHNSON. SAM first saw combat in Korea, 62 hair-raising combat missions in an F–86 Sabre. He told me he used to race Buzz Aldrin to get to where the bad guys were to get the first kill of the day. That same Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon with Neil Armstrong.

SAM shot down one MIG in Korea. He came home and quickly became one of our best pilots in the Air Force. He joined the Thunderbirds, the Air Force's flight demonstration team. He flew solo and slot in the F–100C Super Sabre. He became an instructor pilot at the Air Force's Fighter Weapons School, their Top Gun.

SAM saw combat again in Vietnam. He flew the F–4 Phantom into combat. Coming back after dropping his bombs on North Korea, he was shot down. It was his 25th combat mission over Vietnam, April 15, 1966. SAM bailed out and fell into hell on earth. He was taken prisoner, confined for 6 years, 9 months, and 12 days.

This was a new war for POWs. It was a war of propaganda, so every minute

those men were alive, they were valuable. Their captors used starvation, disease, isolation, physical, and mental torture to push these men to confess to war crimes, to bombing hospitals and schools with napalm. They were beaten every single day they were held in captivity.

The Viet Cong saw a fighter in SAM JOHNSON. They saw a man who might start a riot, a rebellion. They called him a ''diehard,'' and so—with 10 other men—they moved him from the Hanoi Hilton to a place they called Alcatraz, hell within hell.

SAM was alone for over 2 years. He stayed in a windowless concrete room, 9 feet wide, 4 feet, 9 by 4 feet. Every summer, it got up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit in his cell.

His legs were shackled with irons—both legs—every minute he was in his cell. Ten other men went with him: Jeremiah Denton, Jim Stockdale, Bob Shumaker, Ronald Storz, Harry Jenkins, Howard Rutledge, Nels Tanner, Jim Mulligan, George McKnight, and George Coker.

□ 1745

Ten came home. Ronald Storz died in Alcatraz in captivity. SAM and his 10 brothers all learned to lean on each other to survive. In Alcatraz, one day SAM was put in a cell and beaten and beaten and beaten to make him write a document and sign his confession of committing a war crime.

Jeremiah Denton heard the clamor when SAM was thrown back into his cell hours after he was taken off from his cell with the Viet Cong. Admiral Denton said: SAM, SAM, it is okay, buddy. There was silence for a couple moments, and then SAM said: I made them write it, but I had to sign it. Admiral Denton said: It is okay, SAM. You are, okay. Hang on. You did a good job.

Because of what SAM and others went through, every naval aviator, marine aviator, Air Force pilot, Army pilot, Navy SEAL, Marine Force Recon, Army Green Berets attend what is known as SERE school—S-E-R-E, survive, evade, resist, escape—POW school.

I went to SERE for 1 week in the fall of 1991. I was fed little amounts of food. No sleep. The last 2 days were in the POW camp in a small concrete room like SAM, alone, stuffed into a small box in the dark, loud music and a waterboard. That training gave me a taste of torture—my strengths and weaknesses. SAM never had that training. He learned it with his blood and broken bones.

I want to close by using the tap code, the way SAM and his fellow prisoners used to communicate without talking. It is a 5 by 5 matrix, 25 letters. It omits the K.

(Tapping on podium.)

In the Hanoi Hilton and Alcatraz, that says: I salute you. SAM, if I was there that day, 42 years ago when you came home, I would say: SAM, I salute you.

God bless them all.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING THE 42ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE RELEASE OF AMERICAN POWS FROM VIETNAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Texas for his remarks talking about SAM JOHNSON, one of the great American heroes that we have the honor here of serving with. That tap code that you just heard was really the lifeline, the lifeline for so many of the almost 600 POWs, the vast majority in the Hoa Lo Prison. So while you heard those taps, those taps were actually the communication system that allowed those POWs to have some sort of contact with another human, and, I would argue, probably saved many lives.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to my good friend from Kentucky.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD), my friend, for his leadership on this issue and for leading this special hour. I also want to thank my friend from Texas for honoring our colleague SAM JOHNSON, a true American hero who, through his service and sacrifice, his time in the Hanoi Hilton, his time as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, really showcased what it means to be a great patriot and an American hero willing to sacrifice for his fellow countrymen and for the freedom that we all enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of central and eastern Kentucky, I, too, rise today to recognize the 42nd anniversary of the release of American prisoners of war from Vietnam. I would like to honor the brave men and women who courageously wore our Nation's cloth and made great sacrifices in the name of freedom.

As I walk into my congressional office, I am reminded every day of all the American servicemembers that never returned home from past wars by the POW flag that I proudly display outside of my office.

Since the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Kentuckians have continued to answer our Nation's call to service. In fact, over 125,000 Kentuckians courageously and unselfishly served during the Vietnam era, and the people of Kentucky honor those who fought and died in Vietnam by commissioning the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which overlooks Kentucky's beautiful State capitol building in Frankfort. I would also like to recognize the organizations that keep the memories of those who have sacrificed much for our country alive, organizations such as Task Force Omega of Kentucky, Rolling Thunder, and the Kentucky Patriot Guard, who constantly remind us to never forget the servicemembers who have perished and have not yet returned home from Vietnam and other wars fought on foreign soil.

While being held captive, American POWs found strength in each other, and as Congressman DOLD and Congressman OLSON pointed out, those taps were the way that those men in that prison kept each other's spirits alive. Through their struggle, they found resilience; through their faith, they found comfort; and through their patriotism, they found hope. We are so grateful to have these servicemembers home. As we know all too well from recent events in the Middle East, not all prisoners of war make it back to their family members alive, but we owe all of them a debt of gratitude.

Unlike the veterans of World War II, Iraq, the Persian Gulf war or Afghanistan, those who served in Vietnam had a very different and unfortunate experience, many of them, when they returned home. Some were advised to change into civilian clothes and avoid contact with protestors, and it really hurt. They didn't deserve it. They deserve better. So for all of those veterans of the Vietnam war, including those who were POWs, we welcome them home because they deserve our respect, and they deserve to be welcomed home to a grateful nation.

American servicemembers found hope in the fact that a grateful nation would not leave them behind and would do everything possible to bring them home. We, as Americans, still stand behind that promise today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for the opportunity to honor the 42nd anniversary of the release of American POWs from Vietnam.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for coming and joining us in honoring these really incredible servicemen, each with an incredible story, and really as we talk about it, actually, Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor yesterday. Yesterday I came to this very spot to talk about my uncle. My uncle is one of the Alcatraz 11, lives not far from the Capitol here in Washington. He was flying off the USS *Coral Sea* in an F–8 Crusader and was shot down on a low-level mission, flying about a thousand feet above the ground.

Now, for those, Mr. Speaker, that don't know what an F–8 Crusader is, it is a jet that can fly at Mach 1.72, nearly twice the speed of sound. When it filled up with smoke after he was hit, he had very little time to eject. He ejected. His parachute opened about 35 feet above the ground, and he broke his back on impact.

Now, this is an incredible story. Yesterday marked the 50th anniversary of being shot down. That was one of the darkest days, I would argue, certainly in our family; but for American servicemen, and certainly aviators, that is certainly a very dark day.

Today, February 12, marks a very different day, a day for us to rejoice because it was the day that marks Operation Homecoming, the day that over 600 American POWs would eventually be released, and February 12 was the day that those first POWs would be released from the Hoa Lo Prison.

The Hoa Lo Prison, Mr. Speaker, was a prison that was built by the French, and unspeakable things happened at this prison. What is incredible to me is not the darkness of what happened at the Hoa Lo Prison, a prison that we know today as the Hanoi Hilton. What is remarkable to me is the fact that these servicemen relied upon faith and honor to get them through, and largely each other.

So I just want those that may be tuning in to put themselves in the place of an American aviator, jumping on board a jet. Put yourself, perhaps, in the cockpit of that F–8 Crusader.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not revealing any news when we talk about American servicemen and -women being a little bit cocky if they are out there flying. I think some might think they are invincible. Well, the world changed certainly for my uncle and for many on the day of their captivity. They no longer had their aircraft. They no longer had their sidearm. They no longer had their uniform. All was stripped from them. They were issued, in essence, a pair of pajamas and a pair of sandals.

Little did my uncle or SAM JOHNSON or Nels Tanner or Jim Stockdale or Jeremiah Denton or JOHN MCCAIN or many of the other POWs realize how long this conflict would continue. What they did know was that each and every one of them, as an American fighting man, was going to return home with honor.

Many of you may know, Mr. Speaker, the story of JOHN MCCAIN. His father was very high up in the United States Navy. The Vietnamese knew that they had a prize when they had JOHN MCCAIN, and he was offered early release. They were going to give him a free pass home and comfort to be back here in the United States. The devastation that would have done to the POWs, the morale would have been devastating, and so he turned them down. The Vietnamese said it was going to be very bad for you now, Mr. MCCAIN, and indeed it was. He, as well as the other Americans in captivity, would endure years of torture.

□ 1800

The big four, Mr. Speaker, was name, rank, serial number, and date of birth. And these men would be tortured for additional information. Every person—at least everyone that I know—has their breaking point, and certainly American POWs are no different.

They set up a system. They set up, in essence, a military operation, following rank. Jim Stockdale was the highest-ranking officer and, therefore, sent word out that if they were broken, to be able to stiffen their back up and give no additional information next time.

That tap code system that you heard the gentleman from Texas talk about, the 5 by 5 matrix, A–B–C–D–E–F–G–H–I–J—they eliminated the K because they needed to have a 5 by 5 matrix. Rows and columns—first the row, then the column. So B is first row, second column. And really, the way they did it is, ''shave and a haircut, two bits'' is how you started this conversation. So most Americans know that if you give the rap, they are going to respond with two taps. And that is when you knew there was an American on the other side of the wall. If they got any sort of a different response, they knew that it was most likely not an American and, therefore, they were going to stop their communication.

What was going on through those walls was literally like hundreds of woodpeckers going nonstop, day in and day out, letting people know that it was okay, that they had them. They knew when someone was coming. They could hear the keys rattling and they knew that their comrade was going to be taken out and tortured and beaten. So when they got back to their cell, that tap code would go, letting them know that there was somebody there for them. Incredible.

Now out of the hundreds of POWs that went to North Vietnam and were captured, there was a crew of the 11 greatest threats to camp security, according to the North Vietnamese. They became known as the Alcatraz 11. My uncle, Bob Shumaker, was one of the Alcatraz 11, along with Admiral Stockdale, who was shot down in 1965. He was the senior U.S. officer present during the camps. And he was considered to be a big troublemaker, no question.

Also, George Coker, who was shot down in 1966. Jeremiah Denton, a United States Senator from the great State of Alabama, was shot down in 1965. Harry Jenkins was shot down also in '65. SAM JOHNSON, whom we talked about, whom we have the honor of serving with here in the United States Congress, was shot down in 1966 on his 25th combat mission. George McKnight was shot down in 1965. James Mulligan was shot down in 1966. Howard Rutledge was shot down in 1965. Ron Storz of the Alcatraz 11 was the only one who did not make it home alive.

Nels Tanner has a unique story. He was the last of the Alcatraz 11. Nels Tanner got his ticket to Alcatraz by making the Vietnamese look bad. When he was being tortured and they were trying to get information about who was his commanding officer, Nels Tanner told them it was ''Ben Casey'' and ''Clark Kent.'' Well, here in America, everybody knows Ben Casey and Clark Kent are not real figures. And when word got back to the Vietnamese that they had been made a joke of, he got his ticket to Alcatraz.

Mr. Speaker, I want people to understand Alcatraz for a minute. The reason why these 11 men went to Alcatraz is because they were the thorn in the side of the North Vietnamese. They were the ones that resisted the hardest. They were the ones that caused the problems.

The American fighting men in the Hoa Lo Prison, the Hanoi Hilton, they also caused problems, but these 11 were singled out. And they went into a cell that was—at most generous—about 4 feet by 9. Just imagine that, 4 feet by 9. It is about yea big, at 9 feet in front of you. The Alcatraz 11 spent, on average, about 2½ years in this prison camp. They were able to get out of their cell for 15 minutes a day to be able to go empty their sanitation bucket. They ate in their cell. And they had a tremendous amount of time.

What can you do? The most important muscle that they exercised was their brain, which is why the tap code was so important. But they used other methods. They could cough. They could sneeze. They could try to do different things along those lines. They waved their hands in front of the door so that shadows would be indicative of those letters and they were able to communicate.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say, my uncle built his home in Fairfax Station, Virginia, in his mind long before any brick was laid. Brick by brick, he knew exactly how many bricks it would take. He knew exactly how many feet of pipe it would take. He knew exactly how much lumber. These were the exercises. He built it, tour it down. He built it and tour it down. These were the exercises that these men would go through.

At Alcatraz, SAM JOHNSON learned French through the walls. A product of Texas public schools, he might not have had the opportunity to learn a foreign language. So he used that opportunity in Alcatraz to learn French from Bob Shumaker. It is not the most ideal way to learn French, but the one thing they did have was time.

The Vietnamese tried to strip everything from these men, but there is one thing that they couldn't strip. They couldn't strip their faith. They couldn't strip their honor. And each was determined that they would return to the United States with honor. That, I think, is just remarkable.

One of the things, as we think about February 12, 1973, we cannot miss what was happening back here at home. Their spouses played a vital role and an active role not only with the government but also in the Paris Peace Accords, advocating for the release of the American POWs.

Mr. Speaker, Vietnam was not a popular war, a war that went into living rooms. But the one thing that the American public was able to unite and rally around was our American POWs. Bracelets were worn identifying American POWs and the day that they were shot down.

I have a bracelet, Mr. Speaker, in my office. It is sitting next to two pictures—one of the day Bob Shumaker

was shot down, February 11, 1965, and the other is this picture right here. This is the first time that he had an opportunity to see his wife and his son Grant, who was about 8 years and 3 months at the time, I think. When he had been shot down, his son Grant was only about 3 months old. This is the picture of them being reunited.

I know it is not the best picture for people to be able to view. But in 1973, the styles were a little bit different. So after the release, Bob Shumaker called his wife, Lorraine, and wanted to make sure that she dressed in the fashion of 1965. You can't see the go-go boots, but you can see the miniskirt. And that was how he had remembered her, and that is how he wanted to see her when he got off that plane.

Mr. Speaker, 8 years and a day for Bob Shumaker; 7 years plus for SAM JOHNSON; 5½ years for JOHN MCCAIN. Incredible stories. Torture.

I can tell you that some of America's finest servicemen tried to take their own lives because they thought they let their country down when they gave information to the Vietnamese. But they were pulled up by their comrades, by the men who were next to them in these cells.

There are a couple of others whom I think are particularly interesting, Mr. Speaker.

Everett Alvarez actually was the first American POW. He was a U.S. Navy commander and was held in captivity for 8½ years.

Douglas Hegdahl was really a unique case. Most of the POWs were aviators, whether they were flying for the United States Air Force or the United States Navy. Doug Hegdahl was a guy who was in the Navy but happened to be on a ship. He came up and happened to be standing on the deck. The ship zigged when he thought it would zag, and over the side he went. When he was picked up by the Vietnamese in civilian clothes, they thought he was a member of the Central Intelligence Agency. They put him in the Hoa Lo Prison, and he started to just get along.

One of the things with that tap code that they tried to do each and every day was they would communicate who was newly in the prison. And when you think about trying to memorize the names of all the POWs—because if, for some reason, somebody were to be released or to escape, they wanted to make sure that the United States had the opportunity to know exactly who was in captivity. It was absolutely critical for them, critical for their families to be able to know that they were still alive.

Well, there were a couple of folks, Mr. Speaker, who were released early. I would say that was not necessarily the tack that many of the other POWs would have taken. Doug Hegdahl did not want to be released but was ordered to go because he had a photographic memory and knew every single POW, knew their hometown, their phone number. When he got back to the United States, he took his time to go to all of these places to visit the families of the POWs, to let them know that their son, that their husband, that their brother was still alive. He had memorized their addresses and phone numbers. He is really a remarkable man.

Bud Day, Mr. Speaker, another pilot that was shot down, sustained significant injuries while flying his F–100F. JOHN MCCAIN credits him for really saving his life. While in captivity, he was in really tough shape. Bud Day was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, as was Jim Stockdale.

Each and every one of these men—certainly the Alcatraz 11—were highly decorated for their efforts. But I think the thing that was most important to them was being able to return home with honor.

We look at today, Mr. Speaker—February 12, 2015—as a celebration honoring the legacy that these American fighting men have given us all, an incredible faith and a dedication to make sure that each and every one of them was going to return with honor.

There was a ceremony that happened on February 12 as they were discharged and marched out of the Hoa Lo Prison. They were determined to march in rank, as an American fighting force, and then were discharged one by one. The first one shot down would be the first one released. So that was Everett Alvarez. The second one was Bob Shumaker.

They didn't believe that this day had finally come. They saw that C–141 come into Hanoi and really didn't start the real celebration until the 141 had lifted off of that tarmac and the first group of American POWs were on their way home.

Mr. Speaker, I am in awe every time I read stories of these men who did incredible things to endure and to overcome. It is an honor to be able to serve with one in this body, but it is also an honor to be able to stand here today on the day of Operation Homecoming and its 42nd anniversary and to say that America will never forget, America will always remember, that we stood by you then, and we look to stand by all of our men and women in uniform.

□ 1815

We are in the midst of a conflict right now in the midst of a war on terror. We must make sure that we give our men and women that we have asked to go out and defend us the tools necessary to protect our country and to do the job that we have asked them to do. I hope, Madam Speaker, that no one has to endure what these men endured in Hanoi.

I want to thank my colleagues who join me here today, but I also wanted to take this opportunity for those that may be tuning in to let the POWs from the Vietnam conflict know how much they mean not only to me, but to our country. We thank you, and we love you.

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

HONORING THE NAACP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman for the recitation. It was very touching, very moving, and I just want to commend him for keeping the memory alive. Thank you so much.

Madam Speaker, I am honored tonight to thank the leadership and to thank the Members of Congress who have been supportive of this resolution that we bring to the floor for a discussion. This is a resolution that honors the NAACP.

This resolution is not new to the Congress of the United States of America because, in 2006, it actually passed the House of Representatives by a voice vote and then, in 2007, it passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 410–0; in 2008, 403–0; 2009, 424–0; and 2010, 421–0.

I thank the leadership and the Members of this body for the support it has shown to the NAACP with the passage of this resolution through the years.

I am honored to be a member of the NAACP. I take great pride in my membership. I have a life membership in the NAACP. I have been fortunate enough to serve on the board of the Houston branch of the NAACP. I served for nearly a decade as president of the Houston branch of the NAACP, and I have been the beneficiary of the NAACP's works. The NAACP has made America the beautiful a more beautiful America.

Tonight, Madam Speaker, I would like to continue this discussion of the NAACP. I would like to say just a few words first about the founding of the NAACP. It was founded on this day 106 years ago—106 years ago—when approximately 60 people answered what was called the call.

It was a clarion call for persons to come together to talk about and discuss a means by which lynching could be dealt with. Of the 60 people, about seven were African Americans. The NAACP is not now and never has been an organization that has been supported by only African Americans or what some might call a Black organization. It has always been an integrated organization.

After having been founded in 1909, February 12, 106 years ago, the NAACP did embark upon a campaign to end lynching in the United States of America, a sad chapter in our history, but one that we must never forget because we never want to see these things happen again.

As things are doing well now in this area of lynching—we don't have lynchings in the United States of

America, generally speaking, we understand the adage—the premise—that if you don't remember your history, there is a possibility that it can be repeated.

For this reason, we talk about these things. They are a sad chapter in our history, but it is a chapter that we dare not forget. The NAACP, in embarking on this campaign to end lynching, published a publication in 1919 that was styled ''30 Years of Lynching in the United States.''

It is interesting to note that lynching was so prevalent in the United States that the great Billie Holiday—the great Billie Holiday—sang a song, she was known for this song, styled ''Strange Fruit.''

This was a song that she could only sing in certain places because this was one of the first songs that dealt with the protest movement around this notion of civil rights and human rights for African Americans. This song was first presented in New York at a nightclub, the Cafe Society.

When she first presented the song, she had much fear and much consternation because she wasn't sure how it would be received. After she finished singing the song, there was a silence. For a moment, she thought that it would not be well received.

Then one person, as is the case with many movements, one person started to applaud and, after that, one person, then another and another. Then she received a very loud ovation for this song.

I am going to share the words to the song with us tonight because this song is probably one of her signature songs, but it is also a song that predated ''We Shall Overcome,'' which was a part of the civil rights movement, the contemporary civil rights movement.

These are the words to the song, and you will have some appreciation for why I am mentioning it to you. The words are:

Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.

Of course, we know that this song is referring to the lynchings that were taking place. In fact, between 1882 and 1968, according to Tuskegee Institute, there were 3,446 African Americans lynched in the United States of America—a sad chapter in our history.

This is why the NAACP came into being. In part, it was established to ensure political, educational, social, and economic equality for all persons—for all persons—not just African Americans, not just Blacks, not just as we were known at that time, Negroes, but for all persons; and it was established as well to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination—all noble challenges and challenges that we would easily embrace today.

At that time, when the NAACP was founded, because of lynchings that were taking place and because of a desire to make sure that all persons were treated fairly and equally, it was a difficult thing to do.

The NAACP, I am proud to say, has a history of being on the right side of right. It is consistently on the right side of right. The NAACP was on the right side of right in 1948 and 1953 when it filed and won the lawsuits Shelley v. Kraemer and Barrows v. Jackson. These lawsuits dealt with restrictive covenants.

There was a time in this country when persons could restrict the sale of property to people simply because of who they were, the hue of their skin, restrict the sale of property to people because of the way they looked.

These two lawsuits were taken to the Supreme Court of the United States of America and were won. If the truth be told, we sleep where we sleep and we live where we live because of the NAACP, because the NAACP was on the right side of right.

What is interesting about this proposition of being on the right side of right, Madam Speaker, is the notion that when you are what I call—what some others would call a Monday morning quarterback, but what I call a hindsight quarterback—a hindsight quarterback, that is my phrase—when you are a hindsight quarterback, it is easy to be on the right side of right because others have had to suffer the slings and arrows associated with being on the right side of right at the right time, in the right place, in the right space. The NAACP has dared to be on the right side of right when it was very difficult to be there.

In 1948 and 1953, when Shelley v. Kraemer and Barrows v. Jackson were litigated, it was not easy to be on the right side of right, to talk about integrating neighborhoods, to talk about selling property to anybody if they could pay the price of the cost of the property.

Being on the right side of right means something in the country that we know and love. It means something in a country that stands for the proposition of liberty and justice for all, a country that stands for the notion that government should be of the people, by the people, and for the people.

It means something to be on the right side of right; hence it means something to have an organization like the NAACP that will step forward using litigation when necessary, protests when needed, but always a peaceful means to a just end. The NAACP has been there and has always been consistently on the right side of right.

The NAACP was on the right side of right in 1954 when it won the lawsuit Brown v. Board of Education. I would daresay that we eat where we eat because of the NAACP and we go to the schools that we go to because of the NAACP.

The NAACP took that lawsuit to the Supreme Court under the leadership of the Honorable Thurgood Marshall with the aid and assistance of the honorable Charles Hamilton Houston and won that lawsuit, placing the NAACP again on the right side of right, overturning decades of injustice with one single lawsuit. The NAACP made a difference in the lives of all Americans.

The truth be told, if we did not have the NAACP, we would have to create it because you need an organization like the NAACP. You need an organization that is willing to take a bold stand in difficult times, an organization that understands that it is not easy to be on the right side of right, but that understands also that a great country has to move forward, and to do so, it must be on the right side of right.

Let me pause for just a moment because we have had a great sage come into the Chamber tonight. He is, of course, the sage from New York. We know him as the Honorable CHARLIE RANGEL.

I know him as a friend to all of humanity, a person who has consistently been on the right side of right, a person who speaks with clarity, with force, sincerity, and he actually calls them as he sees them, without any fear and without any belief that there are consequences that can be of great harm to him, such that he should not speak truth to power.

Tonight, I am honored to ask my dear friend if he would join me and give his commentary on the NAACP.

I will now yield to the gentleman from New York City, the Honorable CHARLES RANGEL.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Let me thank my friend and colleague for giving me an opportunity to thank an organization that, unfortunately, so many Americans, Black and White, have taken for granted.

Earlier today, I was sitting on the floor next to one of my Republican friends from the South, and we were talking about Selma. He had recently seen the motion picture, and he was shocked that something like this could have happened.

Me being an oldtimer, I was surprised that he did not know that those things had gone on, but it was the graphics in the motion picture and the change in attitude that people have.

□ 1830

And it reminded me that this happened in my lifetime, to see somebody from the same culture, the same background, now seeing things obscene that should never happen in our great country.

Now, if people could have stood up 60 years ago and subjected themselves as some people did in Selma and put their life on the line in the early sixties, as JOHN LEWIS and so many others did—because I would like to remind everybody I did the march too, but it was after Bloody Sunday. I was not thinking about putting my life on the line. And putting my feet on the line for 54

miles was an ordeal for me, because I didn't fully understand the concept and the threat to human life that was taking place in the sixties.

Imagine what it was when the NAACP was formed. Imagine the threat that Blacks and Whites had formed this organization to bring us together during the time that slavery had just been over and this organization has continued. I cannot begin to tell you, Congressman, at my age, the number of civil rights organizations and political organizations and religious organizations that I have worked through in my lifetime.

But no matter what the internal debate is, no matter what state our Nation is in, the NAACP has managed, during very rough economic times and hard political times, to keep going step by step and never falling back. And when the whole country and parts of the world were rejoicing over the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act—and we see what recently happened to the Supreme Court. Why was nobody surprised that, once again, in front of the Supreme Court, organizing the entire Nation to do the right thing was the National Association of Colored People?

And so I just wish that, without solicitation, we can find some way to thank those faceless people who never get their names and pictures in the newspaper, go out to the meeting, active in voter registration, and whenever anybody in any community wants to go there for a rally, the first thing they do is call the local branch of the NAACP to make certain that someone would show up. Because the NAACP doesn't do these things for press conferences. They don't do it because they want their names in the newspaper. They have too much credibility and have done too much work and have suffered too much to risk their reputation for something like that.

So I am so grateful and appreciative that you would focus in the well of the Congress, and certainly we all admit that notwithstanding what Dr. Martin Luther King and so many others that we don't know their names have done to bring some sense of equality in our great Nation, that the NAACP was there 100 years ago doing the same thing and then hoping and praying that they can improve the quality of life for all of us. And guess what? They are still doing it.

Thank you for your commitment.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you very much, Mr. RANGEL, for your very eloquent recitation. Once again, you have risen, you have stepped up to the plate, and we are most appreciative that you took a moment to come over and be with us. Thank you very much.

If I may now, we have another Member of the Congress with us from the 18th Congressional District in the State of Texas. She is a voice for the voiceless, a very powerful voice, not only in Congress, but across the length and breadth of the country when it comes to human rights, human dignity, and human decency.

I am honored to have my colleague with me tonight, the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE, who is adjacent to me, the Ninth Congressional District in Houston, Texas. The Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Congressman, thank you so very much. And, again, my greatest appreciation for your annual tribute to the NAACP. We are reminded of its great history. You are the carrier of this dream and this celebration. We are appreciative that you have come to this Congress and done many things, but you brought us to a moment every year to be able to honor this storied organization 106 years old. So let me thank my good friend Congressman GREEN, my next-door neighbor in Houston, and a friend of many of the same friends.

We know the work of the NAACP local chapter in Houston, Texas. Now, the leading President is, as I call him, Dean James Douglas. Many presidents before, of course, have ably served our local chapter, but we come today to acknowledge the grandness of the NAACP. And as my colleague, Congressman RANGEL, just mentioned, it is an organization that is everywhere in all ways.

It is well to note that many of the successes that we have had in freedom, justice, and liberty have come about through the NAACP. President Truman was the first President in 1948 to speak to the NAACP. But it was not just an oration, if you will. The NAACP seeks to work, collaborate, and get things done. It was that close relationship with President Truman that generated a commission that in the late 1940s, after World War II, where soldiers came home to a second-class citizenship.

Soldiers who left the hills and valleys of America, the farms, and the urban centers of America, African Americans, colored boys, who went into World War II came out as a second-class citizen. You will hear stories of soldiers coming back home being forced off trains or in the back of the train or the back of the bus, not being offered food at a train station, even with the uniform on.

So heroes that had fought in the war and managed to survive and come home still came to a segregated America. It was in that backdrop that President Truman spoke to the NAACP, and they called for a commission to address the question of civil rights in America. Out of that came the—because it was in the realm of World War II, out of that came an important announcement that really, I think, was the predecessor to desegregating America. That, of course, was the executive order that desegregated the United States military. That is the clout of the NAACP.

Through the years—through the years—the NAACP certainly has a long history, starting in its early birth. But I want to carry it forward into the 1950s and into the utilization of Thurgood Marshall. Now it is called the NAACP Legal Defense Fund that separated it out, but it was these lawyers of the NAACP that rose to defend those in the civil rights movement who were the foot soldiers and the actors of the civil rights movement, meaning acting on the issue, the activists. And they had the cerebral opportunity, if you will, the cerebral leaders, the lawyers, that came together to provide them the legal armor that they needed. Certainly we know that Thurgood Marshall had a very fond expression and appreciation for the NAACP.

So we come through these years in the 1950s and the 1960s. And the kind of continued support that the NAACP provided in lasting and embracing—lasting and embracing—so it embraced the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which I had the privilege of working for. It embraced various other organizations. It embraced the various faiths in our community, and it embraced any organization that was moving toward justice, as Dr. King said, bending that arc toward justice. The NAACP was there with its many chapters, and it was there with providing the education of so many of these individuals that were, in fact, I call them, foot soldiers in every hamlet of America.

Now we come, if I may cite him, in the civil rights movement, again joining with those marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, being a mighty vehicle, if I might, a lobbyist. I understand Congressman Clarence Mitchell was called the 101st Senator. He was a lobbyist for the NAACP. He was on the cutting edge of every single civil rights legislation for a period of, I believe, 40 years. I may be exaggerating the timeframe, but he was there for the '64 Civil Rights Act, there for the '65 Voting Rights Act. Clarence Mitchell of the NAACP was an advocate, not a lobbyist, on behalf of the NAACP, and met and stood, if you will, to debate not on the floor of the Senate with the Strom Thurmonds and others who had a different opinion about desegregation of this country.

Let me take note of the fact that today I had the privilege of seeing an unveiling of a stamp in honor of Robert Robinson Taylor, the great-grandfather of Valerie Jarrett. And what I would say is that even his success in the backdrop of being the first graduate of MIT, African American graduate, you can be assured that the NAACP was moving along to add to the civil rights aspect of the great outstanding success and leadership that this gentleman, Mr. Taylor, has shown.

So the NAACP has been there to make a pathway. The NAACP has been there to embrace. The NAACP has been there to collaborate. The NAACP has been there to stand with you when you need them to stand with you.

I close by indicating that we have had a challenging year of addressing issues of criminal justice reform, and I am very grateful that the NAACP has also taken up this issue and will be a

partner on this issue of criminal justice reform, working with many of us as we commit to America—not just African Americans—that we will answer the question dealing with justice, equality, and liberty.

I pay tribute, finally, Mr. GREEN, to the leader of ACT-SO, who lost her life, in the local chapter of the NAACP. I want to honor her and thank her for the years that I knew her and her service to young people in the ACT-SO program in Houston, Texas. To her family, I want to thank her so much for the work that she did and the lives that she touched.

That is the NAACP. Tonight, I say, ''I am the NAACP.'' Congratulations for 106 years.

Thank you, Mr. GREEN, for yielding.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you very much. I applaud you for your very kind words about the NAACP, and I also compliment you for giving us additional examples of the NAACP being on the right side of right—the right side of right.

With the history that it has for being on the right side of right, one can imagine 100 years from now, when someone looks through the vista of time back upon this time, when the NAACP is the champion right now for voting rights, who will be on the right side of right when we look back?

I think that is important for us to consider because we never want to be on the wrong side of history, but we are in a situation right now where it will take some courage for some people to be on the right side of right as we tackle this question of voting rights, voting rights that have been diminished by the evisceration of section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which emasculated section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which means that there is no coverage. We have to now find a way to reinstate section 4 of the Voting Rights Act.

Who will be on the right side of right? Who will be with the NAACP? When we look back 100 years from now and we examine these circumstances and we understand that it was not easy to be on the right side of right, who will be there so that we can accomplish, again, what the NAACP has fought for for many decades in this country?

I thank you, again, Madam Speaker. I thank the leadership for this opportunity. Our time has expired, but our energies are still with us, and we will continue to be a part of this great august organization known as the NAACP, as it continues to be on the right side of right.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF THE MEN OF THE VIETNAM WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Forty years ago today, the first flight carrying U.S. prisoners of war out of North Vietnam lifted off from Hanoi to take the first 40 U.S. servicemen to freedom.

These men, some of whom had been held for 8 years in a brutal captivity, were just a small cohort of more than 683 Americans known to have been held in North Vietnamese prisons and the first of 591 POWs returned to American soil after the Paris Peace Accords through Operation Homecoming.

□ 1845

Sadly, 92 Americans died in captivity, and to this day, more than 1,000 Americans who served in Indochina during the Vietnam war era are still unaccounted for.

Today, we are here to honor both the men who survived and those who never returned. Their extraordinary courage, endurance, and sacrifice should be an example for everyone in this Chamber and across the country.

I would, in particular, like to recall the service of my good friend Senator JOHN MCCAIN and of our colleague here in the House, SAM JOHNSON, who spent nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war—many of them locked in solitary confinement.

The treatment that Congressman SAM JOHNSON and Senator MCCAIN faced inside the prisons was designed to break those held. To force them to give military information or to serve as propaganda tools for the North Vietnamese regime, physical and emotional torture were used to compel cooperation. The denial of food and sleep deprivation were regular, beatings with bars and whips were common, and the binding of POWs with ropes and then dislocating their arms and legs was a favorite tactic.

The names of the places that they were held have entered the lexicon—the Hanoi Hilton, the Alcatraz, and the Dogpatch—all names that conjure up images of cramped cells, isolation, filth, and savage pain.

Madam Speaker, it is worth remembering that the North Vietnamese, in order to justify their treatment of the American captives, declared all of their prisoners to be war criminals and denied them all protections of the Geneva Convention.

What is most remarkable is these men never broke. They kept faith with their country and with each other despite the extraordinary costs to themselves.

When asked what kept them going, many responded their faith in God and their fellow prisoners. Commander Paul Galanti stated:

> What held me together was faith—four of 'em: faith in God, faith in my fellow POWs—many of whom I'd never met, although I felt closer to them than my own family—faith in my fellow military forces and leaders whom I knew wouldn't let us down, and, finally, faith in the USA.

Madam Speaker, these stories and the others shared by my colleagues here tonight should remind us of the terrible price paid by those who serve our country and of the debt we owe to each of them. We must also continue to make every effort to recover the 1,636 missing in action from the Vietnam war.

I would like to thank Mr. DOLD for speaking earlier tonight on this topic.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. PEARCE (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and the balance of the week on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. HONDA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the afternoon of today until February 13 on account of official business.

Mr. SWALWELL of California (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today starting at 1:30 p.m. and the balance of the week on account of traveling with the President and participating in a forum on cybersecurity.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

AMENDMENT TO THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2015.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I am pleased to submit for printing in the Congressional Record, pursuant to Rule XI, clause 2(a) of the Rules of the House, a copy of the Rules of the Committee on Agriculture, which were adopted at the organizational meeting of the Committee on January 22, 2015, and revised at the business meeting of the Committee today, February 12, 2015.

Appendix A of the Committee Rules will include excerpts from the Rules of the House relevant to the operation of the Committee. Appendix B will include relevant excerpts from the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. In the interests of minimizing printing costs, Appendices A and B are omitted from this submission.

Sincerely,

K. MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Chairman.

(As adopted January 22, 2015, and revised February 12, 2015)

RULE I.—GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) Applicability of House Rules.—(1) The Rules of the House shall govern the procedure of the Committee and its subcommittees, and the Rules of the Committee on Agriculture so far as applicable shall be interpreted in accordance with the Rules of the House, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are nondebatable privileged motions in the Committee and its subcommittees. (See Appendix A for the applicable Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.)

(2) As provided in clause 1(a)(2) of House Rule XI, each Subcommittee is part of the

Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and its Rules so far as applicable. (See also Committee Rules III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII and XI, infra.)

(b) Authority to Conduct Investigations.—The Committee and its subcommittees, after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, may conduct such investigations and studies as they may consider necessary or appropriate in the exercise of their responsibilities under Rule X of the Rules of the House and in accordance with clause 2(m) of House Rule XI.

(c) Authority to Print.—The Committee is authorized by the Rules of the House to have printed and bound testimony and other data presented at hearings held by the Committee and its subcommittees. All costs of stenographic services and transcripts in connection with any meeting or hearing of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be paid from applicable accounts of the House described in clause 1(i)(1) of House Rule X in accordance with clause 1(c) of House Rule XI. (See also paragraphs (d), (e) and (f) of Committee Rule IX.)

(d) Vice Chairman.—The Member of the majority party on the Committee or Subcommittee designated by the Chairman of the full Committee shall be the vice chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee in accordance with clause 2(d) of House Rule XI.

(e) Presiding Member.—If the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee is not present at any Committee or Subcommittee meeting or hearing, the vice chairman shall preside. If the Chairman and vice chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee are not present at a Committee or Subcommittee meeting or hearing the ranking Member of the majority party who is present shall preside in accordance with clause 2(d), House Rule XI.

(f) Publication of Rules.—The Committee's Rules shall be publicly available in electronic form and published in the Congressional Record not later than 30 days after the Chair is elected in each odd-numbered year as provided in clause 2(a) of House Rule XI.

(g) Joint Committee Reports of Investigation or Study.—A report of an investigation or study conducted jointly by more than one committee may be filed jointly, provided that each of the committees complies independently with all requirements for approval and filing of the report.

RULE II.—COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETINGS—REGULAR, ADDITIONAL AND SPECIAL

(a) Regular Meetings.—Regular meetings of the Committee, in accordance with clause 2(b) of House Rule XI, shall be held on the first Wednesday of every month to transact its business if notice is given pursuant to clause 2(g)(3) of House Rule XI. The Chairman shall provide each Member of the Committee, as far in advance of the day of the regular meeting as practicable, a written agenda of such meeting. Items may be placed on the agenda by the Chairman or a majority of the Committee. (See paragraph (f) of Committee Rule XI for provisions that apply to meetings of subcommittees.)

(b) Additional Meetings.—(1) The Chairman may call and convene, as he or she considers necessary, which may not commence earlier than the third day on which Members have notice thereof after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or after concurrence with the Ranking Minority Member, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such additional meetings pursuant to the notice from the Chairman.

(2) A hearing or meeting may begin sooner than specified in clause (1) (in which case the chair shall make the announcement specified at the earliest possible time) if the Committee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of Members required under the Rules of the Committee for the transaction of business.

(3) At least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of a measure or matter the Chair shall cause the text of such measure or matter to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(c) Special Meetings.—If at least three Members of the Committee desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chairman, those Members may file in the offices of the Committee their written request to the Chairman for such special meeting. Such request shall specify the measure or matters to be considered. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the Majority Staff Director (serving as the clerk of the Committee for such purpose) shall notify the Chairman of the filing of the request. If, within 3 calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman does not call the requested special meeting to be held within 7 calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the Members of the Committee may file in the offices of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Committee will be held, specifying the date and hour thereof, and the measures or matter to be considered at that special meeting in accordance with clause 2(c)(2) of House Rule XI. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the Majority Staff Director (serving as the clerk) of the Committee shall notify all Members of the Committee that such meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered, and only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at that special meeting.

RULE III.—OPEN MEETINGS AND HEARINGS; BROADCASTING

(a) Open Meetings and Hearings.—Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, and each hearing by the Committee or a Subcommittee shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of House Rule XI. (See Appendix A.)

(b) Broadcasting and Photography.—Whenever a Committee or Subcommittee meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, or a hearing is open to the public, that meeting or hearing shall:

(1) To the maximum extent practicable the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings and shall maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

(2) Be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography in accordance with clause 4 of House Rule XI (See Appendix A). When such radio coverage is conducted in the Committee or Subcommittee, written notice to that effect shall be placed on the desk of each Member. The Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee, shall not limit the number of television or still cameras permitted in a hearing or meeting room to fewer than two representatives from each medium (except for legitimate space or safety considerations, in which case pool coverage shall be authorized).

(c) Closed Meetings—Attendees.—No person other than Members of the Committee or Subcommittee and such congressional staff and departmental representatives as the Committee or Subcommittee may authorize shall be present at any business or markup session that has been closed to the public as provided in clause 2(g)(1) of House Rule XI.

(d) Addressing the Committee.—A Committee Member may address the Committee or a Subcommittee on any bill, motion, or other matter under consideration (See Committee Rule VIII (e) relating to questioning a witness at a hearing). The time a Member may address the Committee or Subcommittee for any such purpose shall be limited to 5 minutes, except that this time limit may be waived by unanimous consent. A Member shall also be limited in his or her remarks to the subject matter under consideration, unless the Member receives unanimous consent to extend his or her remarks beyond such subject.

(e) Meetings to Begin Promptly.—Subject to the presence of a quorum, each meeting or hearing of the Committee and its subcommittees shall begin promptly at the time so stipulated in the public announcement of the meeting or hearing.

(f) Prohibition on Proxy Voting.—No vote by any Member of the Committee or Subcommittee with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(g) Location of Persons at Meetings.—No person other than the Committee or Subcommittee Members and Committee or Subcommittee staff may be seated in the rostrum area during a meeting of the Committee or Subcommittee unless by unanimous consent of Committee or Subcommittee.

(h) Consideration of Amendments and Motions.—A Member, upon request, shall be recognized by the Chairman to address the Committee or Subcommittee at a meeting for a period limited to 5 minutes on behalf of an amendment or motion offered by the Member or another Member, or upon any other matter under consideration, unless the Member receives unanimous consent to extend the time limit. Every amendment or motion made in Committee or Subcommittee shall, upon the demand of any Member present, be reduced to writing, and a copy thereof shall be made available to all Members present. Such amendment or motion shall not be pending before the Committee or Subcommittee or voted on until the requirements of this paragraph have been met.

(i) Demanding Record Vote.—

(1) A record vote of the Committee or Subcommittee on a question or action shall be ordered on a demand by one-fifth of the Members present.

(2) The Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment. If the Chairman postpones further proceedings:

(A) the Chairman may resume such postponed proceedings, after giving Members adequate notice, at a time chosen in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member; and

(B) notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, the underlying proposition on which proceedings were postponed shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(j) Submission of Motions or Amendments In Advance of Business Meetings.—The Committee and Subcommittee Chairman may request and Committee and Subcommittee Members should, insofar as practicable, cooperate in providing copies of proposed amendments or motions to the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or the Subcommittee twenty-four hours before a Committee or Subcommittee business meeting.

(k) Points of Order.—No point of order against the hearing or meeting procedures of

the Committee or Subcommittee shall be entertained unless it is made in a timely fashion.

(l) Limitation on Committee Sittings.—The Committee or subcommittees may not sit during a joint session of the House and Senate or during a recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress.

(m) Prohibition of Wireless Telephones.—Use of wireless phones during a Committee or Subcommittee hearing or meeting is prohibited.

RULE IV.—QUORUMS

(a) Working Quorum.—One-third of the Members of the Committee or a Subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action, other than as noted in paragraphs (b) and (c).

(b) Majority Quorum.—A majority of the Members of the Committee or Subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for:

(1) the reporting of a bill, resolution or other measure (See clause 2(h)(1) of House Rules XI, and Committee Rule IX);

(2) the closing of a meeting or hearing to the public pursuant to clauses 2(g), 2(k)(5) and 2(k)(7) of the Rule XI of the Rules of the House;

(3) the authorizing of a subpoena as provided in clause 2(m)(3), of House Rule XI (See also Committee Rule VII.); and

(4) as where required by a Rule of the House.

(c) Quorum for Taking Testimony.—Two Members of the Committee or Subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

RULE V.—RECORDS

(a) Maintenance of Records.—The Committee shall keep a complete record of all Committee and Subcommittee action which shall include:

(1) in the case of any meeting or hearing transcripts, a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved, and

(2) written minutes shall include a record of all Committee and Subcommittee action and a record of all votes on any question and a tally on all record votes.

The result of each such record vote shall be made available by the Committee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee and by telephone request and also made publicly available in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote. Not later than 24 hours after adoption of an amendment to a measure or matter, the chair of the Committee shall cause the text of such amendment adopted thereto to be made publicly available in electronic form. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order or other proposition and the name of each Member voting for and each Member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those Members present but not voting.

(b) Access to and Correction of Records.—Any public witness, or person authorized by such witness, during Committee office hours in the Committee offices and within 10 calendar days of the close of hearings, may obtain a transcript copy of that public witness's testimony and make such technical, grammatical and typographical corrections as authorized by the person making the remarks involved as will not alter the nature of testimony given. There shall be prompt return of such corrected copy of the transcript to the Committee. Members of the Committee or Subcommittee shall receive copies of transcripts for their prompt review and correction and prompt return to the Committee. The Committee or Subcommittee may order the printing of a hearing record without the corrections of any Member or witness if it determines that such Member or witness has been afforded a reasonable time in which to make such corrections and further delay would seriously impede the consideration of the legislative action that is subject of the hearing. The record of a hearing shall be closed 10 calendar days after the last oral testimony, unless the Committee or Subcommittee determines otherwise. Any person requesting to file a statement for the record of a hearing must so request before the hearing concludes and must file the statement before the record is closed unless the Committee or Subcommittee determines otherwise. The Committee or Subcommittee may reject any statement in light of its length or its tendency to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person.

(c) Property of the House.—All Committee and Subcommittee records (including hearings data, charts, and files) shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the Members serving as Chairman and such records shall be the property of the House and all Members of the House shall have access thereto. The Majority Staff Director shall promptly notify the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of any request for access to such records.

(d) Availability of Archived Records.—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with House Rule VII. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee of the need for a Committee order pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of such House Rule, to withhold a record otherwise available.

(e) Special Rules for Certain Records and Proceedings.—A stenographic record of a business meeting of the Committee or Subcommittee may be kept and thereafter may be published if the Chairman of the Committee, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, determines there is need for such a record. The proceedings of the Committee or Subcommittee in a closed meeting, evidence or testimony in such meeting, shall not be divulged unless otherwise determined by a majority of the Committee or Subcommittee.

(f) Electronic Availability of Committee Publications.—To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form.

RULE VI.—POWER TO SIT AND ACT.

For the purpose of carrying out any of its function and duties under House Rules X and XI, the Committee and each of its subcommittees is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned and to hold such hearings.

RULE VII.—SUBPOENAS AND OATHS.

(a) Issuance of Subpoenas.—In accordance with clause House Rule XI, clause 2(m), a subpoena may be authorized and issued by a majority of the Committee or by the Chairman in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member. Such consultation shall occur at least 48 hours in advance of a subpoena being issued under such authority. Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman of the Committee or by any Member designated by the Committee.

(b) Oaths.—The Chairman of the Committee, or any member of the Committee designated by the Chairman, may administer oaths to any witnesses.

RULE VIII.—HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) Power to Hear.—For the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and duties under House Rule X and XI, the Committee and its subcommittees are authorized to sit and hold hearings at any time or place within the United States whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned. (See Committee Rule VI and paragraph (f) of Committee Rule XI for provisions relating to Subcommittee hearings and meetings.)

(b) Announcement.—The Chairman of the Committee shall after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, make a public announcement of the date, place and subject matter of any Committee hearing at least 1 week before the commencement of the hearing. The Chairman of a Subcommittee shall schedule a hearing only after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee, and the Chairmen of the other subcommittees after such consultation with the Committee Chairman, and shall request the Majority Staff Director to make a public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of such hearing at least 1 week before the hearing. If the Chairman of the Committee or the Subcommittee, with concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or Subcommittee, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, or if the Committee or Subcommittee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business, the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee, as appropriate, shall request the Majority Staff Director to make such public announcement at the earliest possible date. The clerk of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record, and shall promptly enter the appropriate information into the Committee scheduling service of the House Information Systems as soon as possible after such public announcement is made.

(c) Scheduling of Witnesses.—Except as otherwise provided in this rule, the scheduling of witnesses and determination of the time allowed for the presentation of testimony at hearings shall be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee, unless a majority of the Committee or Subcommittee determines otherwise.

(d) Written Statement; Oral Testimony.—(1) Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a Subcommittee, shall insofar as practicable file with the Majority Staff Director of the Committee, at least 2 working days before the day of his or her appearance, a written statement of proposed testimony. Witnesses shall provide sufficient copies of their statement for distribution to Committee or Subcommittee Members, staff, and the news media. Insofar as practicable, the Committee or Subcommittee staff shall distribute such written statements to all Members of the Committee or Subcommittee as soon as they are received as well as any official reports from departments and agencies on such subject matter. All witnesses may be limited in their oral presentations to brief summaries of their statements within the time allotted to them, at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee, in light of the nature of the testimony and the length of time available.

(2) As noted in paragraph (b) of Committee Rule VII, the Chairman of the Committee or any Member designated by the Chairman, may administer an oath to any witness.

(3) To the greatest extent practicable, each witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity shall include with the written statement of proposed testimony:

(i) a curriculum vitae;

(ii) disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of any Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current calendar year or either of the 2 preceding calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness; and

(iii) disclosure of the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government received during the current calendar year or either of the 2 preceding calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness.

Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of witnesses, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than 1 day after the witness appears.

(e) Questioning of Witnesses.—Committee or Subcommittee Members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee for that purpose. Each Member so recognized shall be limited to questioning a witness for 5 minutes until such time as each Member of the Committee or Subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to question the witness for 5 minutes; and thereafter the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee may limit the time of a further round of questioning after giving due consideration to the importance of the subject matter and the length of time available. All questions put to witnesses shall be germane to the measure or matter under consideration. Unless a majority of the Committee or Subcommittee determines otherwise, no Committee or Subcommittee staff shall interrogate witnesses.

(f) Extended Questioning for Designated Members.—Notwithstanding paragraph (e), the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member may designate an equal number of Members from each party to question a witness for a period not longer than 60 minutes.

(g) Witnesses for the Minority.—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any Subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party Members on the Committee or Subcommittee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman by a majority of those minority Members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least 1 day of hearing thereon as provided in clause 2(j)(1) of House Rule XI.

(h) Summary of Subject Matter.—Upon announcement of a hearing, to the extent practicable, the Committee shall make available immediately to all Members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject matter (including legislative reports and other material) under consideration. In addition, upon announcement of a hearing and subsequently as they are received, the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee shall, to the extent practicable, make available to the Members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on such matter. (See Committee Rule XI(f).)

(i) Open Hearings.—Each hearing conducted by the Committee or Subcommittee shall be open to the public, including radio, television and still photography coverage, except as provided in clause 4 of House Rule XI (see also Committee Rule III(b).). In any event, no Member of the House may be excluded from nonparticipatory attendance at any hearing unless the House by majority vote shall authorize the Committee or Subcommittee, for purposes of a particular series of hearings on a particular bill or resolution or on a particular subject of investigation, to close its hearings to Members by means of the above procedure.

(j) Hearings and Reports.—(1)(i) The Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee at a hearing shall announce in an opening statement the subject of the investigation. A copy of the Committee Rules (and the applicable provisions of clause 2 of House Rule XI, regarding hearing procedures, an excerpt of which appears in Appendix A thereto) shall be made available to each witness upon request. Witnesses at hearings may be accompanied by their own counsel for the purpose of advising them concerning their constitutional rights. The Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee may punish breaches of order and decorum, and of professional ethics on the part of counsel, by censure and exclusion from the hearings; but only the full Committee may cite the offender to the House for contempt.

(ii) Whenever it is asserted by a Member of the Committee that the evidence or testimony at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, or it is asserted by a witness that the evidence or testimony that the witness would give at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate the witness, such testimony or evidence shall be presented in executive session, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (i) of this rule, if by a majority of those present, there being in attendance the requisite number required under the Rules of the Committee to be present for the purpose of taking testimony, the Committee or Subcommittee determines that such evidence or testimony may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person. The Committee or Subcommittee shall afford a person an opportunity voluntarily to appear as a witness; and the Committee or Subcommittee shall receive and shall dispose of requests from such person to subpoena additional witnesses.

(iii) No evidence or testimony taken in executive session may be released or used in public sessions without the consent of the Committee or Subcommittee. In the discretion of the Committee or Subcommittee, witnesses may submit brief and pertinent statements in writing for inclusion in the record. The Committee or Subcommittee is the sole judge of the pertinency of testimony and evidence adduced at its hearings. A witness may obtain a transcript copy of his or her testimony given at a public session or, if given at an executive session, when authorized by the Committee or Subcommittee. (See paragraph (c) of Committee Rule V.)

(2) A proposed investigative or oversight report shall be considered as read if it has been available to the Members of the Committee for at least 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such day) in advance of their consideration.

RULE IX.—THE REPORTING OF BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

(a) Filing of Reports.—The Chairman shall report or cause to be reported promptly to the House any bill, resolution, or other measure approved by the Committee and shall take or cause to be taken all necessary steps to bring such bill, resolution, or other measure to a vote. No bill, resolution, or measure shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of Committee is actually present. A Committee report on any bill, resolution, or other measure approved by the Committee shall be filed within 7 calendar days (not counting days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the Majority Staff Director of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the Committee, for the reporting of that bill or resolution. The Majority Staff Director of the Committee shall notify the Chairman immediately when such a request is filed.

(b) Content of Reports.—Each Committee report on any bill or resolution approved by the Committee shall include as separately identified sections:

(1) a statement of the intent or purpose of the bill or resolution;

(2) a statement describing the need for such bill or resolution;

(3) a statement of Committee and Subcommittee consideration of the measure including a summary of amendments and motions offered and the actions taken thereon;

(4) the results of the each record vote on any amendment in the Committee and Subcommittee and on the motion to report the measure or matter, including the names of those Members and the total voting for and the names of those Members and the total voting against such amendment or motion (See clause 3(b) of House Rule XIII);

(5) the oversight findings and recommendations of the Committee with respect to the subject matter of the bill or resolution as required pursuant to clause 3(c)(1) of House Rule XIII and clause 2(b)(1) of House Rule X;

(6) the detailed statement described in House Rule XIII clause 3(c)(2) and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 if the bill or resolution provides new budget authority (other than continuing appropriations), new spending authority described in section 401(c)(2) of such Act, new credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures, except that the estimates with respect to new budget authority shall include, when practicable, a comparison of the total estimated funding level for the relevant program (or programs) to the appropriate levels under current law;

(7) the estimate of costs and comparison of such estimates, if any, prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office in connection with such bill or resolution pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 if submitted in timely fashion to the Committee;

(8) a statement of general performance goals and objectives, including outcome-related goals and objectives, for which the measure authorizes funding;

(9) an estimate by the Committee of the costs that would be incurred in carrying out such bill or joint resolution in the fiscal year in which it is reported and for its authorized duration or for each of the 5 fiscal years following the fiscal year of reporting, whichever period is less (see House Rule XIII, clause 3(d)(2), (3) and (h)(2), (3)), together with—(i) a comparison of these estimates with those made and submitted to the Committee by any Government agency when practicable, and (ii) a comparison of the total estimated funding level for the relevant program (or programs) with appropriate levels under current law (The provisions of this clause do not apply if a cost estimate and comparison prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 has been timely submitted prior to the filing of the report and included in the report);

(10) a list of congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, and limited tariff benefits in the bill or in the report (and the name of any Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner who submitted a request to the Committee for each respective item included in such list) or a statement that the proposition contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits;

(11) the changes in existing law (if any) shown in accordance with clause 3 of House Rule XIII;

(12) the determination required pursuant to section 5(b) of Public Law 92–463, if the legislation reported establishes or authorizes the establishment of an advisory committee;

(13) the information on Federal and intergovernmental mandates required by section 423(c) and (d) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as added by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (P.L. 104–4);

(14) a statement regarding the applicability of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act, Public Law 104–1;

(15) a statement indicating whether any provision of the measure establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program. The Statement shall at a minimum explain whether—

(A) any such program was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139; or

(B) the most recent catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169), identified other programs related to the program established or reauthorized by the measure; and

(16) a statement estimating the number of directed rule makings required by the measure.

(c) Supplemental, Minority, Additional, or Dissenting Views.—If, at the time of approval of any measure or matter by the Committee, any Member of the Committee gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, all Members shall be entitled to not less than 2 subsequent calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on such date) in which to file such writing and signed views, with the Majority Staff Director of the Committee. When time guaranteed by this paragraph has expired (or if sooner, when all separate views have been received), the Committee may arrange to file its report with the Clerk of the House not later than 1 hour after the expiration of such time. All such views (in accordance with House Rule XI, clause 2(l) and House Rule XIII, clause 3(a)(1)), as filed by one or more Members of the Committee, shall be included within and made a part of the report filed by the Committee with respect to that bill or resolution.

(d) Printing of Reports.—The report of the Committee on the measure or matter noted in paragraph (a) above shall be printed in a single volume, which shall:

(1) include all supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views that have been submitted by the time of the filing of the report; and

(2) bear on its cover a recital that any such supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views (and any material submitted under House Rule XII, clause 3(a)(1)) are included as part of the report.

(e) Immediate Printing; Supplemental Reports.—Nothing in this rule shall preclude—

(1) the immediate filing or printing of a Committee report unless timely request for the opportunity to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views has been made as provided by paragraph (c); or

(2) the filing by the Committee of any supplemental report on any bill or resolution that may be required for the correction of any technical error in a previous report made by the Committee on that bill or resolution.

(f) Availability of Printed Hearing Records.—If hearings have been held on any reported bill or resolution, the Committee shall make every reasonable effort to have the record of such hearings printed and available for distribution to the Members of the House prior to the consideration of such bill or resolution by the House. Each printed hearing of the Committee or any of its subcommittees shall include a record of the attendance of the Members.

(g) Committee Prints.—All Committee or Subcommittee prints or other Committee or Subcommittee documents, other than reports or prints of bills, that are prepared for public distribution shall be approved by the Chairman of the Committee or the Committee prior to public distribution.

(h) Post Adjournment Filing of Committee Reports.—(1) After an adjournment of the last regular session of a Congress sine die, an investigative or oversight report approved by the Committee may be filed with the Clerk at any time, provided that if a Member gives notice at the time of approval of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, that Member shall be entitled to not less than 7 calendar days in which to submit such views for inclusion with the report.

(2) After an adjournment of the last regular session of a Congress sine die, the Chairman of the Committee may file at any time with the Clerk the Committee's activity report for that Congress pursuant to clause 1(d)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House without the approval of the Committee, provided that a copy of the report has been available to each Member of the Committee for at least 7 calendar days and the report includes any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a Member of the Committee.

(i) Conference.—The Chairman is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

RULE X.—OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

(a) Oversight Plan.—Not later than February 15 of the first session of a Congress, the Chairman shall convene the Committee in a meeting that is open to the public and with a quorum present to adopt its oversight plans for that Congress. Such plans shall be submitted simultaneously to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and to the Committee on House Administration. In developing such plans the Committee shall, to the maximum extent feasible—

(1) consult with other committees of the House that have jurisdiction over the same or related laws, programs, or agencies within its jurisdiction, with the objective of ensuring that such laws, programs, or agencies are reviewed in the same Congress and that there is a maximum of coordination between such committees in the conduct of such reviews; and such plans shall include an explanation of what steps have been and will be taken to ensure such coordination and cooperation;

(2) review specific problems with Federal rules, regulations, statutes, and court decisions that are ambiguous, arbitrary, or nonsensical, or that impose severe financial burdens on individuals;

(3) give priority consideration to including in its plans the review of those laws, programs, or agencies operating under permanent budget authority or permanent statutory authority;

(4) have a view toward ensuring that all significant laws, programs, or agencies within its jurisdiction are subject to review at least once every 10 years; and

(5) include proposals to cut or eliminate programs, including mandatory spending programs, that are inefficient, duplicative, outdated, or more appropriately administered by State or local governments.

The Committee and its appropriate subcommittees shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the impact or probable impact of tax policies affecting subjects within its jurisdiction as provided in clause 2(d) of House Rule X. The Committee shall include in the report filed pursuant to clause 1(d) of House Rule XI a summary of the oversight plans submitted by the Committee under clause 2(d) of House Rule X, a summary of actions taken and recommendations made with respect to each such plan, and a summary of any additional oversight activities undertaken by the Committee and any recommendations made or actions taken thereon.

(b) Annual Appropriations.—The Committee shall, in its consideration of all bills and joint resolutions of a public character within its jurisdiction, ensure that appropriations for continuing programs and activities of the Federal government and the District of Columbia government will be made annually to the maximum extent feasible and consistent with the nature, requirements, and objectives of the programs and activities involved. The Committee shall review, from time to time, each continuing program within its jurisdiction for which appropriations are not made annually in order to ascertain whether such program could be modified so that appropriations therefor would be made annually.

(c) Budget Act Compliance: Views and Estimates (See Appendix B).—Not later than 6 weeks after the President submits his budget under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, or at such time as the Committee on the Budget may request, the Committee shall, submit to the Committee on the Budget (1) its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year (under section 301 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974—see Appendix B) that are within its jurisdiction or functions; and (2) an estimate of the total amounts of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction that it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

(d) Budget Act Compliance: Recommended Changes.—Whenever the Committee is directed in a concurrent resolution on the budget to determine and recommend changes in laws, bills, or resolutions under the reconciliation process, it shall promptly make such determination and recommendations, and report a reconciliation bill or resolution (or both) to the House or submit such recommendations to the Committee on the Budget, in accordance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (See Appendix B).

(e) Conference Committees.—Whenever in the legislative process it becomes necessary to appoint conferees, the Chairman shall, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, determine the number of conferees the Chairman deems most suitable and then recommend to the Speaker as conferees, in keeping with the number to be appointed by the Speaker as provided in House Rule I, clause 11, the names of those Members of the Committee of not less than a majority who generally supported the House position and who were primarily responsible for the legislation. The Chairman shall, to the fullest extent feasible, include those Members of the Committee who were the principal proponents of the major provisions of the bill as it passed the House and such other Committee Members of the majority party as the Chairman may designate in consultation with the Members of the majority party. Such recommendations shall provide a ratio of majority party Members to minority party Members no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio of majority party Members to minority party Members on the Committee. In making recommendations of Minority Party Members as conferees, the Chairman shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee.

(f) Hearing on Waste, Fraud, and Abuse.—(1) The Committee, or a Subcommittee, shall hold at least one hearing during each 120-day period following the establishment of the Committee on the topic of waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement in Government programs which the Committee may authorize.

(2) A hearing described in subparagraph (1) shall include a focus on the most egregious instances of waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement as documented by any report the Committee has received from a Federal Office of the Inspector General or the Comptroller General of the United States.

(g) Hearing on Agency Financial Statements.—The Committee or a Subcommittee, shall hold at least one hearing in any session in which the Committee has received disclaimers of agency financial statements from auditors of any Federal agency that the Committee may authorize to hear testimony on such disclaimers from representatives of any such agency.

(h) Hearing on GAO High-Risk-List.—The Committee or a Subcommittee, shall hold at least one hearing on issues raised by reports issued by the Comptroller General of the United States indicating that Federal programs or operations that the Committee may authorize are at high risk for waste, fraud, and mismanagement, known as the 'high-risk-list' or the 'high-risk series'.

(i) Activities Report.—(1) Not later than January 2 of each odd-numbered year, the Committee shall submit to the House a report on the activities of the Committee. After adjournment sine die of the last regular session of a Congress, or after December 15 of an even-numbered year, whichever occurs first, the Chair may file the report, a copy of which shall be made available to each Member of the Committee for at least 7 calendar days, with the Clerk of the House at any time.

(2) Such report shall include separate sections summarizing the legislative and oversight activities of the Committee during that Congress.

(3) The oversight section of such report shall include a summary of the oversight plans submitted by the Committee pursuant to clause 2(d) of House Rule X, a summary of the actions taken and recommendations made with respect to each such plan, and a summary of any additional oversight activities undertaken by the Committee, and any recommendations made or actions taken with respect thereto.

RULE XI.—SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) Number and Composition.—There shall be such subcommittees as specified in paragraph (c) of this rule. Each of such subcommittees shall be composed of the number of Members set forth in paragraph (c) of this rule, including ex officio Members.[1] The Chairman may create additional subcommittees of an ad hoc nature as the Chairman determines to be appropriate subject to any limitations provided for in the House Rules.

(b) Ratios.—On each Subcommittee, there shall be a ratio of majority party Members to minority party Members which shall be consistent with the ratio on the full Committee. In calculating the ratio of majority party Members to minority party Members, there shall be included the ex officio Members of the subcommittees and ratios below reflect that fact.

(c) Jurisdiction.—Each Subcommittee shall have the following general jurisdiction and number of Members:

General Farm Commodities and Risk Management (22 members, 13 majority and 9 minority)—Policies, statutes, and markets relating to commodities including barley, cotton, cottonseed, corn, grain sorghum, honey, mohair, oats, other oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, rice, soybeans, sugar, wheat, and wool; the Commodity Credit Corporation; risk management policies and statutes, including Federal Crop Insurance; producer data and privacy issues.

Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit (15 members, 9 majority and 6 minority)—Policies, statutes, and markets relating to commodity exchanges; agricultural credit; rural development; energy; rural electrification.

Conservation and Forestry (15 members, 9 majority and 6 minority)—Policies and statutes relating to resource conservation, forestry, and all forests under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture.

Nutrition (22 members, 13 majority and 9 minority)—Policies and statutes relating to nutrition, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and domestic commodity distribution and consumer initiatives.

Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research (15 members, 9 majority and 6 minority)—Policies, statutes, and markets relating to horticulture, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, and ornamentals; bees; and organic agriculture; policies and statutes relating to marketing and promotion orders; pest and disease management; bioterrorism; adulteration and quarantine matters; research, education, and extension; and biotechnology.

Livestock and Foreign Agriculture (15 members, 9 majority and 6 minority)—Policies, statutes, and markets relating to all livestock, poultry, dairy, and seafood, including all products thereof; the inspection, marketing, and promotion of such commodities and products; aquaculture; animal welfare; grazing; foreign agricultural assistance and trade promotion.

(d) Referral of Legislation.—

(1)(a) In General.—All bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to the Committee shall be referred to all subcommittees of appropriate jurisdiction within 2 weeks after being referred to the Committee. After consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, the Chairman may determine that the Committee will consider certain bills, resolutions, or other matters.

(b) Trade Matters.—Unless action is otherwise taken under subparagraph (3), bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to the Committee relating to foreign agriculture, foreign food or commodity assistance, and foreign trade and marketing issues will be considered by the Committee.

(2) The Chairman, by a majority vote of the Committee, may discharge a Subcommittee from further consideration of any bill, resolution, or other matter referred to the Subcommittee and have such bill, resolution or other matter considered by the Committee. The Committee having referred a bill, resolution, or other matter to a Subcommittee in accordance with this rule may discharge such Subcommittee from further consideration thereof at any time by a vote of the majority Members of the Committee for the Committee's direct consideration or for reference to another Subcommittee.

(3) Unless the Committee, a quorum being present, decides otherwise by a majority vote, the Chairman may refer bills, resolutions, legislation or other matters not specifically within the jurisdiction of a Subcommittee, or that is within the jurisdiction of more than one Subcommittee, jointly or exclusively as the Chairman deems appropriate, including concurrently to the subcommittees with jurisdiction, sequentially to the subcommittees with jurisdiction (subject to any time limits deemed appropriate), divided by subject matter among the subcommittees with jurisdiction, or to an ad hoc subcommittee appointed by the Chairman for the purpose of considering the matter and reporting to the Committee thereon, or make such other provisions deemed appropriate.

(e) Participation and Service of Committee Members on Subcommittees.—(1) The Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member shall serve as ex officio Members of all subcommittees and shall have the right to vote on all matters before the subcommittees. The Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member may not be counted for the purpose of establishing a quorum.

(2) Any Member of the Committee who is not a Member of the Subcommittee may have the privilege of sitting and nonparticipatory attendance at Subcommittee hearings or meetings in accordance with clause 2(g)(2) of House Rule XI. Such Member may not:

(i) vote on any matter;

(ii) be counted for the purpose of a establishing a quorum;

(iii) participate in questioning a witness under the 5–Minute Rule, unless permitted to do so by the Subcommittee Chairman in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member or a majority of the Subcommittee, a quorum being present;

(iv) raise points of order; or

(v) offer amendments or motions.

(f) Subcommittee Hearings and Meetings.—(1) Each Subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and make recommendations to the Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction after consultation by the Subcommittee Chairmen with the Committee Chairman. (See Committee Rule VIII.)

(2) After consultation with the Committee Chairman, Subcommittee Chairmen shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their subcommittees and shall request the Majority Staff Director to make any announcement relating thereto. (See Committee Rule VIII(b).) In setting the dates, the Committee Chairman and Subcommittee Chairman shall consult with other Subcommittee Chairmen and relevant Committee and Subcommittee Ranking Minority Members in an effort to avoid simultaneously scheduling Committee and Subcommittee meetings or hearings to the extent practicable.

(3) Notice of all Subcommittee meetings shall be provided to the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee by the Majority Staff Director.

(4) Subcommittees may hold meetings or hearings outside of the House if the Chairman of the Committee and other Subcommittee Chairmen and the Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee is consulted in advance to ensure that there is no scheduling problem. However, the majority of the Committee may authorize such meeting or hearing.

(5) The provisions regarding notice and the agenda of Committee meetings under Committee Rule II(a) and special or additional meetings under Committee Rule II(b) shall apply to Subcommittee meetings.

(6) If a vacancy occurs in a Subcommittee chairmanship, the Chairman may set the dates for hearings and meetings of the Subcommittee during the period of vacancy. The Chairman may also appoint an acting Subcommittee Chairman until the vacancy is filled.

(g) Subcommittee Action.—(1) Any bill, resolution, recommendation, or other matter forwarded to the Committee by a Subcommittee shall be promptly forwarded by the Subcommittee Chairman or any Subcommittee Member authorized to do so by the Subcommittee.

(2) Upon receipt of such recommendation, the Majority Staff Director of the Committee shall promptly advise all Members of the Committee of the Subcommittee action.

(3) The Committee shall not consider any matters recommended by subcommittees until 2 calendar days have elapsed from the date of action, unless the Chairman or a majority of the Committee determines otherwise.

(h) Subcommittee Investigations.—No investigation shall be initiated by a Subcommittee without the prior consultation with the Chairman of the Committee or a majority of the Committee.

RULE XII.—COMMITTEE BUDGET, STAFF, AND TRAVEL

(a) Committee Budget.—The Chairman, in consultation with the majority Members of the Committee, and the minority Members of the Committee, shall prepare a preliminary budget for each session of the Congress. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee and subcommittees. After consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, the Chairman shall include an amount budgeted to minority Members for staff under their direction and supervision. Thereafter, the Chairman shall combine such proposals into a consolidated Committee budget, and shall take whatever action is necessary to have such budget duly authorized by the House.

(b) Committee Staff.—(1) The Chairman shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the professional and clerical employees of the Committee not assigned to the minority. The professional and clerical staff of the Committee not assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of such staff members and delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate. (See House Rule X, clause 9)

(2) The Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall appoint and determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the professional and clerical staff assigned to the minority within the budget approved for such purposes. The professional and clerical staff assigned to the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee who may delegate such authority as he or she determines appropriate.

(3) From the funds made available for the appointment of Committee staff pursuant to any primary or additional expense resolution, the Chairman shall ensure that each Subcommittee is adequately funded and staffed to discharge its responsibilities and that the minority party is fairly treated in the appointment of such staff (See House Rule X, clause 6(d)).

(c) Committee Travel.—(1) Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolution as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern official travel of Committee Members and Committee staff regarding domestic and foreign travel (See House Rule XI, clause 2(n) and House Rule X, clause 8 (reprinted in Appendix A)). Official travel for any Member or any Committee staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chairman. Official travel may be authorized by the Chairman for any Committee Member and any Committee staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee and its subcommittees and meetings, conferences, facility inspections, and investigations which involve activities or subject matter relevant to the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chairman in writing the following:

(i) The purpose of the official travel;

(ii) The dates during which the official travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the official travel is being made;

(iii) The location of the event for which the official travel is to be made; and

(iv) The names of Members and Committee staff seeking authorization.

(2) In the case of official travel of Members and staff of a Subcommittee to hearings, meetings, conferences, facility inspections and investigations involving activities or subject matter under the jurisdiction of such Subcommittee to be paid for out of funds allocated to the Committee, prior authorization must be obtained from the Subcommittee Chairman and the full Committee Chairman. Such prior authorization shall be given by the Chairman only upon the representation by the applicable Subcommittee Chairman in writing setting forth those items enumerated in clause (1).

(3) Within 60 days of the conclusion of any official travel authorized under this rule, there shall be submitted to the Committee Chairman a written report covering the information gained as a result of the hearing, meeting, conference, facility inspection or investigation attended pursuant to such official travel.

(4) Local currencies owned by the United States shall be made available to the Committee and its employees engaged in carrying out their official duties outside the United States, its territories or possessions. No appropriated funds shall be expended for the purpose of defraying expenses of Members of the Committee or is employees in any country where local currencies are available for this purpose; and the following conditions shall apply with respect to their use of such currencies;

(i) No Member or employee of the Committee shall receive or expend local currencies for subsistence in any country at a rate in excess of the maximum per diem rate set forth in applicable Federal law; and

(ii) Each Member or employee of the Committee shall make an itemized report to the Chairman within 60 days following the completion of travel showing the dates each country was visited, the amount of per diem furnished, the cost of transportation furnished, and any funds expended for any other official purpose, and shall summarize in these categories the total foreign currencies and appropriated funds expended. All such individual reports shall be filed by the Chairman with the Committee on House Administration and shall be open to public inspection.

RULE XIII.—AMENDMENT OF RULES

These Rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Committee. A proposed change in these Rules shall not be considered by the Committee as provided in clause 2 of House Rule XI, unless written notice of the proposed change has been provided to each Committee Member 2 legislative days in advance of the date on which the matter is to be considered. Any such change in the Rules of the Committee shall be published in the Congressional Record within 30 calendar days after its approval.

ENDNOTES

1. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee serve as ex officio Members of the Subcommittees. (See paragraph (e) of this Rule).

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 295. An act to amend section 2259 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes, to the Committee on Judiciary.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 11, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 203. To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the conduct of annual evaluations of mental health care and suicide prevention programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, February 13, 2015, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

437. A letter from the Management Analyst, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Flock Delivery and Stages of Poultry Production (RIN: 0580-AB23) received February 6, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

438. A letter from the Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Defining Larger Participants of the International Money Transfer Market [Docket No.: CFPB-2014-0003] (RIN: 3170-AA25) received February 6, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

439. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Ottawa County, OH, and Incorporated Areas) [Docket ID: FEMA-2014-0002] received February 6, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

440. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Office of the Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 76.1506 of the Commission's Rules received February 6, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

441. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b) Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Cove and Daisy, Arkansas; Alamo, Georgia; Grayville, Illinois; Clayton, Louisiana; Harrison, Michigan; Alton, Missouri; Ennis, Montana; Buffalo, Erick, Haworth, Leedey, Reydon, Taloga, Thomas, and Wright City,

Oklahoma; Weinert, Texas; Boscobel, Owen, and Tigerton, Wisconsin) [MB Docket No.: 11-147] received January 26, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

442. A letter from the Director, ES/PL/PS, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Prevailing Rate Systems; Redefinition of the Fort Wayne-Marion, IN, and Detroit, MI, Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Areas (RIN: 3206-AN06) received February 3, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

443. A letter from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Miscellaneous Changes to Trademark Rules of Practice and the Rules of Practice in Filings Pursuant to the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks [Docket No.: PTO-T-2013-0026] (RIN: 0651-AC88) received January 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

444. A letter from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revised Jurisdictional Thresholds for Section 8 of the Clayton Act received February 9, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

445. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; PILATUS Aircraft Ltd. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0770; Directorate Identifier 2014- CE-024-AD; Amendment 39-18064; AD 2015-01-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 9, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

446. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Aviation Training Device Credit for Pilot Certification; Withdrawal [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0987; Amdt. Nos.: 61-133, 141-18] (RIN: 2120-AK62) received February 9, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

447. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0925; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-229-AD; Amendment 39-18066; AD 2014-25-52] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 30, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

448. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB rule — Gracia v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2004-147 [AOD 2015-01] received February 9, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

449. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB rule — Estate of Martinez v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2004-150 [AOD 2015-01] received February 9, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mrs. LOWEY):

H.R. 907. A bill to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 908. A bill to include the Santa Cruz Redwoods Public Lands in the California Coastal National Monument as a part of the National Landscape Conservation System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. GRIFFITH, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 909. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to expanding access for breakthrough drugs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan (for herself and Mrs. LAWRENCE):

H.R. 910. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to provide eligibility under certain highway programs for projects for the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. MARINO, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LANCE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. PERLMUTTER):

H.R. 911. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. YARMUTH (for himself, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. TONKO, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 912. A bill to place a moratorium on permitting for mountaintop removal coal mining until health studies are conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. PINGREE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. POLIS, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. WELCH, Ms. TITUS, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HONDA, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 913. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require that genetically engineered food and foods that contain genetically engineered ingredients be labeled accordingly; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. GRAHAM (for herself and Mr. BUCK):

H.R. 914. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to jointly operate the Federal Recovery Coordination Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. POLIS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. FARR, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. ESTY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. PETERS, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KIND, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KILMER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. HONDA, Ms. MENG, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 915. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend and expand the membership of the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans to include veterans who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual and veterans who are transgender; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MENG, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. JONES, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. KILMER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. SINEMA, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. HAHN, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. SIRES, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. VELA, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. KATKO, Mr. GUINTA, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. BERA, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. JUDY

CHU of California, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 916. A bill to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. CHAFFETZ):

H.R. 917. A bill to provide for media coverage of Federal court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIBERI, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. REED, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin):

H.R. 918. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to prevent concurrent receipt of unemployment benefits and Social Security disability insurance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. RUSH, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. TONKO, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 919. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to extend and improve the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. MASSIE):

H.R. 920. A bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. WOMACK):

H.R. 921. A bill to provide protections for certain sports medicine professionals who provide certain medical services in a secondary State; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Ms. MOORE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 922. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to provide enhanced academic and career training in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. STUTZMAN:

H.R. 923. A bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. LATTA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. JONES, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. POMPEO, and Mr. MILLER of Florida):

H.R. 924. A bill to require that the prevailing wage utilized for purposes of subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Davis-Bacon Act), be determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. AMODEI (for himself, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. HARDY):

H.R. 925. A bill to promote conservation, improve public land, and provide for sensible development in Douglas County, Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 926. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of guide dogs to veterans blinded by a service-connected injury; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BEYER (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SIRES, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SABLAN, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 927. A bill to prevent and reduce the use of physical restraint and seclusion in schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. YOHO, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. HARPER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. COOK, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LANCE, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. BARR, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. KLINE, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. REED, Mr. HANNA, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. JOLLY, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. LATTA, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. AMODEI, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. OLSON, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. TURNER, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. NUNES, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. LONG, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. FLORES, Mr. COLE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HILL, Mr. STEWART, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. MULLIN, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. POSEY, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. SCHOCK, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. BARTON, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. JONES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. PERRY, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. FINCHER, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. DENT, Mr. ALLEN, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HENSARLING, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. YODER, and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 928. A bill to repeal the annual fee on health insurance providers enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 929. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit former Members of Congress from engaging in lobbying contacts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California (for herself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 930. A bill to recruit, support, and prepare principals to improve student academic achievement at eligible schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 931. A bill to provide for approval of certain drugs and biological products indicated for use in a well-defined population of patients in order to address increases in bacterial resistance to drugs and biological products, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. NADLER, Ms. LEE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. ESTY, Mr. KILMER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana,

Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. HAHN, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. MENG, Mr. HONDA, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. TONKO):

H.R. 932. A bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 933. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to ensure that all children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs are vaccinated, and allow exemptions only for children with underlying medical conditions, for whom vaccines are therefore medically contraindicated; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. HINOJOSA):

H.R. 934. A bill to require any State which, after enacting a Congressional redistricting plan after a decennial census and apportionment of Representatives, enacts a subsequent Congressional redistricting plan prior to the next decennial census and apportionment of Representatives, to obtain a declaratory judgment or preclearance in the manner provided under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in order for the subsequent plan to take effect; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HAHN (for herself, Mr. POE of Texas, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 935. A bill to establish a National Freight Network Trust Fund to improve the performance of the national freight network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HECK of Washington (for himself, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H.R. 936. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to identify, declare, and respond to marine disease emergencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself and Mr. FATTAH):

H.R. 937. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to make grants to support early college high schools and other dual enrollment programs; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. JOLLY (for himself and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 938. A bill to revise and extend provisions under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 939. A bill to require the Secretary of Education to use the excess revenue generated from the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program to carry out the Federal Pell Grant Program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. FLEMING, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. AMASH, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. BUCK, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. KLINE, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. OLSON, Ms. FOXX, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LONG, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BABIN, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MESSER, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. PALAZZO, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MARINO, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. STEWART, Mr. FORBES, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. FLORES, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. YODER, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. YOHO, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. HARPER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 940. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. KUSTER (for herself, Mr. GUINTA, and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 941. A bill to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to extend the requirement of the Secretary to furnish hospital care and medical services through non-Department of Veterans Affairs entities to veterans residing in certain locations; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. BURGESS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. JONES, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 942. A bill to reduce by one-half of one percent the discretionary budget authority of any Federal agency for a fiscal year if the financial statement of the agency for the previous fiscal year does not receive a qualified or unqualified audit opinion by an external independent auditor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEWIS (for himself and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 943. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the requirement for employer disclosure of information on health care coverage of employees who are Medicare beneficiaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOBIONDO (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. POSEY, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. JOLLY):

H.R. 944. A bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. LUMMIS (for herself, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 945. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey to a State all right, title, and interest in and to a percentage of the amount of royalties and other amounts required to be paid to the State under that Act with respect to public land and deposits in the State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 946. A bill to make loans and loan guarantees under section 502 of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 available for implementing positive train control systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 947. A bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to allow the rebuilding, without elevation, of certain structures that are located in areas having special flood hazards and are substantially damaged by fire, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MESSER (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. ZINKE):

H.R. 948. A bill to reduce a portion of the annual pay of Members of Congress for the failure to adopt a concurrent resolution on the budget which does not provide for a balanced budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, Oversight and Government Reform, and

Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 949. A bill to establish the African Burial Ground International Memorial Museum and Educational Center in New York, New York, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 950. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to prohibit automated traffic enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. SCHWEIKERT):

H.R. 951. A bill to amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to permit a State to require an applicant for voter registration in the State who uses the Federal mail voter registration application form developed by the Election Assistance Commission under such Act to provide documentary evidence of citizenship as a condition of the State's acceptance of the form; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 952. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to establish a minimum direct care registered nurse staffing requirement at nursing facilities and skilled nursing facilities under Medicare and Medicaid and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MARINO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. JOYCE):

H.R. 953. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 954. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt from the individual mandate certain individuals who had coverage under a terminated qualified health plan funded through the Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan (CO-OP) program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. NUNES, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WALZ, Mr. TURNER, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. KLINE, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. COOK, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ZINKE, and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 955. A bill to authorize assistance and sustainment to the military and national security forces of Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 956. A bill to amend the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 to require the Secretary of Defense maintain a registry of sexual offenders; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself, Mr. WALZ, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 957. A bill to require Senate confirmation of Inspector General of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 958. A bill to posthumously award a Congressional gold medal to Clyde Kennard in recognition of his sacrifice for education equality; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 959. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Medgar Evers House, located in Jackson, Mississippi, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. TURNER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 960. A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community based outpatient clinic in Newark, Ohio, as the Daniel L. Kinnard Department of Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KIND, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. REED, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. BOUSTANY):

H.R. 961. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the subpart F exemption for active financing income; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUELSKAMP (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. PITTS, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. JONES, Mr. LATTA, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BABIN, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. FLORES, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GIBBS):

H.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to marriage; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. COSTA):

H. Res. 108. A resolution expressing the sense of the House relating to the dispute between the Pacific Maritime Association and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union impacting operations of West Coast ports; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan):

H. Res. 109. A resolution expressing support for the designation of February 28, 2015, as ''Rare Disease Day''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HOLDING (for himself, Mr. NUNES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. ROONEY of Florida):

H. Res. 110. A resolution recognizing the self determination of Gibraltar to determine its status as a British Overseas Territory; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

5. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 70, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States.; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

6. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Illinois, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 42, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States.; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 907.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 908.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 909.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Sec. 8: ''The Congress shall have Power To . . . regulate Commerce . . . among the several States . . .''

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:

H.R. 910.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK:

H.R. 911.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. YARMUTH:

H.R. 912.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 913.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. GRAHAM:

H.R. 914.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 915.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 916.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 917.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 9 that grants Congress the power to constitute inferior tribunals to the Supreme Court.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 918.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, to ''provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 919.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 920.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Per Article 1, Section 8, Clause 9, and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution and the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, Congress has the power to enact this proposed legislation to make reforms to federal criminal sentencing. The proposed legislation conforms to the norms of the Fifth Amendment with respect to due process.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 921.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;—And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. ADAMS:

H.R. 922.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. STUTZMAN:

H.R. 923.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 3 of Section 8 of Aritcle I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 924.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Because this legislation adjusts the formula the federal government uses to spend money on federal contracts, it is authorized by the Constitution under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, which grants Congress its spending power.

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 925.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 926.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 927.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 928.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 929.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 930.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 931.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 932.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 933.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 934.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 sec. 8 cl. 18)

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 935.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

According to Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: of the United States Constitution, seen below, this bill falls within the Constitutional Authority of the United States Congress.

Article 1: Section 8: Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. HECK of Washington:

H.R. 936.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: ''Congress shall have power to . . . make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carring into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.''

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 937.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Clauses 1 and 18 of Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 938.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution which reads: ''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 939.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Artile I, Section 8, Clause 3:

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States; . . .

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among several states, and with the Indian tribes

By Mrs. BLACK:

H.R. 940.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 941.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States) of the United States Constitution

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 942.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 943.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. LOBIONDO:

H.R. 944.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. LUMMIS:

H.R. 945.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 946.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 947.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 948.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 section 6 of the United Stated Constitution and the 27th Amendment to the United States Constitution

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 949.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clauses 1, 17, and 18.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 950.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 951.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4, Clause 1: The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY:

H.R. 952.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 953.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 954.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 955.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defence'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy'' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 956.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 957.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution: Congress shall have the power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 958.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution [t]o make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 959.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 2 of Section 3 of Article IV of the Constitution: The Congress shall have the Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or any particular State.

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 960.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution, Article I, Section 8

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 961.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill makes changes to existing law relating to Article 1, Section 7 which provides that ''All bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.''

By Mr. HUELSKAMP:

H.J. Res. 32.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this joint resolution is based is found in Article V of the Constitution, which grants Congress the authority, whenever two thirds of both chambers deem it necessary, to propose amendements to the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 131: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 169: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 222: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 228: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 231: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

H.R. 232: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 238: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 263: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 265: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 280: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 281: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. HARDY.

H.R. 284: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 310: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 359: Mr. HANNA, Mr. LANCE, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 379: Mr. LANCE and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 381: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 402: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 411: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 430: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 439: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 445: Mr. MESSER and Mr. HARDY.
H.R. 456: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 473: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 485: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 495: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 516: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 524: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.R. 528: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 540: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 542: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 546: Mr. PALAZZO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 551: Mr. VELA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. KAPTUR, and Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 571: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 578: Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 583: Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 590: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 592: Mr. HUNTER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 599: Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 602: Miss RICE of New York, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. PETERS, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. KILMER, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 605: Mr. YODER and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 606: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 613: Mr. KILMER and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 614: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 625: Mr. POLLS, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. ASHFORD.
H.R. 654: Mr. HANNA and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 663: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
H.R. 674: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 684: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 699: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 700: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 703: Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 709: Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 727: Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. FARR, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. STEFANIK, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 750: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 756: Mr. SABLAN.
H.R. 762: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 768: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 803: Mr. HENSARLING.
H.R. 814: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 824: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 841: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
H.R. 846: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COOPER, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HONDA, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PETERS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 855: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. HARPER, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 861: Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HOYER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KIND, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. BONAMICI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. SCHRADER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 864: Mr. PETERS, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 885: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MESSER, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. UPTON, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 902: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.J. Res. 1: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. FINCHER, and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.J. Res. 2: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. CRAWFORD.
H.J. Res. 30: Mr. NOLAN.
H. Con. Res. 2: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. PLASKETT.
H. Res. 14: Mr. WELCH and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H. Res. 15: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H. Res. 24: Mrs. LOWEY and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H. Res. 26: Mr. LATTA.
H. Res. 54: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H. Res. 67: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 93: Mr. JONES.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2015 No. 24

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God of light, in whom there is no darkness, thank You for Your love. You are a guide who gently leads us. You are a mystery but not a puzzle, profound but not incomprehensible. You are loving but not sentimental, patient and long-suffering but not weak and indecisive. O God, You are all things that we are not but need to be.

You, O God, with steadiness and perseverance, move in the lives of humanity and in the life of the whole world and its events. Awaken our lawmakers to Your inescapable presence. Enable them to feel You in their midst as they grapple with the problems of our time.

And, Lord, we thank You for the many years of faithful service by Kathie Alvarez.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). The majority leader is recognized.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.R. 240.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 5, H.R. 240, a bill making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

CARTER NOMINATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, later today the Senate will consider the nomination of Ash Carter to be the next Secretary of Defense.

If I could place one demand on him, it would be to leave our Armed Forces in a better position to deal with global threats than they are today. As I have noted in the past, the overall consequence of many of the President's policies have been to weaken our ability to confront Al Qaeda and its affiliates, the Taliban, and associated groups.

The President's inflexible commitment to campaign promises made in 2008 has led to artificial deadlines for withdrawal from Afghanistan, a rushed withdrawal from Iraq, and Executive orders to close Guantanamo and send detainees back home to places such as Yemen and Afghanistan. It has also led essentially to end America's ability to capture, detain, and interrogate terrorists—whether or not we are still at war with Al Qaeda.

The truth is Al Qaeda was at war with us before we went to war with them, and today we face a diffuse and versatile threat from terrorists, with ISIL intent on striking America and its allies.

The next Secretary of Defense needs to explain to the President that drawing down in Afghanistan—based on an artificial deadline—risks the gains we have made there. He needs to explain that the Haqqani network and the Taliban continue to threaten our allies.

The next Secretary of Defense must do all he can to make a declaratory policy of pivoting to Asia a real one. Past drawdowns of conventional power and failure to modernize the American force have encouraged foes and unsettled friends. So it is time to invest in the platforms and the capabilities needed to address effectively China's military buildup, and the next Secretary must also support the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when he provides his best military advice to the President, especially when that advice is ignored in the White House.

In the Senate I will do all I can to support the next Secretary. That starts today. I intend to support Ash Carter's nomination, but my support is conditioned on this request: The incoming Secretary needs to have the courage to speak truth to power—to Congress, yes, but also to his Commander in Chief.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have been trying to understand what has been holding up the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

The Department of Homeland Security is the agency we created after 9/11 that merged 22 different agencies of our government to make sure that 9/11 never happened again. We created this new Department, and we said to them: Keep America safe. Use our tax resources and your best efforts to keep America safe. Thank goodness that we have not had a repeat of that terrible tragedy of 9/11 since—under either Republican or Democratic Presidents.

When we started debating about funding the agencies of government in December with an omnibus budget bill, the House Republicans said: We will fund the entire Government of the United States, but we will not give regular budget appropriations to the Department of Homeland Security. They singled out the one department responsible for our safety and security and

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

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said: We will give them temporary funding.

In fact, the funding for this round ends February 27, in 15 days. So we are in an almost impossible-to-explain situation where the agency with the premier responsibility of keeping America safe is not being adequately funded to do its job. Now, we know we live in a dangerous time in the world's history. Evidence continues to be shown of the ruthless, barbaric tactics of extremist groups such as ISIS.

Kayla Mueller, this magnificent young woman—I believe 26 years old—taken captive by ISIS, was killed by them. They murdered a Jordanian pilot by burning him alive. They beheaded the Japanese journalist. So we know they are ruthless and barbaric, and we know that they are extending their reach.

Well, we are doing what we must do with the Department of Defense when it comes to stopping them, but we are not doing enough when it comes to the Department of Homeland Security because we are not funding this agency as it should be funded. It has been singled out by the House Republicans as the only agency that doesn't receive regular appropriations.

We sat down with Secretary Johnson and asked him: Well, what impact does it have on you, on managing your Department when it comes to temporary funding, as opposed to a regular budget?

He said: I can't make grants to fire departments in Illinois, Nevada or Arizona. The fire departments come to me and say: Our firefighters need better training; can you give us a Federal grant for that purpose?

Or if they need equipment to keep themselves safe, he said: I can't give the grants because I am under a continuing resolution.

If we look at the budget for this Department of Homeland Security, honestly, there is no real disagreement on how much they should receive. When we look at this budget of $47.8 billion, it raises some obvious questions.

I wish to mention for the record some of the items the money is used for. There is $8.5 billion, roughly, for the Coast Guard. We know the Coast Guard's responsibilities—focusing on preventing terrorist attacks; addressing evolving threats to our maritime and transportation systems as well as the global supply chain; preventing the unauthorized acquisition, importation, and use of chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive materials. That is what the Coast Guard is supposed to do. I said $8.5 billion, but it looks like it is $10 billion in total that is supposed to go to the Coast Guard. But it is being held up by this continuing resolution.

We have to ask ourselves: What is stopping us from funding the Coast Guard properly so they can protect us?

How about Customs and Border Protection: There are $12.5 billion for Customs and Border Protection to secure U.S. air, land, and sea borders; safeguard and streamline lawful trade and travel; and disrupt and dismantle transnational, criminal, and terrorist organizations.

The list goes on and on. What is it that is holding up this appropriation? It took some research, but I found what is holding it up.

It is this young woman on the poster. Her name is Herta Llusho. Herta Llusho was brought to the United States from Albania at the age of 11.

She grew up in Grosse Pointe, MI, a suburb of Detroit. She quickly learned English and became an academic star. She graduated from Grosse Pointe South High School with a 4.05 grade point average. In high school, Herta was a member of the varsity track team, won an Advanced Placement Scholar Award, and was a member of the National Honor Society.

Herta went on to the University of Detroit Mercy, and she graduated with honors with a major in electrical engineering. While Herta was in college, she completed internships at engineering companies, was very involved in her community, and volunteered at homeless shelters, tutoring programs, and in her church.

Listen to what her friends say about Herta Llusho:

> I am humbled by Herta's willingness and desire to serve. I have had the privilege of going to the same church at which she faithfully serves. She spends hours tutoring kids and volunteering with the junior high Sunday school class. It's a joy to watch so many kids run up to her at church because of the love they receive when they are with her.

Herta, after she graduated, learned that she could be protected from deportation—because she is undocumented—with a Presidential order called DACA. It is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and it was an Executive order by President Obama which says that Herta Llusho could be a DREAMer, allowed to stay in the United States, and will not be deported.

It turns out that Herta Llusho is the reason why we can't fund the Department of Homeland Security, in the minds of Republican leaders. They believe she needs to be deported first before we fund the Department of Homeland Security.

I hate to put that burden on Herta's shoulders, but she and many like her are at the center of this debate—600,000 young people, many of them people such as Herta Llusho, who came to this country as children, made a great record in high school, have no criminal issues whatsoever, and who want to be part of America's future. And what we are hearing from Republican leadership is that we will not fund the Department of Homeland Security to protect America until they deport Herta Llusho. That is what the House bill says. It makes no sense whatsoever.

We were off to a flying start in the Senate. We had 3 straight weeks of debate and 30 to 40 amendments from both sides of the aisle. I thought there was—but for one bump in the road on a Thursday night—a great spirit of cooperation. Amendments were being offered on the Democratic side and on the Republican side. Some were controversial, and people didn't want to vote on them. But I happened to welcome what happened on the floor. I think that active debate, deliberation, and all these amendments were the right thing to do, even though I disagreed with the basic bill, the Keystone Canadian pipeline bill that came before us. We took it through to its conclusion.

There were countless times when any Democrat could have stood up, objected and stopped the Senate for 30 hours or 60 hours, as we saw over the past several years. We did not do that.

We tried in a spirit of bipartisanship to engage in an active debate, even on an issue where we knew the Republicans would prevail. I think that was the right thing to do.

Sadly, in the past 2 weeks, we have fallen back into bad habits. There has been this insistence by Speaker BOEHNER that the Homeland Security bill not go forward to fund this critical agency unless they can challenge President Obama on immigration issues.

Why are they doing this? Why are they endangering the safety of the United States of America?

Is it because of Herta Llusho and their determination to make sure this spectacular young woman leaves America, is deported back to Albania, a country she barely remembers? Is that why we are doing this? If it is, it is sad. In fact, it borders on being disgraceful.

We need to pass a clean Homeland Security bill. We need to do it now. We can take up the debate on immigration any time the Speaker and the majority leader want to bring it up. It is within their power to call the next issue we are going to debate.

I sincerely hope that before we leave for the President's week break that we call up this bill; that we debate it and pass it, so we can make sure America is safe in this age of terrorism, and then let's save for another day the debate on Herta and the thousands just like her and what their fate and future will be in the United States of America.

Some Republicans have stepped up recently and joined us in our effort. I thank the Presiding Officer for the time he joined us on the rollcall. Yesterday, my colleague Senator KIRK, from the State of Illinois, made a statement on this issue. He said: My hope is that we pass the Homeland Security appropriations bill clean now. I would think we should just pass a regular appropriations bill under regular order. Republican Senator JEFF FLAKE said: To attempt to use a spending bill to try to poke a finger in the President's eye is not a good move, in my mind.

More and more Republican Senators are speaking up. I hope the leadership is listening and I hope the Speaker is

listening. If we want a debate on immigration, let's have it. I am anxious to tell the story of Herta and many others and to appeal to my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to come up with sensible immigration reform. But let us not withhold funding from this critical agency while we are embroiled in this political squabble.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Illinois.

CARTER NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to express my support for the President's nominee, Dr. Ashton Carter, to serve as our Nation's 25th Secretary of Defense.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL

Let me first say a few words of thanks to Chuck Hagel, our former colleague in the Senate, who has served as Secretary of Defense. He is a friend, he has had a long career in public service, and he is a veteran of Vietnam. The people of Nebraska rewarded him by asking him to represent them in the United States Senate.

As our Nation's first person of enlisted rank to serve as Secretary of Defense, he had a unique, ground-level view on matters of war and peace, and a strong commitment to our troops. I thank Chuck Hagel for his service and his family for their sacrifices over the last 2 years.

Dr. Carter has an impressive and distinguished record of service as well in government, as an adviser and as a scholar. He has what it takes to be a great Secretary of Defense.

His credentials as one of our Nation's top security policy experts are well established. He earned a bachelor's degree in physics and medieval history from Yale and his doctorate in theoretical physics from Oxford. He has served as faculty chair at Harvard and is the author of 11 books.

As singularly impressive as this is, Dr. Carter is also very much a doer. He has served no fewer than 11 Secretaries of Defense, including Leon Panetta and Chuck Hagel. He has four times been awarded the Department's Distinguished Service Medal, as well as the Defense Intelligence Medal.

As an assistant secretary during the Clinton administration, he was instrumental in removing nuclear stockpiles from the former Soviet states of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus.

As Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, he was renowned for breaking through bureaucratic logjams to get our troops what they needed, when they needed it. We talked about this at some length when we met in my office a few weeks ago. How can we continue, I asked him, to reform DOD so that it will be able to rise to the occasion of today's challenges?

As part of the discussion, I was pleased to hear his appreciation for the organic industrial base of the Department of Defense, especially one near and dear to my heart, the Rock Island Arsenal in Illinois.

He recalled his experience in Afghanistan as he tried to bring our troops the body armor and armored humvees they needed. He also recalled working alongside the great dedicated employees at the Rock Island Arsenal as they delivered the necessary lifesaving equipment to our troops and rolled it off their assembly lines in record time.

I am confident Dr. Carter can steer the Department of Defense through difficult times and provide the President with the best policy advice to deal with our Nation's challenges. He has my full support.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, while I am pleased the Senate is moving, and moving quickly, on Ashton Carter, I am troubled that my colleagues across the aisle are delaying consideration of Loretta Lynch, the President's nominee for Attorney General of the United States. It has been 96 days since the President announced the nomination. This is longer than any other Attorney General nominee has had to wait in recent memory. By way of comparison, the Democratic-controlled Senate confirmed Michael Mukasey as Attorney General in 53 days, Eric Holder in 64 days.

I sat through the hearings with Loretta Lynch, and I listened to the questions, particularly from the Republican side, because most all Democrats I know of are supporting her. I listened to the questions on the Republican side and I came to the inescapable conclusion that Republican Senators were going to refuse any effort to renominate Eric Holder for Attorney General. That is all they had to say. Their grievance was with the sitting Attorney General, who has announced he is leaving as soon as his successor is chosen. I listened carefully for any criticism of Loretta Lynch and I didn't hear it.

Then they had the panel of public witnesses. That is a panel that has a majority of Republican-chosen witnesses and Democratic witnesses. Early on, I believe Senator LEAHY asked the question of all the witnesses there: How many of you who are on this public panel oppose the nomination of Loretta Lynch for Attorney General? Not one—not one Republican, not one Democrat. There is no opposition to Loretta Lynch.

Why are they holding up this important appointment by President Obama? Why don't we consider that this afternoon? It can be done, and it should be done very quickly.

Nobody has questioned her record as a Federal prosecutor. She has twice before been unanimously confirmed to serve as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York. She has been vetted and examined and questioned to a fare-thee-well. She testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee for nearly 8 hours, answering every question, including 600 written questions that were sent to her.

It is time to move forward and confirm this obviously well-qualified and historic nominee.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will have the opportunity to report Ms. Lynch out this week. We have the opportunity to confirm her immediately. There is no reason for further delay. What are the Senate Republicans trying to prove by holding up an obviously qualified nominee for a critically important agency such as the Department of Justice?

I hope the spirit of bipartisanship shown in that committee can be shown on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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. MURPHY. 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. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

AUMF

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, to her high school classmates it was pretty clear what kind of person Kayla Mueller was going to turn out to be. As a teenager she took up the causes of the disenfranchised and the dispossessed, such as when she joined a campaign to stop the city of Flagstaff from using recycled wastewater to make snow on a set of peaks the Hopi people considered to be sacred. She later went to the most dangerous place on Earth because people there needed help. She saw suffering on an unimaginable scale, brought on by a vicious civil war inside Syria and Iraq, and she wanted to make it better.

No one is responsible for her death except for ISIL. They killed her, as they did James Foley, Steven Sotloff, Abdul-Rahman, Peter Kassig, and thousands of individual innocent Iraqis and Syrians over the course of the last year.

It has been a long time since the world has seen such evil. This is a brutal inhuman terrorist organization

that today is a threat to the region in which they prowl, but without question could pose a threat to the United States if their march is allowed to go unchecked.

Like the Presiding Officer, every time I hear of a new attack or a new execution carried out by ISIL, my blood boils, I get furious, and I commit myself to doing everything within our power to stamp them out. But I also remember that as justified a response as it is, fury is not a strategy; revenge is not security.

If we are going to defeat ISIL, we need to act with our heads, not just with our hearts. And that means Congress needs to pass a war authorization that includes a strategy for victory—a strategy that learns from a small little creature called the planarian flatworm. I want to tell you about flatworms for a second. This is going to sound a little strange, but I will bring it back here.

These flatworms are extraordinary little things that live in ponds, under logs, and in moist soil. What is amazing about these flatworms is that if you split one of them in two, if you cut it in half, both halves regenerate into new flatworms. In fact, if you cut it into four pieces, all four pieces can regrow into new flatworms. It means if for whatever reason you are trying to get rid of flatworms, cutting them into pieces does more harm than good. If you take a knife to it, you actually create more flatworms than you destroy.

So why am I talking about this? Because they are a perfect object lesson of the simple truth that if you attack a problem the wrong way, you might not just leave the problem unsolved, you might actually make it worse. If you use the wrong tool to try to eradicate flatworms, you just end up with a lot more of them.

In the wake of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, we were told we were going to be treated as liberators. We were told we would be out of Iraq in a few years. When that failed, our invasion turned the one-headed monster of Saddam Hussein into a two-headed monster of competing Sunni and Shiite insurgencies.

Then we were told more troops would do the trick. And it worked, for only as long as tens of thousands of Americans were patrolling the sands of Iraq. But ultimately our occupation was quietly breeding a new brand of an even more lethal insurgency, one that turned into the terrorist group we are fighting today.

Put simply, ISIL in its current form would not exist if we had not put massive ground troops into the region in the first place. Our presence in Iraq, our mishandling of the occupation, became bulletin board material for terrorist recruiters. Iraq became, in the CIA's words, the ''cause celebre'' of the international extremist network. We killed a terrorist, and the next day two more showed up.

Let me be clear, because I don't want people to twist my words here. America is not responsible for this evil ideology, and our troops are not to blame for ISIL. No one forgets that Al Qaeda attacked us and killed 3,000 of our people before we invaded Iraq. But do we believe having hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers occupying territory in the Middle East since then has succeeded in making us safer?

We have killed a lot of terrorists over the last 13 years, and yet there are more of them, in more places, with an even more radical agenda today than ever before.

Former Defense Secretary Bob Gates understood the lesson of the flatworm when he said, upon his departure from the Department of Defense, any future Secretary who proposed putting ground troops back into the Middle East should ''have their head examined.''

So for me, as we debate this new war authorization against ISIL, I have a bottom line: We cannot authorize a strategy that could result in American combat troops going back to the Middle East.

If this President or the next President puts our soldiers into the Middle East to fight ISIL, they would serve with bravery and honor. But an intervention of this scale would ultimately create more terrorists than it destroyed. And to the extent we drove back ISIL, it would only be temporary, lasting only as long as our troops were there.

Why? These extremist groups such as ISIL exist not because of a military vacuum but because of a political and an economic vacuum. They prey upon disenfranchised young men who see no future for themselves in societies with massive, crippling hunger, poverty, and destitution.

These groups work best when autocratic or sectarian governments marginalize and dispossess specific ethnic or religious groups, pushing them into the arms of extremists who pledge to fight the corrupt and dehumanizing status quo.

Foreign ground troops do nothing to address these underlying issues. But worse, more often than not, foreign ground troops exacerbate these motivating forces. Bloody ground wars make more economic dislocation, not less. Foreign occupations often empower divisive local leadership, such as the former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Malaki, who pushed people toward—not away from—extremist groups. Then groups such as Al Qaeda and ISIL use this misery to brainwash young men into believing America is to blame, that we are the enemy they are yearning to fight.

That doesn't mean there isn't a role for military force in the Middle East. I have voted for an authorization in the Foreign Relations Committee that allows for the United States—our military—to go in and kill terrorists, but we simply need to understand that ultimately what military force is in the Middle East is a shaping mechanism to give us space in order to achieve the political and economic reform on the ground with our local partners such that those root causes of terrorists disappear.

American military force is useful in this fight, but it has limits. There is a decreasing marginal return and then a point where it actually flips on its head and begins to actually create more of the people we are seeking to destroy.

I have heard two arguments over the past few days as to why this AUMF shouldn't have a limitation on ground troops. First, some of my Republican friends say this kind of prohibition on ground troops would be unwise because it would telegraph to our enemies a critical tactical limitation. My response: Good.

Why do we think ISIL puts up these execution videos? Because they know the best long-term play for their desired caliphate is predicated on the United States making a mistake and rejoining a ground war in the Middle East. Recent history has taught ISIL that the best tool by far to recruit terrorists—and estimates are there are as many as 20,000 foreign fighters who have joined ISIL—is the U.S. Army in the Middle East. Thus, I have no problem being transparent with our enemy by signaling this to them; that we are going to learn from our mistakes and we are going to fight this war with tools that result in victory, not defeat.

The second argument I hear is that Congress would be overstepping our constitutional bounds by limiting the power of the President to prosecute a war. But first let's note that over and over again, starting with Congress's very first authorizations of military force passed in early American times, we have put restrictions consistently on war declarations and AUMFs. Most recently, Republicans and Democrats in the Foreign Relations Committee voted to put some pretty serious limitations on our authorization for the use of military force in Syria in the wake of chemical weapons usage. Frankly, regardless of the precedent, I would argue Congress has a constitutional responsibility to help set the strategy for war, to help guide the Nation's foreign policy.

Let's be honest. This AUMF is going to go on for 3 years, according to the limitations the President proposed, well into the next President's term. As someone who believes combat troops in the Middle East would be a mistake, I simply can't rely on President Obama's promise that he will not use ground troops against ISIL because he only has 2 more years left, and many leading Republicans have made it perfectly clear they would push a President from their party, if that is who comes next, to put troops back into the fight against ISIL. As an elected representative of the people I serve, I should get a say as to whether we have learned from our mistakes of the past 10 years.

I remember my first visit to Iraq. I was there in the bloody spring of 2007. I remember being absolutely blown

away by the capability and the bravery and the capacity of the young U.S. soldiers whom I met in places such as Baghdad, Tikrit, and Baiji. So I can understand why it is easy for some people to believe there is no enemy our soldiers can't beat, that there is no challenge they can't meet, that there is no threat they can't eliminate. I believe in American exceptionalism in my heart, but I don't think it allows us to ignore history, to avoid facts, to deny reality, and the reality is extremists in some parts of the world are like flatworms. If we come at them with the wrong weapon, we may kill one, but we will create two more.

I am pleased the Senate is finally able to debate a new war against ISIL. This debate is past due. ISIL needs to be defeated, and we deserve to honor the U.S. Constitution and step up to the plate and debate an authorization.

Make no mistake, we should pass an AUMF. ISIL is evil personified, but for us to beat them, we need an AUMF that makes it totally clear we will not simply repeat the mistakes of the past that got us into this mess in the first place.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, what is the status of the floor debate and how much time might I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democrats have 8 minutes remaining.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes.

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor, with just 16 days left until the Department of Homeland Security shuts down, to again call for Congress to pass a clean full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security. With our Nation facing very real and very dangerous threats—Senator MURPHY was just on the floor talking about the ISIL threat and pointed out what the risks are—it is time for us to put politics aside and do what is right for the security of our Nation.

If we don't pass a full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, we will not be able to make critical investments in border security, maritime security, and in nuclear detection activities.

If we don't pass a full-year bill, grants to protect our cities and our ports from terror attacks would be halted, and new grants to police and firefighters will not be awarded. If we don't pass a full-year bill, we are short-changing counterterrorism efforts, and we will put our Nation's cyber networks at risk.

Senator MIKULSKI and I have filed a clean, full-year funding bill that is on the Senate calendar and ready for action. Our bill fully funds these key security priorities, but if our colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't want to support a bill that Senator MIKULSKI and I have filed, certainly we can support a clean Republican bill that includes the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

Our bill—our clean bill—is based on the bicameral, bipartisan agreement that was reached in December by Senator MIKULSKI and Congressman HAL ROGERS. The legislation was agreed to by Democrats and Republicans, and it was the result of bipartisan, compromised negotiations. Not everyone got what they wanted in the bill, but it is a good budget that strengthens our Nation and protects against the many threats we face.

Appropriations bills are only possible because of the art of compromise. Senators from both parties identify priorities important to them or their States. They work with Members of the Appropriations Committee on bill language, funding priorities. Everyone works together to influence the final product. All Senators have the opportunity to participate in crafting appropriations bills.

In fact, there doesn't seem to be any disagreement about the funding and how it is allocated in the appropriations bill before us, in the funding bill for Homeland Security. Senator COCHRAN, who chairs the Appropriations Committee, came to the floor and touted all of the benefits in the funding bill for Homeland Security. Senator HOEVEN, who chairs the Subcommittee on Homeland Security that I am the ranking member of, came to the floor and, similar to Senator COCHRAN, touted what is on the bill. I have been on the floor, Senator MIKULSKI has been to the floor many times to talk about what is in the funding bill for the Department of Homeland Security and why we need to pass it.

This morning I wish to highlight a few more of the priorities in a clean, full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security, priorities that will be at risk if we can't pass a clean bill.

There is bipartisan support that the Homeland Security appropriations bill includes strong funding for fire and SAFER grants. I know the Presiding Officer understands these programs because he has been the Governor of his home State. So he knows how important those fire and SAFER grants are to local fire departments, to first responders because they help purchase new equipment, they help with training exercises, and they can help fire departments cut down response times and save lives.

There is also bipartisan support that the Homeland Security funding bill include grants to help our Nation's largest cities protect against terror attacks. There is funding for port security grants, State and local law enforcement grants, emergency preparedness grants. There is bipartisan support for funding to upgrade the FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.

There is a compromise most of the people on the Democratic side of the aisle didn't agree with, to deny President Obama's request to increase air passenger fees and reinstitute the air carrier security fee.

The Coast Guard needs to continue the acquisition of its eighth national security cutter, which is so important for our maritime security. Republicans and Democrats secured $627 million in the bill for the cutter.

We have all seen how devastating the attacks were against Sony when it was hacked. Cyber attacks are an area of security that former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft called ''as dangerous as nuclear weapons.'' That is why Republicans and Democrats pushed for full funding for DHS cyber security activities.

The increase to the southwestern border of unaccompanied children and families last year is a major concern for States along our southern border—States such as Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. It has been a key priority for a number of my Republican colleagues, and for all of us who are concerned about border security, to meet the statutory mandate of 34,000 detention beds for undocumented immigrants that is required for the Department of Homeland Security.

The clean funding bill includes support for those 34,000 detention beds, and it also includes funding to meet Republican requests to build 3,000 new family detention beds in Texas.

The National Bio and Agro-Defense facility construction in Manhattan, KS, which is an effort to help us deal with threats against our food supply and other bioterrorism threats—in a clean funding bill will receive the final amount needed to begin construction.

Senator ROBERTS and I talked about this today. One of the things he pointed out is he has been working on this project for 16 years. There is $300 million in this clean, full-year bill. If we don't pass this bill, if the Department of Homeland Security shuts down, if we are in a continuing resolution, then this funding is at risk and they may have to rebid the project, which will drive up costs. That makes no sense.

There was bipartisan agreement to include $12 million for the National Computer Forensics Institute in Hoover, AL, to support the expansion of basic and advanced training for State and local law enforcement personnel, judges, and prosecutors to combat cyber crime.

These important investments in counterterrorism and cyber and border security are not controversial. That is not what we are arguing about here. We are arguing about whether we are

going to debate what the President did with respect to immigration, and we should not be having this debate on the Department of Homeland Security's funding bill. We can have that debate. I am all for it. I was happy to have that debate when this body passed comprehensive immigration reform 2 years ago, but we should not be having this debate on this bill. The House should understand, just as the Senate understands that. We should not be having that debate on this funding bill for Department of Homeland Security.

We need to come together to pass a clean bill—a bill that was the result of bipartisan negotiation and bipartisan compromise. We have a bill on the Senate calendar to do just that.

I am hearing from communities all across New Hampshire—we are hearing from communities across the country—about the need to pass a full-year funding bill.

Last week the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the International Association of Emergency Managers, and the International Association of Firefighters joined our call for a clean, full-year funding bill because they understand, as I know we all do, how disastrous failing to fund this agency would be. Three previous DHS Secretaries, two Republicans and one Democrat, have done the same.

Earlier this week, the National Fraternal Order of Police joined that call for action.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the letter from the National Fraternal Order of Police printed in the RECORD.

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

NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,
Washington, DC, February 10, 2015.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY M. REID,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY P. PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL, MR. SPEAKER, SENATOR REID AND REPRESENTATIVE PELOSI: I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police, and probably most Americans, to express our frustration and outrage that what used to be two greatest legislative bodies on the planet will allow a policy dispute to compromise the safety and security of our country.

The previous Congress made a conscious, political decision to defer action of funding for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) until the end of this month. I would also point out that is five months since the start of the current fiscal year and that some of our nation's largest and most vital law enforcement agencies and functions are operating without FY15 funding in place. The House passed legislation in spite of a veto threat and the Senate is now paralyzed and cannot even pass a motion to begin debating the bill. The entire process has become farcical and no amount of political spin or blaming the other side is reason enough to jeopardize the integrity of our nation's borders or the safety of the public.

What kind of message does this send to the men and women in DHS who put their lives on the line in defense of our homeland—three of whom fell in the line of duty over the past two years?

What kind of message does this send to our enemies? Our current threat level is ''Elevated'' as threats from terrorists and other hostile organizations plan attacks on the United States and our allies. Our Border Patrol and Customs and Border Patrol officers, not yet recovered from last year's surge of minors unlawfully entering our country by the thousands, now must redouble their vigilance against more sinister penetrations. Yet our great democratic institutions are unable to complete their most basic function—providing funding for the protection of our national security. Just more than a decade has passed since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and today political partisanship holds hostage its operational integrity. This is a political obscenity.

I urge you all, as the leaders of this Congress, to work together and to fund fully the Department of Homeland Security. This is what the American people elected you to do and this is your obligation as Members of Congress. If you cannot, you may as well put out a welcome mat for our enemies and others who would do us harm.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Their letter expresses frustration with the fact that a policy dispute over the President's immigration actions ''could compromise the safety and security of our country.''

The letter continues:

What kind of message does this send to the men and women in DHS who put their lives on the line in defense of our homeland—three of whom fell in the line of duty over the past two years?

What kind of message does this send to our enemies?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for another 60 seconds.

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

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Congress's most basic function is to provide for the Nation's security. It is time to stop playing politics, to get to work, do our jobs, and pass a clean full-year bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SECURITY PLAN

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, on the same week that the President released his national strategy, a pilot in the Royal Jordanian Air Force was burned alive by radical Islamists.

While the administration was putting the finishing touches on this document, the propaganda wing of ISIS was busy too. The jihadist group was pumping out a video of this latest act of horrific brutality.

ISIS represents one of the biggest threats to peace of an already unstable region. These terrorists are committed to establishing a new caliphate ruled by shari'a law where all would be forced to convert or die. They are committed to destroying all who stand in their way. If anyone embodies radical Islam, it is ISIS.

Given the severity of the threat posed by ISIS, not to mention continuing efforts of Al Qaeda to strike again, you would think a plan to take on radical Islam would be a focal part of the President's national security plan. It is not. In fact, there is no mention of radical Islam in the document at all.

What is mentioned instead is global warming. Yes, global warming is discussed in the President's national security strategy, but not radical Islamic extremism. Apparently that is not a threat to the United States. The President and his advisers have stood by this senseless narrative.

In a lengthy interview with Vox, the President essentially blamed the media for overhyping the threat of terrorism. He went on to say that terrorism sells because it is ''all about the ratings,'' and climate change is ''a hard story for the media to tell on a day-to-day basis.''

Yesterday the White House spokesman was pressed on this very issue and refused to accept the premise that terrorist groups such as ISIS pose a ''greater clear and present danger'' than global warming. So you can see the disconnect that exists within the administration. But it doesn't end with just this document.

The President's budget proposal for the Department of Homeland Security would allocate tens of millions of dollars to protect against climate change. It does so by failing to dedicate funds for communities to identify and disrupt homegrown terror, despite the fact that ISIS is recruiting foreign fighters at a clip never seen before. While the majority of them are from the Middle East, the Wall Street Journal reports that upwards of 20,000 foreign fighters have joined ISIS in the past 2 years.

The group's savvy use of social media and its highly orchestrated propaganda campaign has appealed to Westerners as well, bringing thousands of jihadists with passports that allow them to travel with ease to ISIS-controlled territory. Where they will ultimately take the deadly skills they learned in Iraq and Syria remains to be seen. These foreign fighters could return home or even come to the United States, giving ISIS the ability to strike on American soil. The recent attacks in Paris serve as a vivid reminder that the reach of radical Islam extends far beyond the jihadi fighters on the ground in Iraq and in Syria.

Meanwhile, the Democrats in this Chamber, at the behest of the President, are holding up the House-passed DHS appropriations bill. Senate Democrats voted three times to filibuster the House-passed Department of Homeland Security funding bill last week. Their objection is that it withholds funding from the President's unconstitutional Executive actions on immigration. They are holding up the entire bill and threatening to shut down DHS to protect the President's priority—not because the funding is too low or because the programs need reforms. Their complaint is that the President is not getting what he wants.

I encourage them to relent on their filibuster so we can debate the bill, make changes if the Chamber sees fit, and send it to the President. If the President truly wants immigration reform, then do it the right way and work with Congress to get it done. Don't go about it on your own unconstitutionally and then threaten to shut down a department charged with protecting Americans. It is out of touch, but it is not the first time this administration's priorities have been at odds with those of the American people.

The President once characterized ISIS as the JV team. This is no JV team. As the chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee noted, ISIS is the ''largest convergence of Islamist terrorists in history'' that has created a ''pseudo-state dead set on attacking America.''

Preventing ISIS from achieving its goals takes a clear, forceful security strategy both abroad and at home. What the President has put forward is neither.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to follow on the comments of my good friend and neighbor from Arkansas, Senator BOOZMAN. He was talking about what the President is now asking the Congress to do. I think there are many questions that need to be asked about this authorization for activity against ISIS and what that might mean before the Congress can move forward.

The principal question, however, will continue to be: Do we have a strategy? And if we have a strategy, which has not yet been explained, is there a commitment to that strategy to move forward? Is this just another redline that means nothing or is this a document that is designed to meet some objectives that really are not the objectives of fighting people who clearly perceive freedom and America and the values we stand for as anathema to what they would hope to see?

There are so many questions. Is the 3-year timeframe enough? Why would you have a 3-year timeframe? That puts this authorization of force 1 year into the next Presidency. What kind of legacy is that to leave the next President? The minute that person becomes President, suddenly you have a clock that is ticking. If we take that approach, not only are we telling our adversaries when we plan to quit, we are telling the next President, no matter what the situation is, when we will quit. We have not been presented with a 3-year plan on how to degrade and destroy ISIS. We understand that is what the goal is, but nobody suggested a 3-year plan.

In fact, if you look back over the last 6 months, you will find the President's ability to project his foreign policy seems to defy all projections. A few months ago, he talked about Yemen as an example of how well our policy is working. This week we abandoned the Embassy and abandoned our efforts in that country.

The specific focus on ISIS and/or associated persons or forces—what does that mean? Does that mean another terrorist group that is struggling against ISIS is not covered by this? Does that mean Al Qaeda or al-Nusra or some other group that is equally focused on the United States and our friends is not covered by this?

The President has the authority to go after terrorist organizations. As far as 2001, 2002—he says he wants at least one of those authorities left on the books. By the way, it is sufficient to do anything we want to do now, so why add this to it?

This debate may take a while, but during the debate, I think we need to listen closely to our military leaders and question them again about how we can accomplish what we need to accomplish here, what we can do to help our friends as they work to accomplish what needs to be accomplished here, what we do to encourage people from the neighborhood to put their boots on the ground, and what do we need to do to be helpful.

Last weekend I traveled with a few other members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to Jordan and Turkey to discuss the ISIS threat and what was happening in Iraq and Syria. It was especially interesting to be in Jordan just after the brutal murder of the Jordanian pilot. I don't know that we know for sure exactly when that happened, but I think there are many reasons to believe this group was negotiating to save the life of the pilot long after the pilot's life had been taken in one of the most barbarous of possible ways. It got the attention of the neighborhood, and certainly Jordan and the UAE and others are beginning to line up with a new determination to go after ISIS, hitting targets on the ground, we are told, that we have known were targets for a long time but we didn't seem to be able to have the willingness to hit them. Certainly we had the capacity to hit them. Certainly we had the information to hit them. But why weren't we doing that? What is the commitment to do this?

The President asked the Congress of the United States to make this commitment of use of force, but there is absolutely no reason for us to make that commitment unless he intends to use the force and unless we understand how he intends to use the force. Not only can we not define our policy here; those people around the world who would like to know what our policy is don't hear it defined either.

Then we have events happen such as the botched interview of last weekend the Senator from Arkansas was speaking about where the President was asked if ''the media sometimes overstates the level of alarm people should have about terrorism and this kind of chaos, as opposed to a longer-term problem of climate change and epidemic disease.'' The President's response was ''Absolutely.'' Absolutely, a long-term problem of climate change and epidemic disease somehow calculates into the discussion of whether we are in imminent danger of these terrorist groups and whether that is real?

He went on to say in that interview: ''If it bleeds, it leads, right?'' This is the President talking. He went on to say, ''You show crime stories and you show fires, because that's what folks watch, and it's all about ratings.'' I don't know what that means. I wouldn't want to suppose the President is saying that coverage of terrorism is about ratings. I, frankly, don't know what it means, but I do know that if I don't know what it means, a lot of people all over the world don't know what it means.

This is not climate change. It is not what we need to be doing at the CDC. The President is not asking for authorized use of force to do something about the CDC. When that was happening, the Congress stepped up and said: OK, here is money that will help meet that immediate need. That is not the same kind of discussion at all.

The President also raised eyebrows by suggesting that the shooting at a kosher deli, kosher market in Paris was ''random.'' I think his exact quote was, ''It is entirely legitimate for the American people to be deeply concerned when you've got a bunch of violent, vicious zealots who behead people or randomly shoot a bunch of folks in a deli in Paris.'' I could speak quite a bit about the President's unwillingness to call this bunch of violent, vicious zealots what they are. They are Islamic extremists. The Prime Minister of Great Britain can say that. Other leaders all over the world can say that. We can't say that.

The other comment I thought was particularly interesting was ''randomly'' shoot people in a deli in Paris. It was a kosher deli in Paris. There was no ''random'' about that. Most of the customers would be and the victims were Jews. There was no ''random'' about that. Let's accept this for what it is.

Let's not go back, as the President did at the National Prayer Breakfast a few days ago, and decide to equate something—crusades, almost 800 years

ago, 600 years ago, various crusades—equate the crusades with what is happening now and somehow suggest that these people are just temporarily misguided. These people are not temporarily misguided; these people are about an evil purpose. They killed fellow members of their religion because they believed those people didn't perfectly reflect their own religion.

This is an issue we need to be concerned about. We have to have a strategy. We need clarity. We need commitment. If we are going to destroy this threat, we really have to be committed to destroy this terrorist threat.

I plan to press the administration, as many others will, on that question of, What is your plan? The President's nominee for Secretary of Defense couldn't explain the plan. That is a vote we are going to have later today. I don't intend to vote for that nominee today. We have already had three Secretaries of Defense in this Presidency who have been incredibly frustrated, obviously and visibly frustrated and willing to talk about their frustrations—at least the two Secretaries who have already left—of not knowing how to deal with a White House that wants to run the military in the most specific ways rather than saying: Here is our goal. What is the best way to meet that goal?

We have had that already. We don't need another Secretary of Defense who doesn't understand what the plan is and can't communicate that plan to either the Congress or the country or our friends around the world.

The Congress doesn't understand what the President is trying to do. The administration can't explain what the President is trying to do. Our enemies are emboldened by the fact that we can't explain what we are trying to do, and our friends wonder what we are trying to do.

In so many cases—I remember the great speech by the President of Ukraine at a joint session of Congress last year where basically he said: Thank you for the food. Thank you for the blankets. But we can't fight the Russians with blankets. We can't fight the terrorists without a strategy. We can't fight the terrorists without a commitment to the goal.

The document the President sent to us this week was carefully worded to meet all kinds of political constituencies. It is not carefully worded in a way that meets the threat of radical Islamic terrorism. The Jordanians understand this. People in the neighborhood understand this. People in Europe seem to have a better understanding of it than we do. They all want to see some level of commitment by the United States of America, and I would like to hear what that commitment is.

I yield the floor.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I heard the remarks earlier today about how we need to move forward with the Department of Homeland Security funding bill without any reaction to the President's Executive actions of last year. One way to see if that would really meet the test of the Senate is to move forward, to have the debate.

Our friends on the other side are unwilling to debate this. Why would that be? Many of them disagree with the actions of the President of last November. Enough of them certainly disagreed to have 60 votes on the Senate floor that would pass a bill to reverse those actions. Maybe not everybody agrees with everything, but we had more amendment votes on the Senate floor 2 weeks ago on 2 different days—each of 2 different days—than we had all of last year. The majority leader has shown a commitment to let Senators be heard. If they want to improve what the House sent over, let's debate it. If they want to improve what the House sent over, let's hear what those improvements are.

Later today I am joining my colleagues from the Senate Steering Committee and the Republican Study Committee to discuss why Senate Democrats continue their efforts to filibuster this funding bill, to not have a debate on this funding bill. In the last Congress we were often accused of not being willing to end debate; seldom were we accused of not being willing to have the debate. Our argument was, how can we end debate when we have had no amendments? We have not been able to be heard on how we would like to change this bill. Why would we end that debate?

Seldom were we accused of not wanting to go to debate. Several times that was the case when it was clear that nothing was going to happen and the debate was all about politics.

This is a debate about funding part of the government that is so essential that if funding is not there, almost all of the employees show up anyway. They are considered essential. They need a paycheck, just as families all over America do. We are going to see to it that that happens. These are essential employees.

This is not a situation where we can just decide we don't need to have the debate. Our friends on the other side can't continue to think that the debate only happens and amendments only happen in the Senate if there are provisions with which they agree. Maybe they just don't want to explain why the President said 22 times he couldn't take the action he took in November. That is a lot of times, even by political standards. Twenty-two times saying he can't do something and then figuring out a way he can do it is a pretty extraordinary event.

So we need to have this debate. Frankly, unless we engage in the debate, we won't really ever know what is going to happen with the debate.

I think it is time to move forward. I hope Senate Democrats will work with us. If they want to offer amendments, I am more than happy to vote on their amendments. I think the bill the House sent over is work product we should be pursuing. We should be moving forward with it. Seldom is there legislation that can't possibly be improved, but it can't be improved if we won't talk about it. This is not an option. This is an issue we eventually have to deal with.

Let's have the debate on why it now doesn't matter that the President said 22 times he wasn't going to take an action and then took it. If there are provisions in the House bill our friends on the other side don't like, let's hear what they are and vote on those issues and see what happens then.

We need to continue our efforts to move to this funding bill. I hope we will still engage in this debate before the end of the month and give this the attention it deserves.

We should not assume that any legislation that comes to the floor is so perfect, it can't be improved. In fact, the tradition for appropriations bills of the Senate and the House has always been that any Member could challenge anything—until about 7 years ago when suddenly no Member could challenge anything. Let's get back to the way this work is supposed to be done.

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. COATS. 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. COATS. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent to exceed—I know morning business expires in 3 or 4 minutes. I doubt I will be speaking for more than 10 minutes, but for extra time in morning business, I ask unanimous consent.

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

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I rise today to address what I call an issue of public responsibility. More specifically, I rise to address the responsibility of both the legislative and the executive branches to deal with our Nation's out of control deficit spending. Unfortunately, the President has shown little interest in the dire fiscal situation facing our Nation, which makes it all the more important for Congress to do so. Without Presidential leadership, it is

now Congress's duty to step up and take the lead.

We have an obligation to be straightforward and honest with the American people about the financial challenges America faces. There was a furor over our continuing plunge into debt and deficit starting in 2009 and 2010 as we saw the spending explode with stimulus plans that didn't work and other policies that continued to drive us into debt. Unfortunately, that level of intensity and displeasure over all that was happening has subsided, but the problem hasn't gone away. It needs to be addressed, and it needs to be addressed now.

As I said, we have an obligation as Members of this body and of the Congress to be honest and straightforward with the American people about where we stand and what we will do about it.

I received a letter from one of my constituents, Steven of Martinsville, Indiana. Steven wrote to me to describe his concerns about our national debt and spending. Let me quote from his letter:

> As of today, the outstanding national debt is over $18 trillion. That is an overly exorbitant amount of money.

It certainly is, Steven. You are right. It is an exorbitant amount of money—one we can hardly even get our minds around in terms of what $18 trillion means.

Steven continued:

> Therefore, I would like to know our options in America.

I think we as elected officials have an obligation to list those options and describe what we would do about it if we had the opportunity and the support from the President, which is not forthcoming, but perhaps it will be. Surely even the executive branch and the President have to understand the situation we are in and the consequences of not doing something about it.

I am sure my colleagues received many letters and information from constituents who are concerned about the health of our Nation, from our mounting Federal debt, to our management—or I suppose I could say mismanagement of the Federal budget. Our constituents want to know what we, as their elected officials, are going to do about it.

What is plain as day to Steven, unfortunately, is not so clear here in Washington because the President says we don't have a spending problem, we have a revenue problem. I can't go home to people in Indiana and tell them that we need to tax more because government is growing and needs their money, and do so without derision coming back my way because people are being taxed to death. This President has an obsession with solving every conceivable problem by asking for more revenue and more taxes. The revenue is increasing; yet we have not placed the necessary spending restraints to control this ever-growing dilemma of deficit spending.

I think there is only one real solution to our problem—a solution that is absolutely necessary because we literally have tried everything else and come up short—and that solution is for this body to pass a balanced budget constitutional amendment. That is why I am cosponsoring an amendment to the United States Constitution that forces the Federal Government to balance its budget, limits the growth of government spending, and that requires a supermajority to pass any tax increase. Without these measures, we will not successfully deal with this problem.

This is not a new idea. I served here in 1995 and again in 1997. I voted for a balanced budget amendment to limit spending and require the Federal Government to balance its checkbook. Both times, the Senate came one vote short of the necessary two-thirds to pass the constitutional amendment and send it to the States for ratification. One vote—one Member out of 100—could have voted with us, and we would have put ourselves on the path towards a balanced budget. We would not have begun to have the problems of ever-increasing debt, ever-increasing new taxes to cover that debt, and constriction in terms of spending for national priorities, such as defense and health research. Unfortunately, it didn't. When the amendment failed in 1997, our nation's debt stood at $5.36 trillion. Our debt is about three and a half times larger today. If we had had the political will to act then, we would not be faced with the financial challenges that exist today.

By passing a balanced budget amendment, we can send to the States not just a message that we are serious about addressing our fiscal woes, but that we are giving them a voice, we are giving people a voice, and we are giving them the power to hold Federal spending accountable. It would be a unique opportunity to right a wrong and begin restoring our fiscal house by making the Federal Government accountable for its spending.

In March of 1997 I stood on this very floor and warned about the dangers of operating outside our means. I said it then, and I would like to say it again today. I am quoting from what I said in 1997:

> There is no reliable check on this process of intergenerational theft. It is politically prudent, even popular, and this political calculation will not change, will never permanently change without some kind of systematic institutional counterweight, without some measure to give posterity a voice in our affairs. Nothing, in my view, will permanently change until the accumulation of popular debt is a violation of our oath to the Constitution. Perverse incentives of the current system will not be altered until the system itself is altered, until our political interests are balanced by the weighty words of a constitutional amendment. It would be a much needed balance.

We need to come to this body at the beginning of each session and put our left hand on the Bible and our right hand forward and swear to uphold the Constitution, which would involve responsible spending to keep us from plunging into disastrous consequences.

I mentioned earlier that Steven from Martinsville, IN, sent me this letter. What I did not mention is that Steven is a Boy Scout working toward his Citizenship in the Nation merit badge, which teaches Scouts how to become active citizens who are aware of and grateful for their liberties and their rights.

We all know that Boy Scouts take this oath—the oath to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, brave, clean, reverent, and thrifty. If we just take one of those principles, thrifty, and apply it to our governing, then America would be in a better place.

We cannot fail Steven, and we cannot fail his generation. His share of the debt will amount to more than $62,000 in 10 years. Let's not keep shifting the hard choices to our children and grandchildren. Let's not deny them the opportunity at the American dream that all of us in my generation have enjoyed. The opportunity that comes with responsible spending and a responsible government. Opportunity that comes to few people in the world. We are so privileged as Americans to have that, and we are denying that to the future. By passing this balanced budget amendment, we can honor the moral tradition of sacrificing for posterity instead of asking posterity to sacrifice for us.

With that, I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ASHTON B. CARTER TO BE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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

The bill clerk read the nomination of Ashton B. Carter, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Maine.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Ms. KLOBUCHAR pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 74 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Submitted Resolutions.'')

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I always try to be accurate in what I say on the floor. Having been trained before Federal judges for almost 15 years, practicing law, if you said something out of line, you got hammered for it.

My friend, very good friend and colleague, the Democratic whip, Senator DURBIN, earlier today came to the floor and said: Mr. President, I have been trying to understand what is holding up the funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

I would ask my colleague Senator DURBIN: Have you ever heard of a filibuster? What about the filibuster you are leading to block the bill that funds Homeland Security? I mean how much more obvious can the answer be to what is holding up funding for the Department of Homeland Security, the House-passed legislation?

It is good legislation, to my knowledge. There is very little dispute about the agencies and the departments in Homeland Security in terms of what they would get in terms of funding. They simply said that the extra-lawful actions of President Obama would not be funded.

The Los Angeles Times now says that this executive amnesty could cost up to $484 million. I think it will be much more. The Los Angeles Times isn't counting the cost to State and local governments, welfare costs, tax costs. This is just their idea of what it will cost to give lawful status to 5 million people. It is going to cost more than that. But $484 million is still a lot of money.

Congress, the House of Representatives, said: Mr. President, we don't agree with this policy and your policy is unlawful. You said 20 times yourself you don't have the power to do this. Constitutional scholars say that. It is an erosion of our power and, based on the fact that we don't like the policy and we think it is unlawful policy, we are going to fund Homeland Security, we are just not going to allow you to take money from enforcement of homeland security laws to reward people who violated the laws.

Isn't that a responsible thing for Congress to do? Isn't it an absolute fact that Congress has the power to fund what it desires to fund and not fund what it does not desire to fund? That is the power of the purse, vested in the coequal branch of Congress. It is Congress's fundamental power.

Senator DURBIN is now leading the filibuster. We have had a series of votes. He has been able to get every single Democrat to vote with him to block even going to the bill, even allowing a bill to come up on the floor of the Senate for debate and amendment.

If he wants to offer language that says we want to ratify what the President did and allow all this to happen, he is free to offer that amendment on the floor of the Senate. But he is not even attempting to do that. He is basically saying we are not going to allow the bill to come up for a vote, and we are going to blame the Republicans for blocking the bill.

What kind of world are we living in? I have suggested that is ''through the looking glass.'' We have the people leading the filibuster accusing the House and Republicans in the Senate for blocking the bill when they, indeed, are the ones doing it.

He also quoted our fine colleague Senator FLAKE to say: To attempt to use the spending bill to try to poke a finger in the President's eye is not a good move, in my mind.

I agree with that, we shouldn't be using a spending bill to poke the President in the eye. But I suggest to my colleagues that the President is the one who has poked the American people in the eye, he has poked the rights and powers of Congress in the eye by taking money that was assigned and given to Homeland Security to enforce the laws of the United States. He is taking out money and spending it at this very moment to undermine and to violate the laws of the United States.

Colleagues, the law of the United States—we have a lot of laws—says that an employer, for example, cannot hire somebody unlawfully in the country.

So the President's proposal: Well, I am going to make 5 million people who are unlawful today lawful. I am going to give them a photo ID, I am going to give them a right to work, a Social Security number, and the right to participate in Social Security and Medicare, because I am angry that Congress wouldn't pass it.

Senator DURBIN says this—and our colleagues who have been leading the filibuster have been saying this—repeatedly.

It is impossible to explain the situation, quoting Senator DURBIN, where the agency ''with the premier responsibility to keep America safe is not being adequately funded.''

He goes on to say that again about placing America at risk.

I would ask a couple of questions. How does taking funding from the lawful, authorized policies of Homeland Security that are supposed to identify people unlawfully here, to identify terrorists, and do other things to make America safe—how does taking the money from them, to give legal status to 5 million illegal aliens make us safer?

Does that make us safer? How absurd is that?

Ken Palinkas, who is head of the union of CIS workers, the National Citizenship and Immigration Services Council, said:

> Unfortunately—and perilously overlooked in Washington—our caseworkers are denied the urgent professional resources, enforcement tools, and mission support we need to keep out those who are bent on doing us harm.

This is processing the 1 million or so per year who are given lawful status in America. He is not referring to the future when they are going to be expected to process—immediately, apparently—5 million more. They don't have money to process the people today. These are his words, not mine, in a letter dated September of last year. He said:

> The 9/11 hijackers got into the U.S. on visas and now, 13 years later, we have around 5 million immigrants in the United States who overstayed their visas—many from high-risk regions in the Middle East. Making matters more dangerous, the Obama Administration's executive amnesty, like S. 744 that he unsuccessfully lobbied for, would legalize visa overstays and cause millions additionally to overstay—raising the threat level to America even higher.

That is what the people who enforce the law every day are saying.

In January of this year, a few weeks ago, January 22, Mr. Palinkas said:

> The President's executive amnesty—

And that is what they are objecting to. That is what the people who are filibustering this bill today are doing. They are protecting, advancing, supporting, and attempting to fund the President's unlawful amnesty.

Mr. Palinkas, whose duty it is to enforce these laws, said:

> The President's executive amnesty order for 5 million illegal immigrants places the mission of USCIS [that is the immigration service] in grave peril. Instead of meeting our lawful function to protect the Homeland and keep out those who pose a threat to U.S. security, health, or finances, our officers will be assigned to process amnesty for individuals residing illegally inside our nation's borders. This compromises national security and public safety, while undermining officer morale.

That is exactly right. You don't have to be a real expert to understand he is exactly right about this.

He continues:

> The Administration's skewed priorities means that the Crystal City amnesty processing center will likely have superior worksite conditions for personnel relative to our normal processing centers. Additionally, the security protocols at place in this facility will be insufficient to engage in any basic screening precautions, ensuring and rewarding massive amounts of fraud. For the administration to continue down this course after the Paris attacks is beyond belief.

This is what we are dealing with. In October of last year, Mr. Palinkas, when the President was proposing this amnesty before it happened, issued a statement on behalf of his workers and his colleagues in the immigration service. He concludes in his statement:

> That is why this statement is intended for the public. If you care about your immigration security and your neighborhood security, you must act now to ensure that Congress stops this unilateral amnesty. Let your voice be heard and spread the word to your neighbors. We who serve in our nation's immigration agencies are pleading for your help—don't let it happen. Express your concern to your Senators and Congressmen before it is too late.

Well, that is what it is all about. The President 20 times said he did not have the power to do such a thing, but he—under political pressure, I suppose, or just an overreach on his part—decided to do it anyway. He said he didn't have the power to do this. Now he has acted on it, even though the officers pleaded for him to not do it, even though an overwhelming majority of the American people said don't do it, even though at least nine Democratic colleagues who were supporting this filibuster said the President didn't have the power or shouldn't do it this way, that these kinds of decisions are part of Congress's power.

Mr. President, don't do it, is what they said. Yet all nine of them are now standing in lockstep to block the funding of homeland security that funds every part of homeland security—it just doesn't fund this building they have leased across the river in Crystal City that is supposed to process up to 5 million people.

Colleagues, I want you to know it is absolutely true they will not even have face-to-face interviews with these applicants. This is going to be coming in by mail and computer. They will eventually be sent someplace to get a photo ID, they will be given a work permit to take any job in America, and the right to participate in Social Security and Medicare, weakening both of those programs over the long term, without any doubt.

That is what is occurring without congressional approval. This is going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars just in the process.

But what I want Senator DURBIN to know is this is going to weaken national security. Because if someone is here to do harm to America—perhaps they are a drug dealer or they are a terrorist and they want to do criminal acts in America, and they have a record—they are not going to ask for the amnesty. They are going to stay and continue to work their wicked will. That is what they are going to do. Nobody is going to go look for them. Nobody is looking for them now, and nobody will be looking for them then. It will be business as usual.

But if you came here with a bad purpose—terrorism, drug dealing, other criminal activity—and you don't have a criminal record, you will just call in, send an email in, get your identity, and be allowed to permanently operate in the United States.

And colleagues, the American people, I think, understand this. Nobody is going to investigate anything, other than maybe to run a computer background check—a computer check to see if there is a criminal record out there. There is no way anybody is going to go back and try to verify whether someone has actually been in the country a number of years, verify family relations. They are not going to go back to some school to see if they actually graduated. There are no people to do that. This is just a blanket approval for people who apply, basically. You send in a few documents, and you are in. There is no capability of doing anything other than that.

So the President has just made a big mistake—a big mistake—and Congress needs to push back. Congress has the power to consider what kind of policies we want to set with regard to immigration. Those have been set. It is unlawful for people unlawfully in America to work in America and to participate in Social Security and all of those programs. It is just unlawful to do that. The President is violating that law in issuing directives through these departments and agencies to Federal employees, and those employees are protesting dramatically, but nobody seems to care.

Congress is the one body that is supposed to stand up to that, and the House of Representatives has done so. They passed a bill that would stop this activity, that says: we will not authorize the expenditure of any money to carry out this plan that Congress has not approved, that undermines the laws we have in place, and that—as Palinkas and other officers have told us—will encourage more people to come to America unlawfully, further decimating any integrity the system has.

We issued a 49-page document of 200 different actions taken since President Obama has been in office that undermine the moral integrity of the immigration system, making it more and more difficult to maintain even a modicum of legality in the system. His actions are continuing to erode that—the most dramatic, of course, being this Executive Amnesty. So we are just supposed to accept this.

This isn't a personal issue to attack President Obama or any of our colleagues. It is a big American policy issue. It is a huge issue for this country, and we need to understand it. It is a constitutional question as well as a policy question.

The constitutional question, which the House of Representatives understands, is that Congress appropriates money. Congress has no duty to placate the President of the United States when he wants to carry on an activity that Congress chooses not to fund. Congress has a duty to history and to generations yet unborn to defend and protect its power of the purse. Congress has to do that.

I plead with and say to my colleagues that those who know the President overreached on this, this is the time, this is the bill when we should fix this. Passage of this bill without the language of the House would basically fund all of the Executive Amnesty. It would not block funding of this activity. To take out the House language and to pass what our colleagues want to pass—a bill that makes no reference to the Executive Amnesty—takes no action to stop that activity; that is, it ratifies it. It is in effect a financial ratification of an unconstitutional overreach by the executive branch that will have ramifications in the future that we can't even imagine today.

Somebody asked the question—and I think it is a valid analogy—what if the President wanted to reduce the tax rate from 39 percent to 25 percent and Congress wouldn't pass it. So he tells all of his IRS agents—they work for him—don't collect any money over 25 percent. He says to the people: Don't send in money more than 25 percent. I told the agents not to collect more than 25 percent.

Is that so far-fetched, if this were to pass?

What the President is saying is, I know the law says you can't work here. I know the law says you are supposed to be removed if you are here illegally. I know all of these things, but we are just not going to do it. Not only am I not going to enforce the law with regard to immigration, but what I am going to do is I am going declare you as lawful. I am going to give you Social Security numbers and work permits.

A recent report from a liberal group, the Economic Policy Institute, announced on February 10 that the unemployed exceed job openings in almost every industry in America.

We know unemployment is exceedingly high, and we know that we have high job unemployment in the country. Remember, the unemployment rate we see today does not include people who drop out of the workforce, it only reflects those people who are underemployed and looking for more work or people who are actually seeking employment aggressively and have signed up on the unemployment rolls in efforts to get a job.

This indicates that in the big industry we used to hear a lot from—the construction industry—there are six times as many construction workers as there are job openings. Even for professional and business services they are higher. In retail trade there are far more applicants than jobs. It goes on and on, sector after sector.

So remember, at a time of this high unemployment, we are also going to be legalizing 5 million people to take jobs. We know we have to get over 200,000 jobs created in a month—that it takes 180,000 or 200,000—just to stay level with the growth in the population of America. We have been slightly above that recently, and there has been a lot of positive spin about that. But we still have the lowest percentage of Americans in their working years actually working that we have had in this country in 40 years.

Income is down $4,000 since 2007 for middle-class working families. The median income is down $4,000 since 2007. So how is this good for lawful immigrants, permanent residents, American citizens? How is it good to bring in even more workers at a time when we have the smallest percentage of Americans in the workforce in 40 years? I point to 40 years ago because we began to see a lot more women working in

those years, so this is a reversal of that trend.

What do the American people think about it? Here is some Paragon Poll data that says by a more than 2-to-1 margin Americans strongly oppose rather than strongly support the President's Executive actions. Blue collar and middle class workers strongly oppose the President's action by more than a 3-to-1 majority. By a 50-point margin, voters want Congress to pass legislation making it harder for companies to hire workers now illegally in the country—71 to 21.

The American people want to make it harder. Their children, their husbands, their wives are looking for work and not finding any. They want to have a decent wage, a rising wage, and a chance to get a job. So this is a 50-point margin. Remember, the President's action—far from making it harder for people to get a job—is going to provide a photo ID, work authorizations, and Social Security numbers to 5 million people unlawfully here. Almost all of those are adults, frankly.

Just to show how people feel about this and how strongly they feel about it, Kellyanne Conway's polling data shows that by a 75-to-8 margin Americans say companies should raise wages instead of allowing more immigrant workers to fill jobs.

People would like to see a pay raise around here for a change. Salaries dropped 5 cents in December. We are not doing nearly as well as some would like to say. That is a Department of Labor statistic—a government statistic—that says that.

How about this? What about people who have the hardest time finding work right now. African Americans, according to the Conway poll, by an 86-to-3 margin say companies should raise wages instead of allowing more immigrant workers to take jobs. For Hispanics that is true by a margin of 71 to 11. So by a 71-to-11 margin, Hispanics in America say companies should raise wages instead of bringing in more workers to take jobs, pulling wages down. That is what the market says.

So let's go back to the morality of all of this, which is fundamental. We as members of Congress represent the people of the United States. That includes immigrants, recent immigrants—naturalized citizens—living here today. It includes native-born citizens. That is who our obligation is to. So we need to ask ourselves, how are we helping them at a time of difficult wage conditions, difficult job conditions, while allowing a surge of workers to come to compete for the few jobs there are? Is that fulfilling our duty to the voters, to the electors who sent us here? I think not.

I think it is time for somebody to focus on the needs of people who go to work every day, who have had their hours reduced, who have had their wages decline, who have had their spouses and children having a hard time finding work. That is what is happening.

To repeat for my good friend Senator DURBIN, who says he has been trying to understand what is holding up the funding for the Department of Homeland Security, let me answer that question. The House has passed a bill. They have sent it to the Senate. More than a majority of the Senators have voted to pass a bill and fund the Department of Homeland Security. And you, as the Democratic whip, are leading the filibuster to block it from even coming up on the floor so amendments can be offered.

That is the answer to your question. So I don't think you should continue blaming Republicans for not attempting to fund Homeland Security. The whole world knows who is blocking the bill that funds Homeland Security: You and your team of filibusterers.

That is what it is. There is no doubt about that, and we need to get this straight. I don't believe the American people are going to be misled by that argument. I believe they are going to know what is happening in this Senate and why we have this difficulty.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

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. LEAHY. 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. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate will vote later today on the confirmation of Dr. Ashton Carter to fill a critically important Cabinet position, that of Secretary of Defense. I think we all know Dr. Carter is a dedicated and distinguished public servant. He has actually been confirmed twice, unanimously, to two senior positions at the Pentagon. He has been recognized as a four-time recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal, and he has been awarded the Defense Intelligence Medal. I have no doubt the vote today in support of Dr. Carter will be overwhelmingly favorable.

The Defense Department faces important, timely, and difficult decisions in the coming months and years. They have to learn how best to balance what we know are our fiscal constraints with not only existing but emerging international challenges. Dr. Carter served as the day-to-day financial officer of the Pentagon, so he is one of the few people who understand the complexities of the Pentagon's budget. I believe that Dr. Carter will build upon the fine work of Secretary Hagel to chart a path toward fiscal accountability while maintaining the kind of military capabilities we need to face current global threats.

Dr. Carter is receiving his confirmation vote just over a week after he testified before the Armed Services Committee and two days after his nomination was reported to the full Senate, and that swift action is commendable. But I want to contrast how his nomination was handled as compared to Loretta Lynch's for Attorney General.

LYNCH NOMINATION

It is a disappointment that contrary to what was done for Dr. Carter, Republicans on the Judiciary Committee chose to hold over for another two weeks another critical nomination, that of Loretta Lynch to be the Attorney General of the United States, the Nation's chief law enforcement officer.

Loretta Lynch is a renowned prosecutor, twice unanimously confirmed by the Senate. She has worked to put criminals behind bars for such crimes as terrorism and fraud. Some Members of this body said these terrorists should be held in Guantanamo because we, the most powerful nation on earth, should be afraid to try them in our Federal courts—the best court system in the world. She showed a lot more courage. She said, we will try these terrorists in our Federal courts, and we will show the rest of the world America is not afraid—and it worked. She got convictions. Now, the President announced the nomination of Ms. Lynch nearly one hundred days ago. It has been more than two weeks since she testified before the Judiciary Committee. In addition to nearly eight hours of live testimony, she has responded to more than 600 written questions. Her nomination has been pending for longer than any modern Attorney General nominee.

I contrast this to another nominee. In 2007, Democrats, who had been in the minority, took back over control of the Senate. President Bush had had an Attorney General, a man who, by just about any objective standard, had been a disaster. He was removed, and President Bush nominated Michael Mukasey to serve as Attorney General. It took only 53 days from the time his nomination was announced to his confirmation. That included doing all of the background checks and having the hearings. And then, after Mr. Mukasey's hearing, of course under our rules we could have held his nomination over in Committee, but I asked the Committee not to and we did not. While I ultimately voted against Mr. Mukasey because of his responses relating to questions on torture, as Chairman I made sure to have the Committee act quickly on him. In fact, I held a special markup session in order for the Committee to be able to report his nomination as soon as possible, because the President should have an Attorney General—and he was confirmed by the Senate two days later. Now, Republicans should extend the same courtesy with respect to Ms. Lynch's nomination to serve as the Nation's top law enforcement officer.

I look forward to working with Dr. Carter. I am not suggesting we should hold him up because they are holding her up. Of course not. He should be confirmed, as she should be confirmed, and

I look forward to working with Dr. Carter on issues of great importance to Vermonters and to the Nation, particularly concerning our continued diplomatic efforts to end Iran's nuclear program, in halting and reversing the proliferation of landmines around the world, in responsibly managing the Pentagon, and in supporting our servicemembers at home and abroad.

And I look forward to working with Loretta Lynch when the Senate ultimately confirms her nomination, as it will. I urge the Republican Leader to serve the national interest by scheduling a confirmation vote on her nomination as soon as she is reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 26. She has already waited far longer for a confirmation vote than any Attorney General in modern history, and she should be confirmed just as Dr. Carter is going to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to join my friend and colleague from Rhode Island, Senator REED, in supporting the nomination of Dr. Ash Carter to be Secretary of Defense. I am confident Senator REED and I feel we have had a very good nomination hearing and that Dr. Carter is qualified to be the Secretary of Defense.

I have known Dr. Carter for many years during his lengthy service in Washington. He is one of America's most experienced defense professionals, respected by Republicans and Democrats alike.

He has served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, and most recently as Deputy Secretary of Defense. In these positions, I have known him to be an honest, hard-working, and committed public servant. I have had the opportunity to work together with Dr. Carter on several issues of shared concern, especially trying to reform the Defense Acquisition System, improving financial management of the Department, and repealing and rolling back sequestration.

I was also pleased to hear Dr. Carter explain his views on a number of critical national security issues at his confirmation hearing earlier this month.

On Afghanistan Dr. Carter told the committee he would consider revisions to the size and pace of the President's drawdown plan if security conditions warranted. To achieve the success that is possible there, he urged the United States to ''continue its campaign and finish the job.''

Dr. Carter indicated he is very much inclined in the direction of providing defensive lethal arms to help Ukraine resist Russian aggression.

He pledged to do more to streamline and improve the Defense Acquisition System that takes too long and costs too much, and Dr. Carter agreed it is time to roll back sequestration because, in his words, ''it introduces turbulence and uncertainty that are wasteful, and it conveys a misleadingly diminished picture of our power in the eyes of friends and foes alike.''

America is confronted with a diverse and complex range of national security challenges. A revisionist Russia, a rising China, and radical Islamist groups each seeking in their own way to fundamentally challenge the international order as we have known it since the end of World War II, a system that cherishes the rule of law, maintains free markets and free trade, and relegates wars of aggression to their rightful place in the bloody past.

We need a coherent national security strategy incorporating all elements of America's national power to sustain and defend the international order that has produced and extended security, prosperity, and liberty across the globe.

We need to stop holding our military hostage to domestic political disputes and send an unmistakable message to friend and foe alike that America intends to lead in the 21st century by repealing sequestration immediately.

We need to reform our Defense Acquisition System to restore confidence that every defense dollar is spent well and to ensure that the men and women in uniform are getting the training and equipment they need on time and at a cost acceptable to the taxpayer.

That is why America needs a strong Secretary of Defense now more than ever. I think Dr. Carter will be a good Secretary of Defense, who will always keep faith with our men and women in uniform and work tirelessly on their behalf and that of our national security. I am hopeful about the prospects of working together with Dr. Carter, along with my colleagues in the Senate Committee on Armed Services on both sides of the aisle, to achieve our shared priorities, especially the reform of our Defense Acquisition System, the modernization of our military compensation system, and the repeal of sequestration.

But when it comes to much of our national security policy, I must candidly express concern about the task that awaits Dr. Carter and the limited influence he may have.

Two of his predecessors, Secretary Gates and Secretary Panetta, have severely criticized White House micromanagement of the Defense Department and overcentralization of foreign and defense policies. According to numerous news reports, Secretary Hagel experienced similar frustrations with the insular and indecisive White House national security team over issues ranging from ISIL to Ukraine, detention policy to sequestration.

Dr. Carter is a worthy choice for Secretary of Defense. He has the experience, knowledge, and skill to succeed. The Armed Services Committee voted unanimously to approve his nomination last week, and I will gladly vote to confirm him today. I do so with sincere hope, and sadly, little confidence that the President who nominated Dr. Carter will empower him to lead and contribute to the fullest extent of his abilities. At a time of global upheaval and multiplying threats to our security, the American people need and deserve nothing less.

I thank my colleague from Rhode Island for his cooperation and coordination with the hearing and for his input and influence which led to a unanimous vote from the committee.

I yield the floor for my friend and colleague from Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I commend the chairman for his very clear and thoughtful conduct of these hearings with respect to Dr. Carter. The reason we are here today on the verge of a very strong vote for Dr. Carter to be the next Secretary of Defense is due to the contribution that Chairman MCCAIN has made to this process, which was extremely thoughtful and bipartisan. I thank him again for that.

Mr. President, I join Senator MCCAIN, and I not only commend him for his leadership but I also wish to express my strong support for the nomination of Dr. Ashton Carter to be the 25th Secretary of Defense. Dr. Carter is uniquely qualified to lead the Department of Defense at a time when—as Henry Kissinger recently said in a hearing before the Armed Services Committee—''the United States has not faced a more diverse and complex array of crises since the end of the Second World War.''

Dr. Carter was born and raised in Philadelphia. He received a bachelor's degree in physics and medieval history from Yale and a doctorate in theoretical physics from Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar.

During his career, Dr. Carter has already held three critical positions in the Department of Defense: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global and Strategic Affairs in the Clinton administration; Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics from 2009 to 2011; and most recently, Deputy Secretary of Defense from 2011 to 2013. He is well aware of, and has already been deeply immersed in, many of the significant challenges facing this Nation and the Defense Department.

As Deputy Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter was a critical player in the discussions and decision making on a myriad of international issues—issues that will continue to need the close attention in his tenure as Secretary of Defense.

I wish to name just a few. While the Secretary of Defense is not a party to the negotiations relating to Iran's nuclear program, the Secretary will undoubtedly be responsible for any number of potential contingencies. In the event of a breakdown in the negotiations, the consequences could alter the face of the region for generations and generations to come, and the Secretary

of Defense will be intimately involved in shaping the reaction.

Another area of deep concern is ISIL. Their violent campaign in Iraq and Syria to establish an extremist caliphate threatens to erase borders, destabilize the region, and create a breeding ground for foreign fighters willing to return to the West to carry out attacks against the United States and our allies. The Department must provide critical leadership in a coalition effort that includes Arab and Muslim States to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL while being careful to ensure that the United States does not end up, as Brent Scowcroft and Dr. Brzezinski indicated to us in a hearing before the committee, ''owning'' some of these conflicts in Syria and elsewhere.

In Afghanistan the hard-won gains of the past decade are significant but remain fragile. As the Afghan National Security Forces continue taking over responsibilities to secure Afghanistan, the United States and coalition forces have transitioned to a more limited mission of training and assisting the Afghan forces and conducting counterterrorism operations. Yet it remains to be seen whether conditions on the ground in Afghanistan will improve sufficiently by the end of 2016 to warrant the pace of further reductions under the current plan. Dr. Carter's participation in evaluating that plan will be absolutely critical.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has raised tensions in Europe to a level not seen in decades. Recently separatists in eastern Ukraine, with substantial Russian equipment, training, and leadership, have abandoned any pretext of a cease-fire, although there were discussions that were held overnight that perhaps might indicate a cease-fire. But in any case, the United States must determine the best way to support the Ukrainian people and their forces in defending their country.

Political instability in Yemen has caused the United States to evacuate its Embassy and created a vacuum, allowing the free reign of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which is intent on striking the United States and its interests. Again, the Defense Department plays a key role in supporting our partners in Yemen and navigating the complex political situation and continuing to have a presence there—which they do—which can effectively help to preempt any attempt to use that as a launching pad for operations in the region or across the globe.

The same brand of violent extremism in the Middle East can also be found in parts of Africa—al-Shabaab in Somalia, Al Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb, and Boko Haram in Nigeria. Countering the threat posed by these groups will require building partner capacity and enabling support to foreign security forces at a time when resources are scarce and those capabilities are in high demand.

In North Korea, Kim Jong Un's regime has increased tensions on the peninsula with his provocative and belligerent behavior. The recent cyber attack on Sony is just the latest in a string of destabilizing actions. The regime is playing a dangerous game that could have disastrous consequences—especially for its own civilian population which has already suffered untold hardships and deprivation under his leadership. The North Korean regime is painting itself into a corner where it will be left with few friends and few options, and again, the United States, and particularly the Department of Defense, must be ever vigilant.

While the United States and China have many areas of coordination and cooperation, our future relationship remains uncertain. We welcome the rise of a peaceful and prosperous China. Especially in this new century of global commerce and economies, a prosperous China is not only in the region's best interests but also in the world's best interest. China's increasingly controversial claims of sovereignty in the South China Sea and dangerous altercations with its neighbors raise serious concerns. While legal and peaceful avenues for dispute resolution are available, China has instead chosen to pursue, in too many cases, adversarial and unilateral actions that raise questions about its intentions.

On the cyber front, China is engaged in massive theft of U.S. intellectual property from American industry and government, which threatens our technological edge and sows distrust and profound misgivings. China will remain one of the Department's most persistent and complicated challenges. With the focus on so many crises overseas, it is easy to overlook the challenges on our own continent. We have a violent threat of transnational organized crime in our own hemisphere. When the United States faced a threat stemming from violence and the drug trade in Colombia in the 1990s, it dedicated significant resources and entered into a decade-long commitment to provide training and other enabling assistance.

Colombia is a success story, but the problem has simply moved, in many cases, to other nations in the region. General Kelly, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, leads the Department's efforts in the hemisphere, but he operates with scarce resources, a situation that may have serious consequences.

In addition to these traditional challenges that nation-states have faced for many, many years, the United States now faces new 21st century threats. For years we have devoted significant attention to the complex challenge of cyber warfare. The attack on the Sony Corporation was a watershed event in many respects, and it should and must stimulate fresh critical thinking. This attack demonstrated that a relatively small and weak rogue nation can reach across the oceans to cause extensive destruction to a U.S.-based economic target and very nearly succeed in suppressing freedom of expression through cyber space.

The real and manifest advantages of the offense over the defense in cyber warfare that enable militarily inferior nations to strike successfully against the homeland are a new and worrisome factor for our national security and that requires not only the attention of the Department of Defense but the attention of the Congress.

All of the issues I have talked about are external, but there are local issues that the Secretary of Defense has to deal with. Senator MCCAIN pointed out probably the most significant one, and that is the budgetary and programmatic challenges that have been forced upon us by sequestration.

The most immediate threat facing the Defense Department is, indeed, sequestration because without resources, the programs, the policies, and the initiatives which must be undertaken to confront these national threats cannot be done.

General Mattis, former Commander of Central Command, recently testified before our committee. He said: ''No foe in the field can wreak such havoc on our security that mindless sequestration is achieving today.''

Only one-third of Army brigades are ready to fight. Less than 50 percent of our combat squadrons are fully combat ready. Sequestration threatens not only our national security, but it risks damaging our public safety, our health, our transportation, our education, and our environment. In the world we face, there is not a neat distinction between what the Department of Defense does, what the Department of Homeland Security does, and what other civil agencies such as FEMA must do. It is something that we have to consider, not just in the context of the Department of Defense but in so many other agencies of the Federal Government—in fact, in every agency of the Federal Government.

When the Budget Control Act was passed, Dr. Carter organized the Strategic Choices and Management Review to find options for implementing the required defense cuts. The results of this review have helped the Defense Department navigate through difficult fiscal constraints, but Congress must find a balanced and bipartisan solution and a repeal of sequestration across the entire government.

Even without sequestration, the Defense Department has to tackle the rising personnel costs which could crowd out other items in the budget. Currently, military personnel benefits, including health care and retirement, consume approximately one-third of the Defense Department's budget.

If we are to adequately train and equip the force we have, to ensure they are capable of performing the arduous task we ask of them, and to modernize weapon systems, we must slow the growth of these costs within the Department in line with the slowdown of the overall top line. The congressionally mandated Military Compensation

and Retirement Modernization Commission recently released their recommendations. They are far-reaching and would fundamentally change military personnel benefits. They did so with the idea of improving the benefits available to many of our forces. They did it with the idea of insisting that our recruitment and retention efforts continue to be successful because we are a volunteer force. Their focus was really on the troops, but one of the effects of the recommendations was to make these costs sustainable over time.

As Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter will have to work with Congress to carefully consider these recommendations to ensure that the Department has the resources to properly train and equip its fighting men and women.

The other major cost driver in the Defense Department is acquisition. To put it succinctly, defense acquisition takes too long and costs too much, but the Defense Department has undertaken significant reforms in recent years and many of these were personally led by Dr. Carter.

As Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Dr. Carter oversaw implementation of the Weapons System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009, and again, I must commend Senator MCCAIN and Senator Levin for their leadership in this effort. The largest restructuring of DOD acquisition policies in more than two decades resulted from this initiative.

He also oversaw and contributed to improvements in a number of major acquisition programs, including the major restructuring on the Joint Strike Fighter program, the largest DOD acquisition program; efforts to reduce the cost of the Virginia-class submarine program and to improve contract performance, which has allowed the Navy to begin a two-per-year procurement program for these submarines, which are under budget and ahead of schedule—a remarkable achievement; improvements to the littoral combat ship program, which was experiencing major costs increases and delays, with Dr. Carter's participation DOD shifted to competitive fixed-price contracts in 2011; restructured procurement for the Air Force's KC–46A strategic tanker program, which led to a competitive procurement, incorporating a firm fixed-price development production contract for buying up to 120 tanker aircraft; and cancelling of the VH–71 program, an out-of-control program to replace the current Presidential helicopter fleet.

Clearly not all acquisition problems have been fixed and the Defense Department can and should do more to streamline and improve the system. I believe, from what I have just indicated, that Dr. Carter as Secretary of Defense will do just that. He has already demonstrated he can do it and he will do it.

Finally, and most importantly, as Senator MCCAIN indicated, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, Dr. Carter will be leading 1.3 million Active-Duty military, 820,000 Reserve and Guard, and 773,000 civilians. They are under strain after over a decade of war and years of fiscal uncertainty. They are wrestling with many of the same issues as civilian society—issues such as sexual assault and suicide. Yet they are committed to protecting this Nation and remain the finest force in the world.

Every decision Dr. Carter makes, I know he will make it thinking ultimately about what is in the best interests of the men and women in uniform and the DOD civilian workforce who give so much to this country every day, and that, I think, is one of the factors that compels all of us to support this nomination.

Dr. Carter has proven time and time again his commitment to the men and women who serve this Nation. I believe he is the right leader at the right time for the Department of Defense, and I urge my colleagues to support his confirmation.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHUCK HAGEL

Mr. President, I would urge them also at this time to commend and thank Secretary Chuck Hagel for his service. It began decades ago as a young sergeant in Vietnam where he was wounded twice, where he fought in close combat against the enemies of the United States. He took this ethic from his own experience of understanding that ultimately the decisions made here in Washington are carried out by young men and women across this globe. In his tenure, he brought principled leadership, he brought a dedication to the men and women of the Armed Forces, and he also looked ahead in many different ways. One notable approach was his complete review of the nuclear establishment, the triad, not only in terms of its effectiveness but its security and its ability to respond to the threats not just of the Cold War but of the new world we face.

So for many reasons, he has done a remarkable job, and at this juncture, it is an opportunity to salute his efforts.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. President, I have concluded my remarks with respect to the nomination of Dr. Carter, but I wish to speak for a moment on a different topic.

We are in the midst of trying to provide appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security. It is an action we must take and we should take and we should do it without extraneous policy provisions.

Over the past few weeks, the State of Rhode Island has been beset by a series of snowstorms. In fact, the State could face another foot of snow this weekend. In coordinating a response to a disaster such as this, my State depends upon the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency as well as local emergency managers. Those agencies, in turn, depend on Federal funding through the Department of Homeland Security, particularly the Emergency Management Performance grant and Homeland Security grant programs, to build the capacity they need to respond to snowstorms, to hurricanes, and to natural disasters of all forms.

However, uncertainty about Federal funding makes it harder on my State to plan and prepare. It is harder for every State to plan and prepare. It is one of the many reasons we ought to pass the bipartisan bill that was negotiated by Democrats and Republicans on the Committee on Appropriations without the provisions added by the House regarding immigration.

A clean Department of Homeland Security bill would probably pass in this Chamber by an overwhelming majority in a matter of minutes. We all understand the security of the United States—not just with respect to natural disasters but with respect to many of the issues that are handed off, if you will, from the Department of Defense to the Department of Homeland Security. When we are worried, as we all are, about the lone wolves who may be in combat zones but coming to the United States, that is quickly a Department of Homeland Security responsibility. I don't think we want to confuse the issue of defending the homeland and protecting communities from natural disasters with other issues.

This is commonsense legislation. We have done it before. We have to move I think with alacrity to get this done. It is about protecting the American people from natural disasters as well as, unfortunately, in this world we live in, the potential for terrorist activities that emanate elsewhere but are directed against the United States.

Issues that are unrelated to funding the Department of Homeland Security I think should be put aside. We can deal with them. We can deal with them through the authorization process, but let's get this Department fully appropriated so it can continue.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I support Dr. Ashton B. Carter to be our next Secretary of Defense.

I have known Dr. Carter for many years, both inside government and out, and especially as members of the Aspen Strategy Group. I have found Dr. Carter to be deeply thoughtful and extraordinarily competent. I am confident he will serve with distinction as our next Secretary of Defense, and I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

It is vital to swiftly confirm Dr. Carter because we face countless threats around the world, many of which know no simple resolution. On all these national security issues, I strongly believe we need someone in charge who brings leadership, experience, intellect and a strategic lens. Dr. Carter possesses all of these things, and I fully expect he will put his expertise and counsel to good use in tackling our Nation's pressing challenges.

First and foremost, Dr. Carter will need to lead the Pentagon in confronting and ultimately defeating the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL.

ISIL is an unconscionably evil terrorist organization. Its barbarity knows no bounds. ISIL has burned alive Jordanian Capt. Moath al-Kasasbeh, beheaded American journalists and aid workers, and inflicts daily savagery on the people of Syria and Iraq, including the murder of civilians, women, children, and minorities. To marshal international support to sustain the global coalition and ensure ISIL is ultimately eliminated, I trust Dr. Carter to serve his country well.

At the same time, Dr. Carter will need to focus on our drawdown in Afghanistan. The Taliban is resurgent, ISIL is attempting to establish itself in the country, and the Afghan National Security Forces need our continued support. In 2011, the United States fully withdrew from Iraq only to see that country fall apart due to sectarian violence and undue foreign influence. We cannot afford the same in Afghanistan.

I have discussed with Dr. Carter my view that our drawdown in Afghanistan should not be linked to an arbitrary timeline, but rather to the needs on the ground and the necessity of an orderly transition.

Dr. Carter's deep history with nuclear nonproliferation issues will also be important in the coming years. Unfortunately, many of our nonproliferation programs with Russia have gone dormant due to our worsening bilateral relationship. We cannot let this continue to happen.

For decades the United States and Russia have worked together to secure nuclear materials and reduce our nuclear arsenals because doing so is important not only for U.S. security, but for global security. Finding a way to work constructively with Russia on securing and eliminating nuclear material, despite its invasion of Ukraine and continued support for the Assad regime in Syria, is clearly a most difficult assignment. I think Dr. Carter is up to the task.

Finally, Dr. Carter will need to deal with the extremely difficult spending limitations created by the 2011 Budget Control Act. If Congress cannot come together to find a bipartisan solution to raise the spending caps, like we did for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, overall security spending will only be allowed to increase by $1.8 billion this year, that is a less than one-half of 1 percent increase.

At a time when threats to our Nation are increasing, not decreasing, I am deeply concerned that, under current law, our defense budget will not be allowed to rise to meet current threats. Dr. Carter understands this. In his confirmation hearing, he said, ''I very much hope that we can find a way together out of the wilderness of sequester.'' I fully agree, and I urge my colleagues to work together to increase the spending caps for both defense and non-defense programs.

Dr. Carter is a rare combination of a strategic foreign policy thinker and an expert on the roles and procedures of the Department of Defense. In his time as Assistant Secretary of Defense under President Clinton, he focused on key national security issues like proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and relationships with other major world powers.

In his two recent positions at the Pentagon—as Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics and as the Deputy Secretary—Dr. Carter has managed the Department's business functions and ran its day-to-day operations. As Secretary, he will bring his unique experience in both sides of the job to the numerous challenges the Department and the Nation face.

Dr. Carter returns to the Defense Department at a time of immense global upheaval. Leading the Defense Department in such a time is no easy task, but I believe he will prove to be an excellent pick to help our country address these challenges head-on. He has the support of the President, the military, the civilian leadership of the Department, and by virtue of this vote, the U.S. Senate.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REALITIES OF DRUG SENTENCING IN THE FEDERAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President and Members of the Senate, as chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, I have mentioned publicly that I am open to certain Federal sentencing, or prison, reforms, and I have tried to make it very clear that I am very opposed to others.

Today I wish to address the realities of drug sentencing in the Federal criminal justice system. I do so because there are many myths that surround this topic.

The myth is that there are thousands of low-level drug offenders, such as people smoking marijuana, in Federal prison for very long terms. This is supposed to mean a waste of Federal tax dollars, overcrowding, and unfairness to people who should not be in prison. These myths are often used to justify lenient and, frankly, dangerous sentencing proposals in the U.S. Senate. One of those proposals is the so-called Smarter Sentencing Act.

It is time to set the record straight, and that is why I am here. It is important to know how many people are in Federal prison for drug possession, who they are, and why they are in prison. Then it will be clear why it is unwise to make wholesale, one-way lenient changes in drug sentencing. In fiscal year 2013, the most recent year we have statistics, according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission there were 2,332 drug possession cases in the Federal prison. Almost 94 percent involved marijuana, more than 86 percent were against noncitizens, and 88 percent of the cases arose along the southwest border, so it is clear why so many noncitizens were charged. Federal drug possessors were rarely prosecuted for small quantities.

The median amount of drug possession in these southwest border cases, which are 88 percent of the Federal drug possession cases, was about 48 pounds. Understand, we are not talking about a few ounces of possession of marijuana. The average is 48 pounds. Can you imagine being in possession of 48 pounds of illegal drugs? These are not low-level, casual offenders by any stretch of the imagination. Moreover, well over 90 percent of the drug possession cases are along the southwest border. So more than 80 percent of all Federal drug possession cases were brought in the State of Arizona.

In that district, the U.S. attorney will agree to charge a drug trafficker with only drug possession if the offender is a first-time offender who acted only as a courier. Again, the median quantity of the amount of possession is 48 pounds, and many who actually committed trafficking there are charged only with mere drug possession.

Since 88 percent of all Federal drug possession cases derive from the southwest border, only 270 simple drug possession cases arose anywhere else in the United States. Get this, please. The odds of an American being subject to a Federal prosecution for drug possession in any given year are less than 1 in 1 million. It is also imperative to remember that mandatory minimum sentences are not an issue in these cases. The average Federal sentence for drug possession is 5 months; that is, only 5 months—I say that for emphasis—not the years of imprisonment some of the proponents of lenient sentencing would have us believe.

The brevity of Federal drug possession sentences is emphasized by how in the vast majority of these cases the median amount of drugs at issue was 48 pounds. In the 270 cases not along the border, the median amount of drugs the offender possessed was only 4 grams. The average sentence was 1.3 months. Most of those convicted were sentenced to probation.

There is no basis whatsoever to advocate change in Federal mandatory minimum sentencing laws based on drug possession cases since they are not subject to such mandatory minimums. Anyone who raises drug possession as an argument against Federal mandatory minimum sentences is using a stalking horse to lower sentences for much more serious offenders.

There is no separate Federal offense for what is called possession with intent to distribute. Those who possessed with that intent are treated the same as those who distribute. We need to look at drug distribution sentences in the Federal system as well.

Drug trafficking cases are sometimes subject to mandatory minimum sentences. For instance, just under half of all drug courier offenders were subject to mandatory minimum sentences, but under 10 percent were subject to mandatory minimum sentences at the time of their sentencing.

There are two main reasons so few of these offenders are actually sentenced to a mandatory minimum. The first is they may fall within the safety valve Congress has enacted to prevent mandatory minimum sentences from applying to low-level, first-time drug offenders or, second, they may have provided substantial assistance to prosecutors in fingering high-level offenders in a drug conspiracy.

That is an intended goal of current Federal sentencing policy, to put pressure on defendants to cooperate in exchange for a lower sentence so evidence against more responsible criminals can be attained. As a result, even for drug couriers the average sentence is 39 months. That seems to be an appropriate level.

We are not sending huge numbers of nonviolent drug offenders to Federal prison under lengthy mandatory minimum sentences. I want to make it very clear, this is the biggest sentencing myth of them all. When Federal drug sentencing is discussed, we need then to keep in mind the facts. There are hardly any nonviolent drug-offending Americans in Federal prison for mere drug possession. The quantities of drugs underlying the vast majority of Federal possession cases are high and sentences are fair. For drug courier distribution cases, only 10 percent of offenders are subject to mandatory minimum sentences at the time of sentencing.

I hope you will be on notice and be on guard. Don't let anyone tell you Federal mandatory minimum sentences are putting large numbers of nonviolent offenders in jail for long periods of time at great taxpayer expense. Don't let anyone tell you such offenders are the reason for the increase in Federal drug prisoners over the years. Don't let anyone tell you harsh mandatory sentences for low-level nonviolent offenders are decimating various communities.

Apart from the clear evidence from the Sentencing Commission regarding Federal drug offenders, I want to draw attention to the responses to questions from witnesses before our Judiciary Committee just this month. Testifying before the committee, Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke, Jr., stated: ''Federal mandatory minimum sentences have struck terror into the hearts of career criminals . . . and have provided longer periods of respite from the impoverished and crime-riddled communities that can least afford their return.''

The sheriff said he feared the effect in his inner-city community of changing Federal drug mandatory minimum sentences. I have told my colleagues I am going to be open to lowering some Federal mandatory minimum sentences but only where specific situations may warrant that and if we can add or raise new ones for such offenses as arms export control violations, financial crimes, and child pornography possessions. Those three categories do not have to be extremely long sentences under present law, but too many judges are systematically sentencing these offenders to probation. Especially when the Supreme Court has taken away any other means of making sure judges do not let these offenders walk, mandatory minimum sentences are the only way Congress can require these offenders serve any time at all.

I am trying to inform my Senate colleagues through the use of facts. In doing that, by looking at the facts, we will not make unwise and dangerous changes to our Federal sentencing laws. I ask my colleagues to stick to the facts and avoid repeating myths. I pointed out those myths. It is a myth to say sentences for drug possession and nonviolent offenders justify the Smarter Sentencing Act. That bill does not apply to possession at all. Many drug offenses necessarily involve violence. Drug conspiracies operate with the threat or the use of force.

Whatever the offense charged, if the offender has a history of violent crime, he is a violent offender, and the sentence will and should reflect that fact. It is a myth to say the Smarter Sentencing Act would save money. All it would do is shift costs from incarceration to the victims who bear the cost of the crimes that earlier released offenders would commit. That is one of the reasons the bill is dangerous.

The Congressional Budget Office also says it would add billions of dollars in mandatory spending, regardless of what upfront discretionary savings there may be. I would ask my colleagues to get this: It is a fact the Smarter Sentencing Act would cut sentences for a range of heroin offenses, including importation and dealing, while the entire Nation is in the midst of a heroin epidemic and a rising number of deaths from heroin overdoses.

I would ask my colleagues to get this: It is a fact from the heads of the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Agency and Federal police organizations that mandatory minimum sentences spur cooperation from defendants and enable the successful prosecution of high-level drug criminals who cause most of the tremendous harm. That includes cooperation from defendants charged with narcoterrorism.

I would ask my colleagues to get this: It is a fact the so-called Smarter Sentencing Act would cut in half the mandatory minimum sentences Congress put in place for distributing drugs to benefit terrorists or terrorist organizations. It would cut in half the mandatory minimum sentences for members of Taliban, Al Qaeda, ISIS or Hezbollah who deal drugs that fund terrorism. That would mean less cooperation to bring charges of narcoterrorism, get terrorists off the streets, and obtain intelligence to help prevent future attacks.

As President Obama's U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York has remarked, ''[T]here is a growing nexus between drug trafficking and terrorism, a threat that increasingly poses a clear and present danger to our national security.

So I ask my colleagues to get this: It is a fact that the so-called Smarter Sentencing Act is dangerous not only because of its effect on increased crime and victimization but on national security as well.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to urge our colleagues to come together quickly to pass a clean Homeland Security bill. We are now just 16 days away from a Homeland Security shutdown. The clock is ticking. A shutdown would be wholly unnecessary and, quite frankly, completely dangerous. We know we do not lack for security threats. It was less than 2 years ago that terrorists attacked the Boston Marathon. It was just weeks ago that we witnessed a horrific series of terror attacks on our friends in Paris. We know the brutal destabilizing force known as the Islamic State, or ISIL, is determined to hurt our Nation and our citizens. The world is a dangerous place.

At a time like this, we should be working together on a bipartisan basis to fund and strengthen Homeland Security, but instead we are facing insecurity, instability, and uncertainty because some want to hold the funding for the Department of Homeland Security hostage—hostage to a partisan political debate.

Is it really more important to hold a fight over deporting children who came to the United States and know no country other than the United States, came here through no fault of their own? Is it more important to hold this fight over deporting those children than it is to protect America against terrorist threats?

Although protecting against these threats is reason enough to oppose this misguided strategy, the resulting fallout would not just be limited to national security. This bill includes

FEMA grants to disaster-stricken areas. This bill includes funding for grants to local fire departments—grants that would not occur.

Thousands of essential public servants—from Homeland Security, to FEMA, to our terrific men and women in the Coast Guard—would be asked to keep on working even though we are not paying them. This is not the way to run a nation. This is certainly not the way to address national security threats that face us.

I think it is telling when a strategy is being criticized from Members on both sides of the aisle. This is a foolhardy game being played with our national security.

A colleague from Arizona said on this floor just yesterday—a colleague from across the aisle—that ''to attempt to use a spending bill in order to poke a finger in the President's eye is not a good move.''

Another colleague from across the aisle, from Illinois, said, ''The American people are pretty alarmed, as they should be, about security . . . the way to go forward is just fund DHS,'' the Department of Homeland Security. He continued, ''We ought to strip the bill of extraneous issues and make it about homeland security.''

That is the path forward, to have a funding bill for Homeland Security, stripped of political riders designed to take on one issue or another when those issues can be addressed in separate bills. If someone really wants to prioritize the deportation of children who came here through no fault of their own and know no country other than the United States, our DREAMers, then they should write that bill, put it through committee, and then the majority should bring the debate to the floor of this Chamber. I can tell you that I would be voting against that bill, but we would have the debate on that issue separate from the conversation about funding Homeland Security.

I found it interesting to read the Wall Street Journal the other day. It refers to immigration restrictionists who want a larger brawl and have browbeat GOP leaders into adding needless policy amendments. That is coming from the Wall Street Journal. They proceed to say in regard to the fight over prioritizing the deportation of folks who are here without legal credentials and who have criminal backgrounds, that the President is ''prioritizing'' those deportations of those with criminal backgrounds. The Wall Street Journal says:

> That is legitimate prosecutorial discretion, and in opposing it Republicans are undermining their crime-fighting credentials.

So if some of my colleagues want to argue that the President should not prioritize deporting individuals with criminal backgrounds, which I think should be prioritized, have that debate, but do not hold the Homeland Security bill hostage to that particular fight.

In this morning's paper, there was an article about the funding of the Department of Homeland Security. This is in the Washington Post. It refers to the Grand Old Party at impasse as a measure stalls in the Senate. It quotes the Speaker of the House, Mr. BOEHNER. Speaker BOEHNER says, ''It is time for the Senate to do their work,'' and he proceeds to give a little lecture to Senators. He says, ''You know, in the gift shop out here, they've got these little booklets on how a bill becomes a law.'' Well, I encourage Speaker BOEHNER to actually read that book because what that book says is that in order to pass through the Senate, it has to get on the floor and it has to have support to be approved by this Chamber.

So, Speaker BOEHNER, I encourage you to actually read the pamphlet you recommended because sending over funding for Homeland Security laden with unrelated policy riders is going to make sure that bill dies here in the Senate. Don't take my word for it, take the Senate's version or expression on this. It has come up for three votes in the Senate. We have voted three times to kill this House bill, giving clear instruction to the House: Send us the actual Department of Homeland Security bill free of these political riders, and we will put it on the floor, and we will have that debate, and we will undoubtedly pass that bill. But if you want to play political games rather than looking out for the security of the United States of America, don't expect the Senate to rubberstamp your political games, Speaker BOEHNER.

So that is where we are now. I do encourage the Speaker to go right down the gift shop—I will be happy to buy him a copy of this, and I will be happy to read the phrases to the Speaker on exactly how a bill becomes law.

It is deeply disturbing to the American people to see these types of political games being played with our Nation's security. We live in a dangerous world, and we need to take seriously our responsibility to fund this Department.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. BROWN pertaining to the introduction of S. 522 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, are we on the Carter nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, this is an important nomination, at a time when this country faces very significant national security threats.

AUMF

As I commented yesterday, the President came to us yesterday asking us to authorize the use of force, and I think we should do that. I am not necessarily sure we should do it in the way he has asked us to do it. I think it should be a pretty straightforward authorization, and here is what it should say. It should say we authorize the President of the United States to destroy ISIS and to defeat their military. It is up to the Commander in Chief to decide the right way in which to do that.

I have very serious concerns and very serious reservations about our current strategy when it comes to ISIS. I am not sure it is sufficient. I think it is a strategy that will contain them but will not defeat them. In fact, ISIS is now popping up, for example, in Libya, where they have a very significant hub. They have a very significant presence in Benghazi. Just a few days ago they carried out an attack in Tripoli. We are now hearing media reports that ISIS has a presence in Afghanistan, perhaps even terrorist training camps.

So they continue to grow their affiliates, they continue to grow their presence, and we need an authorization of the use of force that allows us to defeat them anywhere in the world where they are to be found.

The President's suggestion has been well received. We thank him for submitting one. But now it is the responsibility of the Senate to do its job and to write one of its own. It may reflect many of the things the President wants, but what I believe it should reflect more than anything else is that we authorize him to defeat ISIS no matter what it takes and no matter how long it takes. If we have problems with the President's strategy, there are different ways to address it. I do have problems with the strategy and I want that to be addressed.

ISRAEL

Mr. Carter's nomination comes at another important moment. In that same region of the world, one of America's strongest allies and its very existence is under attack. Of course I am talking about Israel, the Jewish State—an extraordinary story in the history of the world. Here is a country founded after the end of World War II as a homeland for the Jewish people so that never again—never again—would they have nowhere to go if they faced the sorts of oppression, the sort of genocide they faced during the Holocaust.

Since that time the Jewish State has had an extraordinary story. From an economic perspective, it is a vibrant, first-rate country with a first-rate economy. What is most interesting is this is not a country with oil or a country with vast supplies of natural gas.

This is not a country that is an agricultural superpower, yet it has a world-class economy providing prosperity and upward mobility to millions of its people, and it has done so on the basis of innovation.

There is a very good book recently written called ''Start-up Nation'' that talks about the extraordinary story of Israel.

It is also a very vibrant democracy—in fact, observers of Israeli politics often joke perhaps a little too vibrant. They have heated debates. But it is a democracy.

So what we have here is a democratic nation with a vibrant free enterprise economy in the middle of the Middle East.

Israel is everything we want that region of the world to become. We wish every nation in that region were a real democracy, a vibrant one. We wish every nation in that part of the world had a first-rate economy that provided upward mobility to everyone. And we wish every nation in the Middle East was as strong an ally of the United States as Israel has been.

This is the extraordinary story of this small but important nation, and this country must continue to be their strongest ally in the world. But they face extraordinary threats to their safety, to their security, and to their existence.

It begins with what I believe is a concerted effort around the world—including in American academia, including in the universities of this very country—to delegitimize Israel's right to exist and its right to exist as a Jewish state, and it is an outrage.

It continues with the growth of anti-Semitism all over the world, increasingly in Europe. Every day we see stories of a mass exodus as more and more Jews are leaving Europe because of the growth of anti-Semitism.

We saw what happened in Paris—not just the attack that happened but how Jews were deliberately targeted for death by terrorists. It was not a random attack. It was a deliberate act to target Jews. It was a deliberate act of violence in the furtherance of anti-Semitism.

In every international body in the world, Israel is often the target of scorn and criticism, without any consideration whatsoever to what its enemies intend to do to them. And now perhaps the greatest risk of all is to its very existence from the threat of an Iranian nuclear program.

I, like everybody else, wish that I would wake up tomorrow morning to the news that the Ayatollah had come to his senses and realized Iran cannot continue down its path; that they have given up their nuclear weapons ambition; that they have given up sponsoring terrorism all over the world; that they have given up their anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic rhetoric; that they have given up oppressing their own people. But I know that is not going to happen because Iran is not governed by a normal leader the way we would consider a leader of a nation. Iran is governed by a radical shia cleric—a radical shia cleric who believes he is not only the head of Iran, he believes he is the head of all Islam everywhere in the world. Iran is where he lives. Iran is where he is based. But Iran is not what he believes is his domain; he believes every Muslim on the planet under the Sun is under his control and leadership.

But here is the scariest thing he believes: He believes it is his job to trigger an apocalyptic showdown between the Muslim and non-Muslim world because that would bring about the emergence of the 13th Imam—the Hidden Imam, the Mahdi, as they call him—who will then come and govern the entire world under the flag of Islam—his version of radical Islam. We may say that stuff sounds a little far-fetched. That is what he believes. That is what he passionately and legitimately believes.

So when someone wants to trigger an apocalyptic showdown between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, when someone says they want to destroy the State of Israel, wipe it off the face of the Earth, and that person is trying to acquire nuclear weapons capabilities, we had better be very concerned, and we had better conclude that is an unacceptable risk for us to take. It is particularly scary for Israel because they are closer to Iran than we are. They are in their crosshairs both verbally and militarily.

The administration would have us believe that we are in the midst of this negotiation and hopefully we will delay the Iranian nuclear program or extend the amount of time they would need to break out. Let me break it to everyone: They are not going to break out. They are going to sneak out. They will concoct some sort of excuse at some point in the future as to why they need a nuclear weapons program.

Let me begin by saying that Iran is an oil-rich nation. They have no need for civilian nuclear power. But if they want one, they can have it, like most of the other countries in the world do, by importing enriched uranium or reprocessed plutonium and using it for their reactors for peaceful purposes. But instead they insist on the ability to enrich and reprocess, and there is only one reason why they would insist on that—because they want the infrastructure necessary to one day build a weapon when they decide they need it.

But don't take my word for it. That is not the only thing they are doing. There are two other aspects of their program that aren't even being discussed.

The first is that they continue to develop long-range rockets. Why do they need intercontinental missiles? Why do they need long-range rockets? They don't need them for conventional purposes. They don't put a conventional warhead—they don't spend all the time and energy and money that it takes to build that capacity to bomb someone with a conventional weapon. There is only one reason to build long-range rockets such as those, and that is to put a nuclear warhead on them. That is not being discussed in these negotiations, and they continue to make unabated progress toward their long-range rocket capabilities.

The other is a weapons design. The three things they need for a nuclear weapons program: a weapons design, long-range rockets, and the ability to enrich and reprocess. They are already building the rockets. The weapons design they can literally buy from dozens of people around the world who will sell it to them. And the reprocessing? Even under the deal the President is asking for, if it went down exactly the way the President is asking for, they would still keep all the infrastructure, all the things that it takes to enrich to weapons-grade. They would have all the equipment, all the scientists, all the infrastructure.

Here is one more point. Iran has always had a secret component to their nuclear program. They have always had some secret component to their program. And I would venture to guess that right now they have a secret component to their program as well that we do not know about.

That is why I have little hope in this deal, and that is why Prime Minister Netanyahu is so concerned about the deal. See, he doesn't have the luxury of living an illusion. He doesn't have the luxury of pretending that somehow we can work this out, as if somehow we are negotiating with Luxembourg or Belgium. He knows the neighborhood he lives in, and he knows his enemy. He knows their true nature. He knows their true intentions. And it is his obligation not just to protect his people but to fight for that nation's very existence. So he has chosen to come before the Congress at the invitation of the Speaker. I am glad he has accepted his invitation, and I think we owe him the courtesy to hear what he has to say.

I want you to go back and look at the United Nations rollcall votes. Time and again, when the interests of this country are being challenged around the world, I want you to see how many times Israel is one of the few countries—often the only country—that vote with the United States of America in that international forum. I want you to see all the times that the Israelis have stood with America on issue after issue around the world.

I also want you to think about what it says about us as a nation if we are not prepared to make it very clear that before anything else, we are the friends of our allies. What does it say to our other allies around the world, to other nations in other parts of the world that are counting on the American security guarantee for their own existence and their own security, what does it say to Japan and to South Korea and to our allies in NATO if the United States is

prepared to create daylight between us and the State of Israel?

That is exactly the message people will get—that there is a division between us and Israel—if, in fact, Members of Congress carry through on their threat to boycott the Prime Minister's speech before Congress on the 3rd of March. If a significant number of Members of the Senate and the House boycott his speech, that message will be heard not only by Israel's enemies but also by our allies. And the message will be twofold—one, that America is no longer firmly on the side of Israel as it once was, and two, that America is an unreliable ally; look what they just did to Israel.

I think everyone has the right to go or not go to any speech they want, but I hope my colleagues who are thinking about not going will reconsider. You may not like the way this went down. You may not like the fact that the Speaker did it the way he did it. That is your choice. But I want you to think about the implications beyond that. I want you to think about the implications this leaves on Israel. I want you to think about the message this sends to Israel's enemies because what we have seen decade after decade is that anytime Israel's enemies get the perception that somehow America is no longer as committed to Israel's security as it once was, it emboldens them to attack Israel, and Israel has no shortage of enemies that want to not just attack them but destroy them. We have seen what Hamas has done. We have seen what Hezbollah has done. We have seen what Iran wants to do and is doing.

If you boycott this speech, if a significant number of Members of Congress boycott this speech, you will send an incredibly powerful message to Israel's enemies. So I hope you will reconsider.

I don't question anyone's commitment on this issue. I believe there are supporters of Israel who won't attend the speech because they think it is disrespectful to the President. This is a lot bigger than that. We are talking about the existence of this nation. We are talking about whether people in that nation will survive in 20 years or 15 years. That is how important and monumental this moment is.

I am not claiming that by you not attending the speech, somehow that is going to lead to Israel's destruction. I am claiming that if you boycott this speech, you will send a message to Israel's enemies that could embolden them, and I hope you will reconsider that position.

I find it quite frankly outrageous that reports are that the White House has asked Members of Congress to boycott the speech. I find it outrageous that the Vice President of the United States—the Vice President—has decided to boycott that speech. I find it outrageous, for example, that on the one hand we are more than glad to send administration officials at the highest levels to sit down and meet repeatedly with the highest ranking officials that Iran will send, but our strongest ally's Prime Minister is coming to Washington and they won't even meet with him? One of our strongest ally's Prime Minister wants to speak before the Congress and they won't even attend the speech? What do you think the headlines will be read as in Iran, by the terrorists in Gaza, by the terrorists in Judea and Samaria, by the terrorists in all parts of the world, such as in Lebanon, who want to destroy Israel? What do you think they are going to read into it? What they are going to read into it, unfortunately, is that somehow Congress's commitment to the future security of Israel is not as strong as it once was. And I fear what the implications of that will be. We should not take this lightly.

I can think of no nation on Earth that needs our help more right now than Israel, and I can think of no people on Earth who deserve our support more than they do. As I said earlier, they are a reliable, strong, committed ally of this Nation. We have strong links to them on personal, cultural, political, and economic levels. They have stood by us time and again in international forums when America's interests have been challenged. They are everything we want the Middle East to look like in the future—free, prosperous, democratic, aligned with America, peace-loving, desirous of a better future. What more do you want? What more could they do? What else could they be for us to be any stronger an ally of theirs than we should be or are right now? Yet there are people who are talking about boycotting the speech to protest because their feelings are hurt, because they are upset about the way it went down, because they don't like the way it was scheduled, because it was disrespectful to the President.

You have the right to voice your concerns, but don't do this to an ally. Don't do this to a nation that is as threatened today as it has ever been at any time in its existence. Don't do this to a people who are in the crosshairs of multiple terrorist groups with the capability of attacking them. Don't do this to a nation whose civilians are terrorized by thousands of rockets launched against them at a moment's notice. Don't do this to a country that is facing down the threat of a nuclear weapon annihilating them off the face of the Earth. Don't do this to a people who are being stigmatized all over the world even as we speak, who are being oppressed. Don't do this to a country that in forum after forum has become the subject of delegitimization, as people argue that somehow Israel's right to exist is not real. Don't do this to them.

I hope my colleagues will reconsider their decision to not attend. This is an important speech. It is the Prime Minister's choice, obviously. He must always act in the best interests of his nation and his people. But I hope he will speak to us on March 3, and I hope he will speak to us clearly. I hope that through his speech he will open the eyes of this Congress and the American people that this is not child's play, that what Iran intends to have is not just a nuclear weapon to destroy Israel but ultimately to terrorize the world. I hope he will speak to us bluntly about the true nature of this threat.

I know there is a lot going on in the world, but there is no greater threat to the long-term security of the planet than the Iranian nuclear ambition. No people and no nation on Earth know that better than the people of Israel, and no leader on Earth understands that better than Prime Minister Netanyahu.

I think after years of commitment to this alliance, after the bravery he has shown in his time in office and the bravery the Jewish people of Israel have shown in defending their nation's right to exist after being attacked multiple times throughout their history and even to this modern day, they deserve our unambiguous support. Of course, there are differences between allies. There always have been and always will be.

If we won't stand for Israel, for whom will we stand? If the United States of America will not defend its ally, whom will we defend? What message do we send to our alliances across the planet and what message do we send to our enemies and Israel's enemies?

I hope cooler heads will prevail. I hope Members of the House and Senate who have announced they are boycotting will reconsider. I hope we will all be there, if we can, to hear what the Prime Minister has to say the first week in March.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in executive session.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTES TO KATHIE ALVAREZ

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, regular C–SPAN viewers, this is your DVR alert. Get your TiVo ready. After today you will no longer hear the dulcet voice of Kathie Alvarez calling the roll in the United States Senate. After nearly 30 years as an integral part of the floor staff, Kathie is leaving the Senate.

Her road to the Senate began as a young seventh grade history teacher in Louisiana. In 1984 she chaperoned her

students during a class trip to Washington, DC. During the trip she met an old college friend who told her about a job opening in the Senate Document Room. While her students were touring the Capitol, Kathie interviewed and was hired on the spot. Unfortunately for those students, they lost a great teacher that day, but it turned out to be a gain for the Senate.

In 1985 Kathie was hired as the second assistant bill clerk and was quickly promoted to assistant bill clerk.

In 1991, for the first time, Senators came to this Chamber and heard a woman's voice taking the rollcall vote. It was Kathie Alvarez, the first female bill clerk of the United States Senate. What an achievement.

Before the end of the millennium, Kathie Alvarez was a part of another first when she was 1 of 10 officers—all women—presiding over the Senate at the start of the day. If that were not enough, Kathie once again made history when she was promoted to legislative clerk in 2009. She was the first woman to serve in this role too. What a career.

In 1922, for the history books, Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman to sit in the Senate. She served in this body for only 1 day, but during those 24 hours she made a bold prediction for her time about the future role women would play in the Senate. She said:

> When the women of the country come in and sit with you . . . you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness.

Well, I will certainly second that.

As the first woman to serve as the bill clerk and legislative clerk of the United States Senate, I would say Kathie Alvarez has certainly lived up to Senator Felton's prediction. She began her career as a seventh grade history teacher and came to the Senate, where she made history.

Thank you for your service to this body. I know you will be joining your husband John and your high school student daughter Georgia in a much more fulsome way now, but we will miss you in the Senate, and I wish you and your family the very best.

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

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I wish to say a word about a remarkable woman in the Senate we will soon be losing.

Kathie Alvarez, the Senate's legislative clerk, is a bit of a celebrity. Every C–SPAN aficionado knows her voice. All she has to say is ''Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE . . .'' and it is instantly recognizable.

Kathie has been calling the roll around here for quite a while. In 1991, she became the first woman to ever call the roll in the Senate. In 1999, with Senator COLLINS in the chair, Kathie became a member of the first all-female team to preside over this body, and in 2009 she became the Senate's first female legislative clerk.

So Kathie Alvarez has been making a lot of history since she first arrived here in 1984.

And you will notice, Madam President, that every female floor staffer is paying tribute to her today. They are each wearing something with Kathie's favorite design—animal print.

Along with the love of Cajun food, sartorial distinction is one thing this Louisianan has become known for, a passion for perfection is another.

Kathie has maintained a laser-like focus for three decades. That is good news for the Senate because we rely on her—and the American people rely on her—to ensure that every bill, every amendment, and every message from the House is processed perfectly. That is a lot of pressure.

So we can't blame Kathie for wanting to retire. I know she is looking forward to spending more time with her husband John, and I know Kathie wants to see more of her daughter Georgia.

It will not be as though Kathie is leaving us entirely. We will still be able to hear her voice on the film every tourist watches when they come to visit the Capitol.

So the Senate thanks Kathie Alvarez, its history-making celebrity, for her many years of service, and we wish the very best to her deputy, John Merlino, as he steps into Kathie's role as the Senate's new legislative clerk.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Ashton B. Carter, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Defense?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Ex.]

YEAS—93

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

NAYS—5

Blunt	Crapo	Risch
Boozman	Kirk	

NOT VOTING—2

Moran	Reid

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for 2 weeks now Democrats have continued to filibuster funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

They are filibustering Homeland Security for one reason, and that is to defend actions President Obama himself referred to as ''unwise and unfair'' and ''ignoring the law.''

For 2 full weeks, Democrats have prevented the Senate from even considering legislation to fund the Department of Homeland Security. Democrats won't allow the Senate to even debate this funding. Democrats won't allow the Senate to even consider amendments to this funding.

Democrats appear willing to do anything and everything they can to prevent the Senate from taking any action to fund Homeland Security, and all to defend ''unwise and unfair''—the President's words, not mine—overreach.

This includes Democrats who claim to be against overreach and who claim to be for funding the Department of Homeland Security. Yet these Democrats continue to filibuster things they claim to want.

Listen to the things Democrats have been saying too. We have heard a claim

from them the Democratic filibuster wasn't actually a filibuster. We heard a call from them for the Senate to start with funding legislation of its own. Of course, the Democratic leader has been clear in the past that the Senate can do no such thing.

Well, here is some good news. There is already a funding bill before us. It has already passed the House. It would fund the Department of Homeland Security fully, and we can consider it today, right now. All Democrats have to do is stop blocking the Senate from even debating it. If our Democratic colleagues don't like provisions of the bill the House has passed, the Senate has a process for modifying bills. It is called amending them. But the Senate can only consider amendments to a bill if it is not being filibustered.

This strained logic of our Democratic friends is very hard to swallow. We understand Democrats might be having a tough time kicking this years-long gridlock habit of theirs, but it is about time they did.

I have already offered a fair and open debate to them several times now. It is a debate that would allow amendments from both parties—that means amendments from our Democratic friends as well. If you want to make changes to the bill, colleagues, that is the way to do it. But to do so you first need to end the weeks-long Democratic filibuster of Homeland Security funding.

Why don't we get serious instead and let the Senate fund the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to proceed to H.R. 240 be agreed to, and that it be made in order for the managers or their designees to offer amendments in an alternating fashion, with the majority manager or his designee being recognized to offer the first amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The acting minority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I don't understand why the Republicans in the House and the Senate have decided to hold up one appropriations bill of our Federal Government, the appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security, the one agency that is supposed to protect us against terrorism.

Last December, the House Republicans said: We are just not going to give regular funding to this Department—$48 billion this Department spends on the Coast Guard, border security, and a myriad of different things to keep America safe—but the Republicans said this is one agency we are not going to fully fund. We will put them on temporary funding, called a continuing resolution, and we will get back to you on February 27.

Then what they did is to lash the budget of this Department to the thorny, difficult issue of immigration and insist that we can't fund the Department of Homeland Security unless we take up what I consider to be some rather outrageous riders put on by the House of Representatives on the issue of immigration.

The good news is we have come up with a solution on this side. I am going to make it in the manner of a unanimous consent request, and it is very straightforward.

First, because Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN from New Hampshire has stepped forward and offered, with Senator MIKULSKI, S. 272, we have a clean appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

If the Senator would like me to yield for a question, I will yield at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. If I could ask my colleague a question, isn't it true, I say to Senator DURBIN, that the bill you are talking about, the clean bill Senator MIKULSKI and I have introduced, is the legislation that was agreed to last December by Senator MIKULSKI, when she was chair of the Appropriations Committee, and HAL ROGERS, chair of the House Appropriations Committee? It was a bipartisan agreement, a bicameral agreement, and each side gave some.

What is at issue here is not that underlying bill. What is at issue are the five riders, the amendments the House put on, that have nothing to do with funding the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. DURBIN. I would answer in the affirmative. That is why the unanimous consent request I am going to make is the easiest, quickest solution to our problem—a clean, bipartisan appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security. But we are not running away from the immigration issue. Because Senator MCCONNELL is now the majority leader and controls the business of the Senate and Speaker BOEHNER controls the business of the House, they can take up the immigration issue immediately after we have funded this Department.

So what I am going to suggest in my unanimous consent request is that they use their power in the majority to take us to this important debate on immigration after we have given a clean appropriation to the one Federal agency empowered with keeping America safe from terrorism.

Let's not play politics with terrorism. Let's not play politics with the budget of the Department of Homeland Security.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that following the enactment of the text of S. 272, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader but no later than Monday, March 16, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, as passed by the Senate by a vote of 68 to 32 on June 27, 2013, the text of which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to H.R. 240.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 240, making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Thad Cochran, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, David Vitter, Jerry Moran, Daniel Coats, Michael B. Enzi, Mike Crapo, Bill Cassidy, John Boozman, John Thune, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, James Lankford, Jeff Sessions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

(The remarks of Mr. CORNYN pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 76 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota.

(The remarks of Ms. KLOBUCHAR pertaining to the introduction of S. 491 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

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

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, yesterday the Budget Committee, of which I am the ranking member, held a very important hearing on the Social Security Disability Insurance Program,

which is a life-and-death program for nearly 11 million Americans, including more than 1 million veterans and almost 2 million children who rely on this program to get the nutrition they need, to heat their homes, and to pay for their medicine. This is a program that impacts some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

Let me be very clear in describing this program. This is a program American workers have paid into. It is an insurance program. This is not charity.

When Americans pay 6.2 percent of their income in payroll tax, almost 1 percent of that amount goes into the disability insurance program. The average disability insurance benefit is less than $1,200 a month, and for 30 percent of beneficiaries this is all of the income they have—$1,200 a month, 30 percent of the beneficiaries of SSDI. For them this is all of their income. Nobody is getting rich off of disability benefits.

Sadly, on the very first day of the new Congress, House Republicans passed a rule that would lay the groundwork for a 19-percent cut in Social Security disability insurance benefits. Specifically, this rule would prohibit the reallocation of payroll taxes from the Social Security retirement fund to the disability insurance fund, a routine accounting practice that has been done 11 times in the past in a very noncontroversial, nonpartisan way. But Republicans in the House said they will not allow this to happen unless it is accompanied by a cut in Social Security benefits or an increase in taxes.

In other words, what the House Republicans are saying is that either there will be cuts to the disability program or, if that fund is to be replenished, the money will have to come from cuts to the Social Security Retirement Program. In my view, that is very wrong.

If the Social Security disability program was cut by 19 percent, it would mean the average benefit of approximately $13,980 a year for a disabled person—which is already where the poverty level is—would be cut by 19 percent to $11,324. That is what a 19-percent cut to the average Social Security disability insurance benefit would mean.

Do any of my colleagues believe a person with a severe disability—maybe that person is facing a terminal illness, maybe that person is paralyzed, maybe that person is an amputee. Does anybody believe a disabled person in America in the year 2015 should be forced to live on $11,324 a year?

Unfortunately, that is what the House Republicans are laying the groundwork for. That is what a 19-percent cut in disability benefits would mean, and we must not allow that to happen.

In my view, the debate we are having is nothing more than a manufactured crisis which is part of the long-term agenda of a number of Republicans who in fact are trying to cut Social Security. In my view, cutting Social Security is a very bad idea.

Let us be very clear because there is a lot of misinformation about Social Security that is getting out there. The fact is Social Security has a $2.8 trillion surplus and can pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years.

Let me repeat that. Social Security has a $2.8 trillion surplus and can pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years. That is not the opinion of Senator BERNIE SANDERS. That comes from report of the Social Security trustees.

There are a lot of folks out there who are talking in one way or another about cutting Social Security. Some of them are saying let's raise the retirement age. Let's have struggling workers work another 1 or 2 years or more before they can get Social Security benefits. Other people are saying these COLA benefits are just too generous. In recent years, Social Security beneficiaries know we have had several years where people have gotten a zero cost-of-living increase and other cost-of-living increases in recent years has been minuscule. Yet some are saying let's move to a so-called chained CPI and lower the cost-of-living adjustments.

Other people are talking in one form or another about a means test, which would mean significant reduction in benefits for many seniors. Others who are bolder—including some of our Republican colleagues—are talking about the privatization of Social Security. As many will remember, under President Bush that proposal in fact was brought forward and pushed very hard by Republicans.

Because of an aging population, because more women are in the workforce today, and because of an increase in the retirement age, it is true there has been an increase in the number of Americans who are receiving disability benefits, but this is not a surprise. This is a demographic reality that the Social Security Administration predicted would happen back in 1994. The fact that the Social Security Disability Insurance Program is facing a funding shortfall next year is a surprise to absolutely no one. It was predicted 20 years ago.

Furthermore, shortfalls in the Social Security Disability Insurance Program or the Social Security Retirement Program is nothing new. It has happened 11 times in the past and has always been resolved in a simple, noncontroversial way. That is the reason for the reallocation of payroll taxes between the Social Security retirement fund and the Social Security disability fund.

As this chart shows, reallocation was done in 1968 under President Johnson; in 1970 under President Nixon; in 1978, 1979, and 1980 under President Carter; in 1982, 1983, and 1984 under President Reagan; and in 1994, 1997, and 2000 under President Clinton. In other words, this is a commonplace procedure which has happened under Democratic and Republican Presidents in an absolutely noncontroversial way.

Interestingly, of the 11 times funds were reallocated, it turns out that on 5 occasions it was the disability fund that was reallocated to help the retirement fund. In other words, money was shifted from disability to the retirement fund. This time it is going the other way.

At an interesting committee hearing yesterday, a number of colleagues—Republicans and Democrats—made the point that the reallocation of funds in order to prevent a 19-percent cut in disability benefits was a short-term solution; that it was not going to solve the overall issue of how do we fund Social Security for our kids and our grandchildren. That point is clearly right. No one can argue with that. What we have to do right now in fact is to prevent a massive cut to the disability program, but at the same time, while Social Security can pay out all benefits for the next 18 years, it is important that sooner than later we begin to address the problem of how do we make Social Security solvent, not just for 18 years but for decades beyond that.

In terms of the disability program and the need to go forward with reallocation, every major senior organization in this country, representing tens of millions of people, wants us to do just that. These organizations include AARP, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, and the Alliance for Retired Americans, which together represent over 60 million older Americans. What they are saying loudly and clearly is it is imperative we go forward with this reallocation to prevent cuts in the Social Security disability fund. They are united in opposition to the rule passed by the House Republicans to make reallocation more difficult.

Yesterday AARP wrote a letter to the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator ENZI, and to myself, the ranking member. Let me quote from this letter:

> To prevent any imminent reductions in SSDI benefits, we urge you to rebalance the allocation of social security payroll taxes between the OASI trust and the DI trust as Congress has done with success in the past. Because of SSDI, millions of disabled Americans are able to live their lives with dignity, and support their families. The highest priority in the near term is to ensure that SSDI beneficiaries, most of whom are older Americans, are not put at risk of a 20 percent benefit cut in the very near future.

That is from AARP and virtually every major senior organization. Together, they represent some 60 million older Americans and agree exactly with the sentiment expressed by AARP.

I am delighted President Obama proposed this reallocation plan in his budget request. I applaud the President for doing that. As I mentioned, the Social Security trust fund can pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years.

At yesterday's hearing, my Republican friends—and, again, some Democrats—made the very valid point that we have to go further than just reallocation, that we need a long-term solution to make certain our children and our grandchildren will have all of the benefits to which they were promised. I agree with that sentiment. That is why last year I introduced far-reaching Social Security legislation which in fact would make Social Security solvent for decades to come.

The concept behind this legislation is pretty simple. It would simply apply the Social Security payroll tax on income above $250,000. In other words, it would scrap the cap that currently exists. Right now in the midst of massive wealth and income inequality in our country, a Wall Street CEO who makes $20 million a year pays the same amount into Social Security as someone who makes $118,500. If you make $20 million or you make $118,000, the amount of money you put into the Social Security trust fund is the same because the cap is now at $118,000.

In 2013 I asked the Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration to estimate how long the solvency of Social Security would be extended if we simply applied the Social Security payroll tax on income above $250,000. His answer was that Social Security would be made solvent until 2060—45 years from today. I refer my colleagues to the letter from the Social Security Chief Actuary that I had printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on February 5 of this year.

Further, the Center for Economic and Policy Research has estimated that my proposal—my legislation—would only impact the top 1.5 percent of wage earners. More than 98.5 percent of Americans would not see their taxes go up by one dime under this plan.

So I say to my colleagues, if you want to extend the solvency of Social Security—not just for the next 18 years, which is currently the case, but for the next 40 to 45 years—I hope you will join me in making sure the very wealthiest people in our country—the top 1.5 percent—pay their fair share into the Social Security trust fund. To my mind that is a much better idea than raising the retirement age, forcing hard-pressed workers to work another year or two before they get their benefits. It is a much better idea than cutting the cost of living adjustment. It is a much better idea than many of the ideas I have been hearing for the last few years.

We all know that the huge increase that we have seen in this country in wealth and income inequality has resulted in millions of Americans seeing a decline in their income, and we have people from one end of this country to the other working longer hours for lower wages.

In fact, while the wealthiest people have become much richer, real median family income today is almost $5,000 less than it was in 1999. Incredibly, the typical male worker—the man right in the middle of our economy—made $783 less last year than he did 42 years ago. The typical female worker—the woman in the middle of the economy—earned $1,300 less last year than she did in 2007.

Today the top one-tenth of 1 percent owns more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. As this chart shows, the top one-tenth of 1 percent owns as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. In terms of income what we are looking at is a situation where almost all of the new income generated since the Wall Street crash goes to the top 1 percent.

Why is this significant? Well, obviously it is significant because millions of Americans have not seen growth in their income. In fact, they have seen a decline in their income. But what makes it also significant is that this decline in income for millions of Americans—this growth in income and wealth disparity—has also had a profound impact on the solvency of Social Security.

I want all of my colleagues to understand that if income inequality remained at the same level today as it was in 1983, Social Security would have $1.1 trillion more in the trust fund than it does today. Why? Because, obviously, when workers saw their wages go down, less money went into the Social Security trust fund. When people on the top went over the cap, they were no longer contributing from their income that was above the cap. So less money goes into the Social Security trust fund.

If the payroll tax had simply continued to cover 90 percent of all earnings, which it did in 1983, rather than the 83 percent that it covers today, the Social Security trust fund would be able to pay every benefit owed to every eligible American—not just for the next 18 years but for the next 38 years.

So when we talk about income and wealth inequality in this country, that is not only a tragedy unto itself; when we see the middle class shrinking and real wages for American workers going down, in some cases significantly, it is also a major problem for the Social Security trust fund.

Once again, if income levels had remained the same today as they were in 1983—if incomes had gone up rather than gone down—we would see over $1 trillion more in the Social Security trust fund.

So, I agree with my Republican colleagues who say that doing the reallocation for the disability trust fund is a temporary solution. It is. But it is an important solution, and it is something that has been done 11 times in the past. It is something that is supported by the AARP and every major senior organization. It is something we must do right now to prevent a 19-percent cut in benefits for some of the most vulnerable people in this country. So I won't argue with anyone who says, well, that doesn't go far enough. We need a long-term solution.

So I challenge my Republican friends: Do you have the courage to come up with a solution other than cutting benefits for seniors? Do you have the courage to come up with an idea that says: No, it is bad, it is wrong to raise the retirement age, and it is wrong to cut cost of living adjustments.

Are you prepared to deal with the reality that because of the growing disparity in income in America, we have lost substantial funding for Social Security, and the way to address that issue—the way to extend Social Security—is to ask the people on top, the people who have been doing phenomenally well in recent years, to pay more into the Social Security trust fund?

I do agree with my Republican colleagues that we have to look at Social Security from a long-term perspective for our kids and our grandchildren.

We have brought forth an idea: Raise the cap. Ask people making more than $250,000 a year to pay the same percentage of their income into the Social Security trust fund as somebody making $50,000 a year. I think that is a sensible idea, and I look forward to hearing some of my Republican friends work with us on this concept.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Utah.

PATIENT CARE ACT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, last week I joined my colleague Senator BURR in unveiling the latest version of our legislative proposal to repeal and replace the so-called Affordable Care Act. We are joined this time around by our friend in the House, Chairman UPTON of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

We call our proposal the Patient Choice, Affordability, Responsibility, and Empowerment Act, or the Patient CARE Act for short. As you may recall, we first unveiled this framework last year and in general it received high marks for being a serious, responsible alternative to ObamaCare. We have unveiled the latest version of the proposal in hopes of continuing the conversation we began in the last Congress.

Let's face it. ObamaCare isn't working. It is not working. Sure, its proponents in the Senate and elsewhere have gotten pretty good at cherry-picking data in order to convince the American people that the President's health care law is a success. But the American people know the truth. The law is a disaster for individuals, families, and employers alike.

Despite the claims that ObamaCare would lower health care costs, costs have continued to skyrocket. Due to all the mandates in the law, businesses are slowing hiring and moving employees into part-time work. Of course, the law includes more than a trillion dollars in new taxes that impact consumers and businesses around the country. We need a better path forward

and a long-term vision for sustainable health care reform.

I want to take just a few minutes today to talk about the approach we want to take with the Patient CARE Act and why it is a better approach than the one being taken under ObamaCare. Our plan rests on four simple principles. First, repeal ObamaCare with all its costly mandates, taxes, and regulations. Second, reduce costs by taking the government out of the equation and instead empowering consumers to make choices about their own health care. Third, provide common sense consumer protections, including protections for individuals with preexisting conditions. And fourth, reform our broken Medicaid system by giving States more flexibility to provide the best coverage for their citizens.

Let me talk about each of these principles in a little more detail. For any health care proposal to have a chance of success, it must get rid of ObamaCare. The failures of ObamaCare have been well documented here on the Senate floor and elsewhere. The American people deal with those failures on a daily basis. That is why the first principle of our proposal is to repeal ObamaCare once and for all. Then we move on to address the biggest barrier to health care in this country—skyrocketing costs.

Our plan would give taxpayers affordable options to meet their health care needs by harnessing the power of the marketplace—not through Federal Government mandates. With more options in the private insurance marketplace, people will be better able to find insurance that meets their needs. The lack of choice and draconian coverage mandates is one of ObamaCare's largest shortcomings. Our proposal would allow consumers to find affordable plans that address their particular needs without making them pay for coverage they will never use or want.

Our proposal would also give States more options to provide people with more coverage. Under our plan families earning up to 300 percent of the Federal poverty level would be eligible for a tax credit to purchase insurance of their choosing. In addition, our plan would help small businesses enjoy the same advantages in the marketplace as large businesses by allowing them to band together to leverage their purchasing power to buy insurance for their employees.

The Patient CARE Act also proposes an expansion of the health savings accounts so that people can plan and save for their future medical needs. Under our plan, for the first time consumers would be able to use their pretax dollars to pay premiums and deductibles. Our proposal would inject more transparency into health care costs so people can know what their providers are charging and how successful they are.

In addition, we include other cost-saving measures such as medical malpractice liability reform to help reduce the expensive practice of unnecessary defensive medicine.

Our plan would reduce the distortions in the Tax Code that actually increase the cost of health care in our country by capping the unlimited employee exclusion. This is a key way of restraining costs that has support across the political and economic spectrum.

In our proposal the exclusion is capped at a generous $30,000 for a family plan, and that threshold will continue to grow at CPI plus one. Most importantly, we make sure we preserve the employer-sponsored health care system for those 160 million Americans who rely on it by leaving the employer deduction untouched and by repealing the job-killing employer mandate. By increasing consumer choice and utilizing the power of the market, our proposal will actually reduce health care costs, something ObamaCare has miserably failed to do.

Our plan also includes a number of commonsense consumer protections. For example, we would make sure a person would not see their coverage get canceled if they get sick. Our plan would also ensure that people with preexisting conditions could not be denied access to health insurance. Period.

I will repeat that for my friends on the other side, who were confused about this in some of their speeches: No American with a preexisting condition can be denied coverage under our plan. End of story.

We would also let children stay on their parents' plans through age 26 and prevent insurers from putting caps on total benefits paid out over a person's lifetime so that no patient will have to worry about maxing out their coverage.

Finally, our plan would address the current failings of the Medicaid Program. Keep in mind, many of the newly insured people credited to ObamaCare have obtained their coverage through the expansion of Medicaid. Of course, this is absurd as Medicaid is a financially unsound program that continues to swallow up State budgets on a yearly basis. ObamaCare did not improve the stability of Medicaid, it only threatened it further.

The Patient CARE Act includes a key reform that is similar to the Medicaid modernization plan that Chairman UPTON and I proposed in the last Congress.

Currently, Federal taxpayers have an open-ended liability to match State Medicaid spending, which is a significant driver in Medicaid's budgetary challenges. Our proposal would create per capita spending caps—something President Clinton, and many Democrats who remain in this Chamber, supported in the past.

We would couple this structural reform to Medicaid with new flexibility for States to manage their Medicaid populations. On top of that, we would give those on Medicaid the option of purchasing private health insurance, which is more frequently accepted by quality doctors.

I hope you are grasping a pattern when it comes to this proposal. At virtually every step, our aim with this proposal is to take the Federal Government out of the equation and put individuals and families in charge of making their own health care decisions. We trust the American people to make the best choices for themselves.

The Patient CARE Act represents a sustainable and achievable alternative to ObamaCare, one that will succeed without the tax hikes, the mandates, and the outrageous government spending that came part and parcel with the Affordable Care Act. Most importantly, it will actually reduce the cost of health care in this country.

Once again, our hope with unveiling the latest version of this framework is that we can continue the conversation about improving health care for individuals and families. I have given just a top-line, 35,000-foot overview of the proposal here today. I want to invite my colleagues to take a look at our ideas and give us your feedback. I hope health care experts around the country will continue to do the same.

Unlike ObamaCare, this is a product that will rely on consensus and feedback. We have more work to do. It is important, and I look forward to more discussions and conversations about these issues.

REGULAR ORDER IN THE SENATE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I also rise today to speak about the recent progress we have made in restoring the Senate as an institution.

After being sworn in as President pro tempore just over a month ago, I rose to address the state of the Senate and how we, as Members, must work together to restore its greatness. This is an opportune moment to take stock and to reflect briefly on our progress toward achieving this goal.

I am pleased to report that we have embarked on a new chapter of thoughtful, productive legislating in this Chamber, just as the Framers intended us to and just as the American people expect us to.

We have had hours upon hours of open, constructive debate with arguments from both sides of the aisle. We have considered dozens of amendments reflecting a full range of political viewpoints. The majority leader promised this body that he would restore regular order, and that is precisely what he has done. Not only have we engaged in fulsome debate and considered dozens of amendments, but we have also already passed four major bipartisan bills in a single month to reform and extend the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program, to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, to address the critically important issue of veteran suicides, and—my bill yesterday—to provide effective restitution for victims of child pornography.

That is what voters elected us to do—to craft good legislation, to debate it,

to improve it through the open amendment process, and then send it to the President's desk.

In my remarks when I was sworn in as President pro tempore, I noted that in recent years the foundations of the Senate's unique character—meaningful debate and an open amendment process—have come under sustained assault by those who have prioritized scoring political points over preserving the Senate's essential role in our system of government.

What a difference such a short time can make. What a breath of fresh air these last 6 weeks have been for this body on both sides of the aisle. We are moving forward. We are keeping our promises, and we are helping to restore the Senate as the world's greatest deliberative body.

I wish to highlight some specifics of these positive changes we have witnessed over the past work period.

First, robust debate. The late Senator Robert C. Byrd liked to say that ''as long as the Senate retains the power to amend and the power of unlimited debate, the liberties of the people will remain secure.'' In this new Congress, we are restoring the right to meaningful debate.

As I noted last month, when a full and robust debate has occurred, invoking cloture—a motion to end debate—is often appropriate. But we must not abuse this power by always seeking reflexively to cut off debate before it even begins. In the dark days of the previous Congress, we often saw such motions to cut off debate filed as soon as debate had begun, eviscerating any meaningful opportunity for considering the issues.

The Senate desperately needed to return to a system where all Senators have a say in what the Senate does and are able to express their views without getting cut off at the pass. We are now returning to that system. We have resisted the temptation to cut off debate immediately.

Under the majority leader's leadership, this body spent the better part of 3 weeks considering the Keystone XL Pipeline bill. During that time, Senators—both Republican and Democrat—enjoyed ample opportunity to voice their position on the bill as well as on our energy policy more broadly. This represents the exact sort of deliberate character the Senate was designed to embody.

Indeed, the Democratic minority actually used more hours of floor debate on Keystone than did the Republican majority. To me, this is a remarkable statistic indicative of our new majority's commitment to treat the minority fairly and to approach individual Senators, regardless of party, as valuable contributors to our work rather than as mindless partisans.

The Senate was also designed to be the institution in our system of republican self-government that produced wise legislation. Popular passions, parochial interests, and factionalism—what Edmund Randolph called the ''turbulence and follies of democracy''—were to be defined in the Senate where smaller membership and larger constituencies and longer terms would improve the legislative product.

These structural features of the Senate led to the development of a tradition in which individual Members were allowed to offer amendments freely—one of the primary mechanisms by which this body can refine legislation for the better. For centuries, this notion of an open amendment process has been at the core of the Senate's identity. But in recent years, many of us have bemoaned the demise of this tradition. In effect, one of this institution's most defining characteristics was emasculated for partisan political purposes. But the way we dealt with amendments over the course of the last month shows that the open amendment process is making a comeback.

The majority leader shepherded through votes on more than 30 amendments in January, more than double the amendment votes permitted by the Democrats in all of 2014. In fact, in 1 week alone, we voted on more amendments than the previous majority allowed us to vote on all of last year. There could be no clearer evidence of this body's resurgence.

The facts speak for themselves. While one former Democratic Senator did not receive a vote on any of his amendments during the entire extent of his service in this body over the prior 6 years, the lone freshman Democrat Senator in this Congress, the junior Senator from Michigan, has already received a vote on one of his amendments in just the first few weeks of his service here. Truly, under this new majority, Senators of both parties are individually contributing to our work for the common good.

A key part of returning to regular order is restoring the committee process. A healthy committee process is essential to a well-functioning Senate. In committees, Members are often best able to work together to debate, draft, and amend legislation that ultimately passes the Senate. We began resuscitating the committee process in our consideration of the Keystone XL Pipeline bill.

I commend the tireless efforts of the distinguished Chair and ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, who together masterfully led this body through recently unfamiliar territory of legislating through regular order.

The Senator from Alaska merits particular praise for the skill she demonstrated in guiding this bill through the process, while the Senator from Washington should be lauded for her commitment to a fair and orderly process despite her opposition to the underlying policy. Their admirable work set an important example for the rest of us as we return to regular order in the 114th Congress by working together to improve legislation rather than simply trying to shut each other out of the process.

I heard voices from some corners quibbling over certain elements of the Keystone debate process, but to focus on these criticisms misses the forest for the trees by fixating on one or two nitpicks and ignoring how deliberative and inclusive the process really was. We enjoyed open debate, ample opportunity to amend, and respect for committee expertise. This all contributed to the passage of a bipartisan bill.

The proof is in the votes. Of the almost 50 votes on Keystone-related matters, few followed strict party lines, and the final bill won passage with 62 affirmative votes, including those of 9 Democrats. Twenty percent of Democrats present, nearly one-fifth of the caucus, voted for the Keystone bill. This was real bipartisanship.

The result was a critically important piece of legislation that the President of the United States should sign into law. I urge him to do so. But that is not what we are hearing from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. No, the President has said he will veto the bill. In fact, he said he would veto it before we even took it up—before any amendments had even been offered.

Instead, President Obama appears determined to ignore the will of the U.S. Congress, dismissing bills out of hand that have yet to reach his desk. I fail to see how this recalcitrance advances the cause of responsible governance or responds to the will of the American people who made their preferences clearly known at the ballot box last November.

I, for one, will not let the President's irresponsible attitude toward this institution diminish my commitment to it. In fact, I call on each Senator to continue working to restore our Chamber's proper functioning. I urge all of us to participate actively in the committee process, help produce sound legislation, and carry out our institutional duties.

The American people can then see for themselves the stark difference between a Senate that works and a White House that is unwilling to engage in genuine negotiation and compromise.

I will close with a note on civility, that crucial ingredient we must never overlook, even in the heat of political discourse. I recall the words of Senator Chris Dodd, my friend, who represented Connecticut in this body for 30 years. In his final speech here on the Senate floor in late 2010, he reminded us that the Senate was intended to be a place where every Member's voice could be heard and where deliberation and even dissent would be valued and respected. As Senator Dodd explained, ''Our Founders were concerned not only with what was legislated, but—just as importantly—with how we legislated.''

I have observed that debate on this floor during the past few weeks—although tense at times—has on the whole been genuine, balanced, and respectful. We must remain true to this

ethos as we continue to reinvigorate the debate and amendment process.

In the weeks and months ahead, new disagreements will surely arise. This is when civility and statesmanship are most needed. We must each overcome whatever instincts may drive us away from civil discourse and toward anger, bitterness, petulance, or self-promotion.

When this new Congress convened just over six weeks ago, I spoke of our collective duty to restore the Senate. I expressed my confidence that we could make the Senate work again by returning to regular order, promoting robust debate, and enabling an inclusive amendment process. We have made admirable progress over the last month. Our actions are backing up our rhetoric. Let us sustain this momentum.

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.

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

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

PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, this afternoon the Senate voted to approve Dr. Carter's nomination as the next Secretary of Defense. I supported his nomination and appreciated the candor he displayed during both his confirmation hearing and in our private meeting.

I believe the many challenges facing our Nation require a fresh perspective and a strong analytical mind. I am confident Dr. Carter possesses both. Despite the fact the international landscape has changed dramatically over the past few years, the Obama administration has failed to modify its policies to meet the new challenges facing our Nation. In fact, top administration officials have emphasized in recent interviews their approach is not changing and instead offer Americans a laundry list of things they will continue to do. This is unacceptable.

I am very concerned this administration actually believes the correct course of action is to continue what we have been doing. In the Senate, the Armed Services Committee has held a number of hearings to examine the effectiveness of the current U.S. national security strategy.

Witnesses from across the political spectrum have merged on one point. In several key areas, U.S. national security strategy and our regional goals are either ambiguous or divorced from events on the ground. What is needed is a reevaluation, not a continuation.

In Syria, for example, President Obama called on Bashar al-Assad to step down 3 years ago. However, the President has failed to lay out a strategy to accomplish his stated goal. After hundreds of thousands of Syrians have died, terrorist groups have seized control of about half of that country. Further, thanks to assistance provided by Iran and Russia, Assad has fortified his control over much of western Syria.

In response to all of this, President Obama has continued to call for a negotiated transfer of power without any articulation of how this would be accomplished. The President's goal was probably unlikely when it was first conceived, but now it is thoroughly unimaginable.

The Obama administration has also stated the United States intends to degrade and destroy ISIL. While I support this goal, I am concerned we have yet again failed to lay out a strategy to accomplish it.

Yesterday President Obama sent to Congress his authorization of military force. The decision to send young men and women to war is the most serious decision that elected officials will make. This deserves a serious, open, transparent debate that is worthy of the American people. I look forward to a robust committee process on this issue.

I am also eager to hear more from the President about the exact contours of his strategy, particularly when it comes to achieving very clear goals. What exactly do we hope to achieve? Simply stating our objective is to destroy ISIL doesn't reflect the complexities of actually realizing this goal.

The President has waged a campaign of airstrikes against this barbaric terrorist group, but we know airpower alone will not be sufficient to destroy ISIL. While the White House has proposed arming and training Syrian opposition fighters, this effort will take years to produce a force that is strong enough to dislodge ISIL from its strongholds in eastern Syria. What is more, it is unclear how the Syrian fighters—any of whom view Assad as the primary target—will be convinced to first fight ISIL. Questions about the extent to which the United States will provide opposition forces direct air support if they are attacked by ISIL or Assad—those questions remain unanswered. For these reasons, the President has been rightly criticized for not having a clear and effective strategy.

Again, I support the goal of destroying ISIL. But this is a multilayered problem. In Iraq, the administration seems to embrace a growing Iranian role, even though this puts our goal of maintaining a unified Iraq in even greater jeopardy.

With respect to Iran itself, the administration unequivocally states it will not allow that nation to develop a nuclear capability, but we hear reports repeatedly that are suggesting the U.S. negotiators are crafting an agreement that would accept its enrichment program and leave Iran as a threshold nuclear power 1 year away from a bomb, at most.

In Ukraine, the United States imposed sanctions on Russia in March for its intervention. Since that time, Russia has continued to pour heavy weapons and fighters into that conflict. Clearly our policy is not working. We must acknowledge that as Putin continues to build momentum on the battlefield, the incentive for him to honor his diplomatic commitments and end the conflict diminishes.

Additional measures—including defensive weapons for the Ukrainians—are necessary, and they must be implemented. The international community and most Americans are understandably confused by the stark contrast between what they see and what they hear from the White House. They hear vague assertions, but they see no strategy. They hear a goal, but they see no discussion on how to achieve it. This damages our global credibility.

In a world where we rely heavily on partner nations to be our boots on the ground, we cannot afford to have our international allies wondering if we mean what we say.

Dr. Carter will have a lot on his plate in his new role. I hope his appointment will help encourage the strategic reevaluation that is so desperately needed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. BOOKER pertaining to the introduction of S. 502 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I stand before this body this afternoon to encourage my colleagues—particularly my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—to take into account the need to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

The House of Representatives acted responsibly in passing legislation to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded, and they did so acting more than 1 month in advance of the scheduled expiration of the existing funding stream for the Department of Homeland Security. This was a good move. It was likewise a good move of

the majority leader to bring up this bill for consideration nearly 1 month before the expiration of the existing funding. I applauded this effort and still do.

One of the reasons it was so important is it would help us avoid the cliff effect. What I mean by that is the dynamic that occurs every time we have a scheduled expiration of funding and the House and the Senate wait until the last minute, sometimes with only 1 or 2 days, sometimes with only 1 or 2 hours to spare before we act.

What this does is effectively shuts out the voices of most Members of the House and most Members of the Senate. It strips us of our right to offer improvements, amendments, to legislation before that legislation has a chance to become law.

Ultimately this enures to the advantage of just a few people, and it results in the effective disenfranchisement of so many people throughout America whose voices don't have an opportunity to be considered through their duly-elected Senators and Representatives.

That is why this time it was going to be different. That is why this time it was so great the House and the Senate acted early in bringing up this legislation.

Nevertheless, it has been 2 weeks since we brought up this bill, the bill passed by the House to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded. Two weeks, and we have cast vote after vote trying to get on the bill—just trying to consider the bill—and we have seen those efforts to get on the bill blocked by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Earlier today I heard colleagues on the other side of the aisle trying to explain their reasons for continuing to block consideration of this bill. I heard arguments that suggested that although they want to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded, they don't want to consider this bill because, as some of them have put it, they don't like everything the House of Representatives put into the bill. They don't like the provisions in the bill restricting the administration's ability to use those funds to carry out—to implement—the President's Executive orders issued in November of this last year, Executive orders that would have the effect of granting amnesty to millions of people currently inside the United States illegally.

Look, people are entitled to their opinions about how best we should proceed, how best we should deal with those who are currently inside the country illegally. There are a lot of opinions about this, and everyone is entitled to their own opinion. But Americans are overwhelmingly united behind the uncontroversial proposition that when Congress has established a law in a particular area, as it has with our immigration code, in order for that law to be changed, it needs to be changed by congressional action. The House needs to pass it, the Senate needs to pass it, and the President needs to sign it into law.

As the President has acknowledged repeatedly, he lacks the authority to make those changes on his own. He lacks the authority to act unilaterally. He lacks the authority under our system to behave as if he were a government of one. Ours is not a government of one. In fact, our Founding Fathers, while they disagreed on a number of issues, they were united behind one core principle behind our 227-year-old governing document that has fostered the development of the greatest civilization the world has ever known. They were united behind the proposition that bad things happen when too much power gets consolidated into the hands of the few or, even worse, into the hands of one person.

That is why they put in place this system that would split the powers of government into three coequal branches, and within the legislative branch—which many of them tended to view as wielding potentially the most dangerous power—they split up that power into two bodies and then split up the power within each of those bodies so no one person and no one group of people could accumulate too much power.

They certainly never intended a system in which we would have a virtual monarch, albeit a monarch serving for a term of years who could by the stroke of a pen change the law according to his own will, change the law in order to suit his own political interests, change the law without going through Congress. Yet that is what has happened, which brings me back to arguments made today and over the last few days by my colleagues across the aisle. They say we are fine with funding the Department of Homeland Security, but we don't like all the provisions put in there by the House of Representatives. We don't like those provisions that would restrict the President's authority to spend money implementing the President's Executive amnesty program.

Again, Americans, regardless of how they feel about amnesty, as a matter of policy, are overwhelmingly of the opinion—and correctly so—that this is a decision that needs to be made by Congress and not the President of the United States.

Secondly, this is the kind of issue we deal with, with some regularity, within Congress.

Within the system as it has evolved, within the system as dictated by operation of the rules of the House of Representatives, typically—and for more than a century exclusively—it has been the role of the House of Representatives to initiate appropriations bills when we are trying to fund a government program that starts in the House, and that has been the case for well over a century. So they have the prerogative of starting a bill to fund the government, and that is what they did.

When it comes over here, if you don't like it, that is fine. This is a great place to be if you don't like a bill as it starts out. The U.S. Senate has been called the world's greatest deliberative legislative body with good reason—because our rules, when properly followed, protect the right of every Member to make sure his or her views are adequately aired and protect and preserve the right of each and every Member to offer improvements to bills and offer amendments to make changes to legislation before it is put into law. Our rules are very clear on this.

It is unfortunate that in the last few years under the previous leadership those rights were trampled. Those rights were suppressed. We often didn't have those rights. We often had legislation that came up without a fair, open opportunity for each Member to offer amendments.

But we have moved on. We have a new majority leader, a majority leader who has, to his great credit, stood behind his commitment to protect the right of each Member to offer amendments to legislation. I thank him for that and encourage him to continue following this because it is good for this body. But because it is good for us and because our rules already provide for it and because we are following those rules now, as evidenced by the fact that we have now voted on more amendments on the floor in the form of a rollcall vote to pending legislation just in the last few weeks than we did in the entire last Congress, as evidenced by that, we don't need to fear the old order anymore. We don't need to fear the possibility of legislation coming into this body, and if we proceed to it, that that legislation will be without the opportunity to offer amendments.

So if Members don't like something in this bill, vote at least to proceed to it, vote at least to allow the debate to begin, but that, alas, is not what my colleagues across the aisle have chosen to do.

What they have chosen to do is to say: No. No, no, no. They are obstructing. They are obstructing the process as it was designed by the Constitution and as contemplated by the rules of the Senate and the rules of the House of Representatives.

They are saying, no, we will not consider this because we don't like some provisions of this bill. Yet they are also saying at the same time we want to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded.

I agree with exactly half of that statement. I agree with them I think when they say they want to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded. At least I will take that at face value. But if they truly do, then why on Earth would they not proceed to it? And if they don't like some of the other provisions, let them offer amendments. Let them change that.

At the end of the day, we have to come to terms with the fact that not all of us are going to like every part of every bill that comes over from the

House of Representatives. In fact, I dare say it hardly ever happens that any one Member of this body immediately, automatically feels great about every jot and title, about every section, every syllable, every paragraph of a bill that comes over from the House of Representatives.

That is exactly why we have the rules we do. That is exactly why parliamentary procedures, as they have evolved over the centuries, generally have as their central feature the protection of Members of any body such as this of the right to offer amendments, to offer helpful suggestions. But under our rules in the Senate, that cannot operate, it will not operate, it is not available, it doesn't exist unless we first vote to proceed to the bill.

So I invite my colleagues across the aisle—I challenge them—if they want to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded, vote to get on this bill. If they care about America's national security, there is a way to prove it. There is a way to prove they mean what they say when they say they want to keep it funded. Vote to get on this bill. It doesn't mean they have to agree with me, but it was not only acceptable but entirely appropriate and even necessary for the House to act to protect the constitutional order and to do so by restricting the President's ability to spend money to implement his Executive amnesty program.

People don't have to agree with me on that, but if Members want to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded, they can and they must and they will vote to proceed to this bill. Now we may disagree on what amendments you offer, but the Senate majority leader has repeated his offer, to make sure that we have an open amendment process, and we will.

In light of that, there is no excuse—there can be no excuse for my Democratic colleagues to continue to insist on the one hand that they care about our Nation's security and funding the Department of Homeland Security, while voting on the other hand against proceeding to this funding bill to keep the Department of Homeland Security funded. There is no excuse and there can be none.

It is most unfortunate that we have gone now 2 weeks without being able to proceed to this bill—2 weeks in which we could have offered amendments, 2 weeks in which my Democratic colleagues may well have succeeded in getting rid of some or perhaps all of the provisions they don't like added by the House of Representatives. They may have ended up with a piece of legislation that is exactly what they would have written had they started it over here, but they didn't do that.

Meanwhile, they have the audacity to accuse Republicans of causing this problem. This is something I don't understand. There are those among them who insist that Republicans did this very thing in the last Congress. Well, there were times when Republicans voted in the last Congress not to proceed to something, but overwhelmingly—and if I recall correctly, perhaps entirely—when Republicans stopped their motion to proceed, when Republicans blocked cloture on a motion to proceed to the legislation, it was on the basis of a well-founded complaint that there would be no open amendment process. But there is no such argument to be made here. That argument has thankfully been taken off the table by our majority leader, who has thankfully opened up the Senate once again and made an amendment process possible.

Perhaps my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are still fearing the shadow cast by the previous leadership exercised in the previous Congress in the Senate that blocked out the amendment process, that made amendments impossible. If that is what they are afraid of, they have no need to fear. The Sun is now shining. The opportunity to offer up amendments and have those amendments considered has been restored to the Senate. There is no reason to be afraid. No reason to be afraid, of course, unless we somehow do the unthinkable—unless we continue to kick this can down the road farther and farther until we have no options left on the table.

We have just a few legislative days remaining between now and the time the existing funding for the Department of Homeland Security will expire. Our next vote has been scheduled on this, as I understand it, a week from Monday. I would implore each of my colleagues to reconsider their current strategy. Whether you like it or not, the way our system is set up is that the House of Representatives starts our spending bills. They have to pass spending bills first. If you don't like everything in the Homeland Security bill that the House passed—fine, vote to proceed to it and then change it. Change it back however you want. Propose amendments. I might not vote for all of them, I might not agree to all of them, but propose them. Have them aired out, have them considered by this body, by the American people, and let's have the debate, because our clock is ticking and our Nation's homeland security is too important for us to continue to put this off. But that is what we have been doing. That is what my colleagues who have been voting against cloture on the motion to proceed have been doing every time they voted no on this important issue.

The time has come for this body to accept the fact that a new day has dawned and we now have the ability once again to offer amendments, and because that opportunity now exists again, there is no reason to be afraid to move to legislation that has been passed by the House of Representatives to keep one of our government's important departments operating—no reason to fear whatsoever. In fact, if you are worried about what you should be fearful of, you should be fearful of not proceeding to this bill.

The next time we cast a vote on this, I encourage each of my colleagues to vote yes. Let's get on the bill and have an open, robust debate and whatever the outcome of that debate, we will get something passed. We will get it to the President, and we will make sure we keep this Department funded.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEE

RAMIRO GARZA, JR.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, here in Congress, as the Presiding Officer knows, we do a lot of oversight. Oversight is focused on what is going right as well as what is going wrong in our government. There is a lot of each, actually. That oversight is critically important work. It is sometimes overlooked, but critically important.

I think it is also important to stop and recognize where things are going right from time to time and the people who are doing the right thing. Following in the footsteps of one of our former colleagues here—I don't think the Presiding Officer ever had a chance to work with him, but Ted Kaufman was a Senator who served here for 2 years. He succeeded JOE BIDEN who went off to do some other job—Vice President, maybe that is what it is. And then, before Senator CHRIS COONS was elected 2 years later, Ted Kaufman was our Senator, a great guy. He used to be Senator BIDEN's chief of staff for 20 years or so.

Ted used to come to the floor pretty regularly and talk about different Federal employees who are doing exemplary work; people who had gone above and beyond to achieve the mission of solving problems and giving the U.S. taxpayer something to be proud of.

When somebody has a good idea, I like to steal it, and I think Ted Kaufman had a great idea. I have not really stolen it, but we have taken an idea and we have focused it a little bit, to focus on some of the people the Presiding Officer and I, along with Senator RON JOHNSON, met with this last weekend on the U.S. border with Mexico. I have decided to take the Ted Kaufman idea and focus it, put a spotlight on a number of employees within the Department of Homeland Security.

As many of us know, the Department of Homeland Security, which does important work—sometimes heroic work, dangerous work—they suffer from low morale, but it is filled with men and women who, frankly, deserve, I think, in many cases, a lot more credit than they receive.

Today I wish to speak for the next several minutes about one of the people we met, a fellow whose name I think the Presiding Officer will probably remember. His name is Ramiro Garza, Jr., and he goes by Ram. I think he has probably gone by Ram all his life. I will always remember him as Ram. He is an outstanding Border Patrol officer whom we met last week in McAllen, TX, while we were visiting the Mexican border in South Texas—the three of us, the Presiding Officer, Senator RON JOHNSON, and yours truly.

This is Ram. Some of my colleagues may remember the pictures last summer, when an unprecedented surge of Central American children and families arrived at our Texas border. They are the kind of pictures that really burn into our memories for a lot of us. The pictures we are more used to seeing may be from war zones than to see here in our own country, with hundreds upon hundreds of unaccompanied minors and a lot of mothers with young children in search of protection, literally turning themselves in to our Border Patrol agents; not running away from them, but turning themselves in and asking for asylum.

The Rio Grande Valley in South Texas is where Agent Ram Garza works. Ram is the acting patrol agent in charge of the Rio Grande Valley sector of the U.S. Border Patrol. The Rio Grande Valley where Ram works is the epicenter of that humanitarian crisis we witnessed last year. That is because most of the migrants were from the northern triangle of Central America, and they were fleeing violence, fleeing economic desperation, and fleeing a sense of hopelessness in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.

These migrants had to travel some 1,500 miles through Mexico, risking life and limb to get to the United States. The shortest route—though by no means an easy one—runs up the east side of Mexico from Central America to the South Texas border, and many of the people who are making that 1,500 mile trek did it on top of a train. In fact, they did it on a series of trains—freight trains, not passenger trains—where people actually get on top of the trains and try to hold on for a 1,500 mile trip. Some of them succeeded and some of them didn't. Some of them fell down between the trains and cars and lost their lives. Some made it to the border. Some fell off the train. Some got hurt. Some got on another train. Some didn't make it. But many of them rode on top of those trains to get here, and they suffered violence. If they made it safely on the train, a lot of them suffered violence at the hands of predatory gangs along the way.

When these children showed up in South Texas, they literally overwhelmed the Border Patrol stations along the border. These stations are only supposed to hold detained migrants for a short period of time as they are processed for removal back to where they came from, or for detention. Usually along the border, they deal with the young men. However, last year stations were packed with mothers and young children who were trapped there for days as our government struggled to find suitable shelters and decide what to do with them. There were no adequate meals, no clothing, no diapers. There is literally no room at times for someone to lie down, either.

Faced with this human crisis, Customs and Border Protection agents sprang to action. Among their leaders was our agent here today whom I especially want to put a spotlight on: Ramiro Garza. With the help of his colleagues, Ram went above and beyond to process the arrivals, according to the law, while also responding to the human needs of these people. Agent Garza helped create an emergency operations center to manage the crisis and worked to transfer unaccompanied children to the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Perhaps most impressive, though, he worked with his colleagues to convert an enormous abandoned warehouse that we visited in McAllen, TX. I will not soon forget that. It is just a few miles from our border with Mexico. He turned it into a processing center for detained migrants and they did it in 18 days. They looked at a place—and they described what it was like before they started working on it, and then what they did in 19 days, they did pretty remarkable stuff. And Ram, whom we honor especially here today, and those who worked with him deserve our recognition.

This processing center helped greatly relieve the crowded and inadequate conditions in multiple Border Patrol stations along the border. When Senator RON JOHNSON, our Presiding Officer, Senator SASSE, and I visited this past weekend the extraordinary processing center that Agent Garza helped set up, we were amazed to see a cavernous, orderly center equipped with the humanitarian necessities needed for hundreds of children and their parents. The center also had space for Central American officials to work with Customs and Border Protection in order to properly identify migrants and arrange for speedier repatriations, in many cases to their home countries, where appropriate.

Agent Garza was instrumental in designing the processing facility and getting it up and running quickly. Today he is in charge of that facility.

This is just the latest achievement in Agent Garza's career with the Border Patrol. As I said, known most of his life as Ram, he grew up in the Rio Grande Valley. There he attended high school and the University of Texas-Pan American. He joined the Border Patrol in 1996. His first assignment was to the Brownsville station in the Rio Grande sector. In 2004, he was promoted to supervisory Border Patrol agent at the Rio Grande City station. That was followed by tours at the Rio Grande sector's intelligence office and at Harlingen station.

Agent Garza also worked on detail here in Washington, DC, where his duties included supporting the agency's efforts in biometric collection—something we think is very important. While he is helping to humanely process migrants apprehended at the border, Agent Garza also cares for his own family—his wife and their own two children. We thank them for sharing with us their husband and their dad—a very good man.

The Department of Homeland Security and our Nation are truly blessed by Ram's exemplary service.

Agent Garza, if you are out there listening, we want to thank you for what you do each and every day for all of us. We thank you for your tireless service to our Nation for all of these years.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. CARPER. As the Presiding Officer, along with Senator JOHNSON and myself, met the men and women of the Border Patrol last weekend, including Agent Garza, we heard about their work, and it is hard to ignore the fact that they might not know if they will be getting a paycheck next month when the continuing resolution which funds the Department of Homeland Security expires in actually about 2 weeks, on February 27.

Many of them don't know if they will be able to obtain the technology or supplies they need to do the jobs as effectively as possible either. This is not the way we would want to be treated if we were in their shoes, but it is how I think we are treating the men and women who work around the clock to protect our borders and to keep our Nation safe and secure. Those of us here in Congress can change that, and I think we should.

Two of our colleagues—Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland—have introduced a clean appropriations bill that would fund the Department of Homeland Security for the balance of the fiscal year, up through the end of September. Overall, the funding provisions in their bill, S. 272, which I understand both Democrats and Republicans on the Appropriations Committee agreed to in December—just 2 months ago—provide just under $40 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Homeland Security for the remainder of the fiscal year. I think that is an increase from year to year of about $400 million. It sounds like a lot money. It is about a 1-percent increase above 2014 funding. This bill would ensure that Department employees get their paychecks on time and have the resources they need to best meet the Department's critical mission and the security needs of our Nation.

The clean bill put forward by Senators SHAHEEN and MIKULSKI would

take additional measures to secure order and enforce our immigration laws—something that I know is a priority to me and I know to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle. In fact, most of the funding increase in the Shaheen-Mikulski bill would go to border security and immigration enforcement.

The bill our colleagues have put forward contains a little more than $10 million for Customs and Border Protection—an increase of approximately $118 million above last year's enacted level. This funding level would support the largest operational force levels for the agency in its history—a total of more than 21,000 Border Patrol agents and nearly 24,000 enforcement officers.

But if the Department of Homeland Security remains on a continuing resolution—or worse, shuts down—we just won't be as effective as we ought to be in securing our Nation's borders. If Congress forces a shutdown of the Department—I hope we won't—frontline personnel would be asked to continue to work without pay. We met some of them just a few days ago when we were on the border. They don't look like fast boats, but they move pretty good. We went zipping up and down the Rio Grande River looking for people trying to slip across the border, looking for folks who were trying to bring contraband—drugs, illegal drugs—across the border.

There are some 40,000 Customs and Border Protection officers who are needed to keep our borders secure. If we allow the funding for the Department to lapse on February 27, we are going to expect these guys and gals to still come to work. We are not going to pay them, at least not in a timely way.

If Congress continues to keep the Department on a continuing resolution, Immigration and Customs Enforcement will see a shortfall—I am told a little over half a billion dollars—to respond to unaccompanied minors and families with children.

In addition, Customs and Border Protection won't be able replace or upgrade border surveillance technology, including upgrades to obsolete remote and mobile video surveillance systems in the high-risk area of the Rio Grande Valley.

The drone is a pilotless aircraft. We fly aircraft similar to these all over the planet. We fly a number of them along the border of our country with Mexico in an effort to try to see, visualize, and detect people making their way to our border, maybe just to come across, maybe to flee a bad situation in their own country. Maybe it is to bring drugs or other things that are illegal into our country. We are not going to be able to replace or upgrade this kind of technology and bring it to high-risk areas along the Rio Grande Valley.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson recently said—I want to quote Secretary Johnson just briefly. He said, ''Border security is not free. The men and women of [the Department of Homeland Security] need a partner in Congress to fund their efforts.'' He added, ''Time is running out.'' Those were his words. I couldn't agree with him more.

In the next week or so, I pray that those of us in Congress will come together and will do what I believe is the right thing; that is, support the passage of a clean full-year appropriations bill for the remainder of this fiscal year for the Department of Homeland Security and do it by February 27.

After we have done that, for God's sake, let's get to work on crafting thoughtful, comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform law for our country, one that better secures our borders, one that strengthens our economy, and one that reduces our budget deficit over the next two decades by hundreds of billions of dollars. That is what we ought to do. I would pledge here today to my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, one or two Independents, and our Presiding Officer, that we will meet you in the middle and do our dead level best to make sure we meet our responsibilities.

With that, I am looking for others on the floor who may want to speak. I don't see anybody.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 STAFFERS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I would like to pay tribute to two of the hardest working staffers in the Senate: John Ashbrook and Russell Coleman.

RUSSELL COLEMAN

First, there is Russell, a dyed-in-the-wool Kentuckian. He is a huge Wildcats fan. The only words one associates with Russell more often than ''affable'' are these two: ''persuasive'' and ''determined.'' When Russell sets his mind to something, there is not much you can do to stop him—not that you would want to because he is one of the friendliest guys you will ever meet. More than a few times, you will see a group entering a meeting with Russell, spoiling for a fight. Then the door opens, and they are his best friends. It is quite a skill. It is nearly as impressive as this one: Russell Coleman knows just about everybody in Kentucky. His Rolodex is something to behold.

He has done a lot of great work here in the Senate. This one-time FBI agent is passionate about law-enforcement issues. This one-time intern is passionate about mentoring others, letting those around him know, no matter how junior, that their contributions do matter.

Russell is also a great fighter. That tough will has helped Russell push through adversity with grace and with grit. Faith is a big part of Russell's life too. It is something he shares with Chaplain Black every Friday in Bible study.

Russell is ready to share more of himself, too, with his family, his wife Ashley and his children, Annie and Clay. They are all making the move back to Louisville. They will have a lot more time together, and I know they and Russell couldn't be happier.

So congratulations, Russell, and thanks for your service.

JOHN ASHBROOK

Let me tell you about John Ashbrook. John has been with me since I first became Republican leader. He was a fresh-faced kid back then, a young guy from Cincinnati who wanted nothing more than to work in the White House. I am grateful he chose to work for me instead. I am grateful John was willing to transfer his allegiance across the Ohio River for the past 8 years because John Ashbrook is easy-mannered, matched with unbending will. You don't see that very often. He has been an important player on our staff not only for his professionalism but for his character too.

John is known around the Capitol as a founding member of the Senate Republican Communications Center. With John's help, it has been a real success.

The Capitol is going to be a different place without John's laughter echoing in the corridors. Every reporter knows his name. Every member of my staff knows his smile. It is pretty hard to miss.

John, muffin in hand, is usually the first guy in every morning. Many hours later, he is often the last one out. I appreciate it deeply.

I know John's wife Kate takes a somewhat different view. I can't blame her. Kate is ready for dinners without John's Blackberry at the table, and John is ready to spend more time with his three beautiful daughters—Margaret, Abigail, and Charlotte, all born during his service here. John's daughters and Kate mean everything to him, and I couldn't be happier that John will be seeing more of all of them very soon.

CELEBRATING THE 206TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate one of the most admired, well-known Americans and Presidents this great Nation has ever seen. Just 56 years ago, Carl Sandburg addressed a joint session of Congress and remarked about him: ''Not often in the story of mankind does a man arrive on Earth who is both steel and velvet, who is as hard as rock and soft as drifting fog, who holds in his heart and mind the paradox of terrible storm and peace unspeakable and perfect.''

Those words echo today, as it marks the arrival as the 206th anniversary of

President Abraham Lincoln's birth. Born on February 12, 1809, Lincoln had humble beginnings in Kentucky and Indiana before moving to Illinois as a young adult. He began his journey into politics there, serving in the State legislature, the U.S. House of Representatives, and eventually as U.S. President.

As President, he led our Nation through its most perilous times, successfully ended slavery, and saved the Union. His contributions were timeless as he paved the way for America to appreciate the true meaning of freedom, opportunity, and equality. We have come a long way since his time and continue to work towards the America that President Lincoln envisioned.

Every day we are reminded of President Lincoln's contributions. Symbols of him are found anywhere you go—whether it be on the face of the penny or the monument down the street. We can and should preserve these reminders of his work and his ideals of freedom, opportunity, and equality for generations to come.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 206th birthday of the 16th President of the United States, as well as the penny that honors his name. Hailing from the Land of Lincoln, I have long celebrated the life and legacy of President Abraham Lincoln.

For more than 100 years, Abraham Lincoln has been the face of the penny. Lincoln was the first person to appear on an American coin, and the Lincoln penny is the longest used design of any American coin.

For generations of Americans, the penny has served as a memorial to the first President assassinated in office. It is a reminder of the liberation of the African slaves and of the brutal Civil War that threatened to end the American experiment.

Different versions of the penny have been produced throughout the years. In 1959, the 150th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, a representation of the Lincoln Memorial was put on the reverse side of the coin. To honor Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday, four new penny designs were released. One reflects a log cabin, similar to the one in Kentucky where Lincoln was born. The second features Lincoln reading a book with an axe by his foot, showing his formative years and self-education in Indiana. The third penny shows Lincoln speaking in front of the State capitol in Springfield, representing his professional life as legislator from Illinois. Finally, the fourth design features a half-finished Capitol dome during the Civil War to represent his Presidency. The newest reverse design depicts a Union shield with a scroll and carries the words ''Preservation of the Union'' marking what is seen as Lincoln's greatest achievement.

The Lincoln penny is the most common and most highly circulated coin in the United States. The penny significantly contributes to the U.S. economy, especially in charitable contributions. Tens of millions of pennies have been donated to charities over the past decade.

It may be the lowest coin denomination, but the penny carries a lot of weight in terms of our Illinois and American history, culture, and society. It is an intrinsic part of the American experience and represents the opportunity that many believe is inherent in the American dream.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, in accordance with rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I submit the rules governing the procedure of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that they be printed in the RECORD.

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

RULES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

GENERAL RULES

Rule 1. The Standing Rules of the Senate, as supplemented by these rules, are adopted as the rules of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Rule 2. (a) The Committee shall meet on the third Thursday of each month while the Congress is in session for the purpose of conducting business, unless, for the convenience of Members, the Chairman shall set some other day for a meeting. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary.

(b) Hearings of any Subcommittee may be called by the Chairman of such Subcommittee, Provided, That no Subcommittee hearing other than a field hearing, shall be scheduled or held concurrently with a full Committee meeting or hearing, unless a majority of the Committee concurs in such concurrent hearing.

OPEN HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

Rule 3. (a) All hearings and business meetings of the Committee and all the hearings of any of its Subcommittees shall be open to the public unless the Committee or Subcommittee involved, by majority vote of all the Members of the Committee or such Subcommittee, orders the hearing or meeting to be closed in accordance with paragraph 5(b) of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) A transcript shall be kept of each hearing of the Committee or any Subcommittee.

(c) A transcript shall be kept of each business meeting of the Committee unless a majority of all the Members of the Committee agrees that some other form of permanent record is preferable.

HEARING PROCEDURE

Rule 4. (a) Public notice shall be given of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be held by the Committee or any Subcommittee at least one week in advance of such hearing unless the Chairman of the full Committee or the Subcommittee involved determines that the hearing is noncontroversial or that special circumstances require expedited procedures and a majority of all the Members of the Committee or the Subcommittee involved concurs. In no case shall a hearing be conducted with less than twenty-four hours' notice. Any document or report that is the subject of a hearing shall be provided to every Member of the Committee or Subcommittee involved at least 72 hours before the hearing unless the Chairman and Ranking Member determine otherwise.

(b) Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or any Subcommittee shall file with the Committee or Subcommittee, at least 24 hours in advance of the hearing, a written statement of his or her testimony in as many copies as the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee prescribes.

(c) Each Member shall be limited to five minutes in the questioning of any witness until such time as all Members who so desire have had an opportunity to question the witness.

(d) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or Subcommittee or the Ranking Majority and Minority Members present at the hearing may each appoint one Committee staff member to question each witness. Such staff member may question the witness only after all Members present have completed their questioning of the witness or at such other time as the Chairman and the Ranking Majority and Minority Members present may agree. No staff member may question a witness in the absence of a quorum for the taking of testimony.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Rule 5. (a) A legislative measure, nomination, or other matter shall be included on the agenda of the next following business meeting of the full Committee if a written request by a Member of the Committee for such inclusion has been filed with the Chairman of the Committee at least one week prior to such meeting. Nothing in this rule shall be construed to limit the authority of the Chairman of the Committee to include a legislative measure, nomination, or other matter on the Committee agenda in the absence of such request.

(b) The agenda for any business meeting of the Committee shall be provided to each Member and made available to the public at least three days prior to such meeting, and no new items may be added after the agenda is so published except by the approval of a majority of all the Members of the Committee on matters not included on the public agenda. The Staff Director shall promptly notify absent Members of any action taken by the Committee on matters not included on the published agenda.

QUORUMS

Rule 6. (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), eight Members shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business of the Committee.

(b) No measure or matter shall be ordered reported from the Committee unless twelve Members of the Committee are actually present at the time such action is taken.

(c) One Member shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting a hearing or taking testimony on any measure or matter before the Committee or any Subcommittee.

VOTING

Rule 7. (a) A rollcall of the Members shall be taken upon the request of any Member. Any Member who does not vote on any rollcall at the time the roll is called, may vote (in person or by proxy) on that rollcall at any later time during the same business meeting.

(b) Proxy voting shall be permitted on all matters, except that proxies may not be counted for the purpose of determining the

presence of a quorum. Unless further limited, a proxy shall be exercised only upon the date for which it is given and upon the items published in the agenda for that date.

(c) Each Committee report shall set forth the vote on the motion to report the measure or matter involved. Unless the Committee directs otherwise, the report will not set out any votes on amendments offered during Committee consideration. Any Member who did not vote on any rollcall shall have the opportunity to have his position recorded in the appropriate Committee record or Committee report.

(d) The Committee vote to report a measure to the Senate shall also authorize the staff of the Committee to make necessary technical and clerical corrections in the measure.

SUBCOMMITTEES

Rule 8. (a) The number of Members assigned to each Subcommittee and the division between Majority and Minority Members shall be fixed by the Chairman in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member.

(b) Assignment of Members to Subcommittees shall, insofar as possible, reflect the preferences of the Members. No Member will receive assignment to a second Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all Members of the Committee have chosen assignments to one Subcommittee, and no Member shall receive assignment to a third Subcommittee until, in order of seniority, all Members have chosen assignments to two Subcommittees.

(c) Any Member of the Committee may sit with any Subcommittee during its hearings but shall not have the authority to vote on any matters before the Subcommittee unless he is a Member of such Subcommittee.

NOMINATIONS

Rule 9. At any hearing to confirm a Presidential nomination, the testimony of the nominee and, at the request of any Member, any other witness shall be under oath. Every nominee shall submit the financial disclosure report filed pursuant to title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978. Such report is made available to the public.

INVESTIGATIONS

Rule 10. (a) Neither the Committee nor any of its Subcommittees may undertake an investigation unless specifically authorized by the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member or a majority of all the Members of the Committee.

(b) A witness called to testify in an investigation shall be informed of the matter or matters under investigation, given a copy of these rules, given the opportunity to make a brief and relevant oral statement before or after questioning, and be permitted to have counsel of his or her choosing present during his or her testimony at any public or closed hearing, or at any unsworn interview, to advise the witness of his or her legal rights.

(c) For purposes of this rule, the terms ''investigation'' shall not include a review or study undertaken pursuant to paragraph 8 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate or a preliminary inquiry, undertaken at the direction of the Chairman or the Ranking Member, intended to determine whether there is substantial credible evidence that would warrant an investigation.

SWORN TESTIMONY

Rule 11. Witnesses in Committee or Subcommittee hearings may be required to give testimony under oath whenever the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member of the Committee or Subcommittee deems such to be necessary. If one or more witnesses at a hearing are required to testify under oath, all witnesses at such hearing shall be required to testify under oath.

SUBPOENAS

Rule 12. The Chairman shall have authority to issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses or the production of memoranda, documents, records, or other materials (1) with the agreement of the Ranking Minority Member, (2) when authorized by a majority of all the Members of the Committee, or (3) when within the scope of an investigation authorized under Rule 10(a).

CONFIDENTIAL TESTIMONY

Rule 13. No confidential testimony taken by or any report of the proceedings of a closed Committee or Subcommittee meeting shall be made public, in whole or in part or by way of summary, unless authorized by a majority of all the Members of the Committee at a business meeting called for the purpose of making such a determination.

DEFAMATORY STATEMENTS

Rule 14. Any person whose name is mentioned or who is specifically identified in, or who believes that testimony or other evidence presented at, an open Committee or Subcommittee hearing tends to defame him or otherwise adversely affect his reputation may file with the Committee for its consideration and action a sworn statement of facts relevant to such testimony or evidence.

BROADCASTING OF HEARINGS OR MEETINGS

Rule 15. Any meeting or hearing by the Committee or any Subcommittee which is open to the public may be covered in whole or in part by web, television, or radio broadcast or still photography. Photographers and reporters using mechanical recording, filming, or broadcasting devices shall position their equipment so as not to interfere with the seating, vision, and hearing of Members and staff on the dais or with the orderly process of the meeting or hearing.

AMENDING THE RULES

Rule 16. These rules may be amended only by vote of a majority of all the Members of the Committee in a business meeting of the Committee: Provided, That no vote may be taken on any proposed amendment unless such amendment is reproduced in full in the Committee agenda for such meeting at least three days in advance of such meeting.

REEMERGENCE OF VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES: EXPLORING THE PUBLIC HEALTH SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my remarks at the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee hearing earlier this week be printed in the RECORD.

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

REEMERGENCE OF VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES: EXPLORING THE PUBLIC HEALTH SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

From smallpox to polio, we have learned in the United States that vaccines save lives. And yet a troubling number of parents are not vaccinating their children.

Last September this committee held a hearing about the Ebola virus. Our witnesses included a brave physician, Dr. Kent Brantly, who worked in Liberia; and a brave father in Sierra Leone who came to warn us about how rapidly the virus was spreading. The number of people being infected with Ebola was doubling every three weeks, and many of those infected were dying—because for Ebola there was and is no cure, and there was and is no vaccine.

This produced a near panic in the U.S.—it changed procedures in nearly every hospital and clinic. In response, Congress appropriated more than $5 billion to fight the spread of the virus. The impact of efforts to fight Ebola is that the number of Ebola cases is declining.

At the same time, here in the U.S. we are now experiencing a large outbreak of a disease for which we do have a vaccine. Measles used to sicken up to 4 million Americans each year-and many believed that it was an unpreventable childhood illness—but the introduction of a vaccine in 1963 changed everything. Measles was declared eliminated—meaning absence of continuous disease transmission for greater than 12 months—from the United States in 2000. From 2001 to 2012, the median yearly number of measles cases reported in all of the U.S. was 60.

Today is February 10, 2015. It is the 41st day of the year and we already have seen more cases of measles than we would in a typical year. One measles outbreak—in Palatine, Illinois, a suburb about a half hour from Chicago—has affected at least five babies, all less than a year old.

Infants and individuals who are immunocompromised are traditionally protected by what is called herd immunity—the people around them are vaccinated, so they don't get sick, and that keeps the babies and others who can't get vaccinated from getting sick. That herd immunity is incredibly important. Measles can cause life-threatening complications in children, such as pneumonia or swelling of the brain.

Our witnesses today will talk more not just about what is causing this outbreak, but why some parents are choosing not to vaccinate their children. Measles is only one example. This hearing which was planned before the measles outbreak reminded us of the importance of vaccines. An analysis of immunization rates across 13 states performed by USA Today found the following:

''Hundreds of thousands of students attend schools—ranging from small, private academies in New York City to large public elementary schools outside Boston to Native American reservation schools in Idaho—where vaccination rates have dropped precipitously low, sometimes under 50%.''

California is one of the 20 states that allow parents to claim personal belief exemptions from vaccination requirements. In some areas of Los Angeles, 60 to 70 percent of parents at certain schools have filed a personal belief exemption. In those elementary schools, vaccination rates are as low as those in Chad or South Sudan.

The purpose of this hearing is to examine what is standing between healthy children and deadly diseases. It ought to be vaccinations. But too many parents are turning away from sound science.

Sound science is this: Vaccines save lives. They save the lives of the people who are vaccinated. They protect the lives of the vulnerable around them—like infants and those who are ill.

Vaccines save lives. They protect us from the ravages of awful diseases like polio, which invades the nervous system and can cause paralysis. I can remember as a child how parents were frightened by the prospect of polio for their child. I had classmates who lived in iron lungs. Our Majority Leader, Senator MCCONNELL, contracted polio as a child. Or whooping cough, which causes thick mucus to accumulate in the airways and can make it difficult for infants to breathe. Or, diphtheria, a bacterial infection that affects the mucous membranes of your nose and throat and can, in advanced stages, damage your heart, kidneys and nervous system.

We have learned that vaccines save lives. They take deadly, awful, ravaging diseases

from horror to history. So it is troubling to hear that before we've even reached Valentine's Day this year, 121 Americans are sick with measles, a disease eliminated in the U.S. 15 years ago. It is troubling that a growing number of parents are not following the recommendations doctors and public health professionals have been making for decades. At a time when we are standing on the cusp of medical breakthroughs never imagined—cutting-edge personalized medicine tailored to an individual's genome—we find ourselves retreading old ground.

WOODSTOCK, MAINE BICENTENNIAL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Town of Woodstock, ME. Known today as a gateway to the rugged and beautiful Western Maine Mountains, Woodstock was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today.

Woodstock's incorporation on Feb. 7, 1815, was but one milestone on a long journey of progress. For thousands of years, the banks of the Androscoggin River and its tributaries were the hunting grounds of the Abenaki Tribe. One of the legends that attests to the friendship that developed between the Native Americans and the first European settler concerns the Abenaki Princess Mollyocket, a woman with great spirit and knowledge of healing. A few years before the town was incorporated, she was called to the small settlement of Trap Corner to attend to a seriously ill infant. She nursed the baby back to health and pronounced that he would grow to greatness. Mollyocket's patient was Hannibal Hamlin, who became Abraham Lincoln's first Vice President.

Settlement began in 1787, when 10 lots of 100 acres each were surveyed. The early settlers at what was called The Thousand Acre Squadron were drawn by fertile soil, vast forests, and fast-moving waters, which they turned into productive farms and busy mills. The wealth produced by the land and by hard work and determination was invested in schools and churches to create a true community. In 1815, 5 years before Maine statehood, the settlers' petition for incorporation to the Governor of Massachusetts was readily signed, although, for reasons lost to history, he rejected the proposed name of Sparta and chose Woodstock instead.

The main population center of Woodstock is the Village of Bryant Pond, known for its beauty, recreation opportunities, and hospitality. Bryant Pond also is home to a 14-foot tall, 3,000-pound statue of an old-fashioned, hand-cranked telephone, the kind that had a human operator on the other end, to memorialize the town's distinction as the last place in the United States to use these devices. The townspeople finally gave up their hand-cranked telephones in 1983, but they retain their fondness for the personal touch.

Woodstock is a charming town of involved citizens. The active historical society, volunteer fire department, and library are evidence of a strong community spirit. That spirit will be on full display this June, when Woodstock holds it Great Bicentennial Celebration.

This 200th anniversary is not just about something that is measured in calendar years; it is about human accomplishment, an occasion to celebrate the people who for more than two centuries have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a community. Thanks to those who came before, Woodstock has a wonderful history. Thanks to those who are there today, it has a bright future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING CORPORAL C.G. BOLDEN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, on February 21, 2015, the city of Clinton, AR will gather for a memorial service for Corporal C.G. Bolden who was killed in action in Korea in 1951.

The service will coincide with the return of his remains for proper burial, over 60 years after he left Clinton to fight in the Korean war.

As a member of the Army Reserve, Corporal Bolden was called upon to serve shortly after the Korean war started. He had been in theater for only a few months when his family back in Clinton received a telegram with terrible news; Corporal Bolden was missing in action.

For the next 64 years, his wife, Geraldean Johnson, would await his return. In the days and months following that telegram, Geraldean would check the paper for news and sneak off to a quiet place to pray for her husband's return.

Corporal Bolden—a light weapons infantryman in Company C, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division—was taken prisoner by the enemy on January 5, 1951 and died as a prisoner of war on April 30, 1951.

Last month, upon learning his remains had been positively identified, Geraldean recounted to KARK news in Little Rock how her husband would often appear in her dreams over the six decades. ''Those dreams would say he is coming home this time, this is really it,'' she told the reporter.

Corporal Bolden was just 22 years old when he was captured while fighting the enemy in South Korea. He was marched to a prison camp just south of Pyongyang in what his wife told the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette she heard was ''the coldest weather there ever was.''

About 15 years ago, the military asked for and obtained DNA from Corporal Bolden's remaining siblings to aid in efforts to identify his remains. Last December, the Army contacted Geraldean to notify her of a DNA match. Corporal Bolden became the fifth Arkansan who had disappeared during the Korean war to be identified.

Corporal Bolden was posthumously awarded the Prisoner of War Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, United Nations Service Medal, Republic of Korea War Service Medal, and Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation.

I am grateful that after all these years Corporal Bolden will finally be reunited with his wife, son, and other family members. I appreciate the work of those at the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command who helped identify Corporal Bolden. Most of all, we are grateful for Corporal Bolden's service.•

CONGRATULATING UNLV'S LEE BUSINESS SCHOOL

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the Lee Business School of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, UNLV, for receiving top honors at the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, AICPA, Accounting Competition. UNLV's Accounting REBEL-ation team included Annegenelle Figueroa, Kayla Shim, Brett Sebastian, and Kevin Curry. The students won a total of $5,000 to benefit the school's accounting department, a contribution that will help future students for years to come.

The annual AICPA Competition assesses students' capabilities in making decisions on management, operations, finance, and strategy. This year's competition drew 140 teams to represent schools across the country and required the students to create a cost-accounting system for a fictional business called Humble Pies, Inc. The UNLV accounting team worked over a 3-month period before advancing to the finals and presenting its ideas to a panel of accounting executives. Teams were judged based upon persuasiveness, technical detail, and creativity. The students representing UNLV were specifically applauded for their real-world business application. These Nevada students are shining examples of how hard work and dedication lead to success and stand as role models for future Rebels.

I am excited to see local students bringing recognition to both Nevada and to UNLV for their advancement in a national competition. The Lee Business School should be proud to call itself a top contender in a competitive environment. I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in congratulating these students from UNLV's Lee Business School for their unwavering effort and honorable representation of Nevada.•

CONGRATULATING MOUNTAIN RIDGE LITTLE LEAGUE ALL-STAR TEAM

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate the Mountain Ridge Little League team from Las Vegas for receiving first place in the

Little League World Series U.S. Championships. This series began back in 1947 and for the first time, in 2014, a team from Nevada represented the greatest Little League team in the Nation. Today, I would like to honor the players and coaches for their tireless efforts in reaching their goals and for representing Nevada with integrity and hard work.

The Mountain Ridge team, with players aged 12 to 13 years old, entered the Little League World Series U.S. Championship game with a 16–0 record in four tournaments, outscoring opponents 184–29. The team showed its true dedication to the State by traveling for weeks, spending time away from family and friends. Its journey began at the Western Regionals Competition on August 1 in San Bernardino, CA, and ended on August 25, after competing in the Little League World Series U.S. Championship game. Austin Kryszczuk, most noted for his batting skills, was labeled best player in the Little League World Series U.S. Championships.

All of the players are role models for future generations of Nevada baseball, and the coaches serve as shining examples of leadership. The Mountain Ridge Little League team's accomplishment should be noted as a special moment to Nevada, after being called the second-most successful sports team in Las Vegas' history after the University of Nevada, Las Vegas' men's basketball national championship team in 1990. This team did more for Nevada than just represent the State on the field. It revealed the strong community that Nevada has to offer with many groups of friends and families coming together to watch the games.

I am excited to see local athletes bringing recognition to Nevada and the Las Vegas community. The Mountain Ridge Little League team should be proud to call itself the top baseball team in the country. I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in congratulating this team from northwest Las Vegas for their unwavering dedication and honorable representation of Nevada.●

RECOGNIZING LANDRY VINEYARDS

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, small businesses have the unique ability to seamlessly fill a niche in their local communities. In many cases, this means they offer a service or product that is completely unique to the region. As Valentine's Day and Mardi Gras quickly approach, I would like to honor a small business that is not often associated with the State of Louisiana—a beautiful vineyard and winery. This week's Small Business of the Week is Landry Vineyards and Winery of West Monroe, LA.

In 1999 with the help of their family and close friends, Jeff and Libby Landry decided to pursue their dream of owning and operating a vineyard. The Landry family started their business by planting Blanc Du Bois grapes on their 2 acres in Folsom, LA. Four years later, they were licensed as a Louisiana Native Winery, which allowed their wines to be shipped and sold across the State. After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, however, the Landrys moved their enterprise to higher ground in the hill country of West Monroe. Today, the wines produced at Landry Vineyards are available in over 300 stores throughout Louisiana and can be purchased across the country by simply visiting their Web site.

The Landry family has created an experience for locals and out-of-towners that is well worth the trip. Daily tours of the vineyards are available for small groups on golf carts, and tractor drawn wagons are used for the larger groups. The winery also provides free wine tastings in the nearby tasting room, and guests are encouraged to bring picnic lunches to enjoy on the winery grounds. Each year the winery hosts an outdoor music concert series that caters to families with local bands who perform in all genres like Cajun, funk, and country blues. The 20-acre property also serves as a popular destination for public and private events, including weddings.

In the last 15 years, Landry Vineyards has thrived despite any obstacles—whether it is a natural disaster or burdensome regulations—in its way. As I work to make sure the voices and concerns of small business owners across the country are heard in Washington, the history and success of Landry Vineyards serve as an inspiring reminder of what is worth fighting for. Congratulations to Landry Vineyards and Winery for being selected as this week's Small Business of the Week.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:56 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1. An act to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 431. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March in March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 431. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March in March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 720. An act to improve intergovernmental planning for and communication during security incidents at domestic airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

H.R. 22. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Rept. No. 114–3).

By Mr. BLUNT, from the Committee on Rules and Administration, without amendment:

S. Res. 73. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Daniel Henry Marti, of Virginia, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 470. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain educational institutions from the employer health insurance mandate, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 471. A bill to improve the provision of health care for women veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. 472. A bill to promote conservation, improve public land, and provide for sensible development in Douglas County, Nevada, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 473. A bill to implement programs and activities to raise children up out of poverty and save the next generation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 474. A bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COATS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. HELLER, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 475. A bill to reform the Federal sugar program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 476. A bill to recruit, support, and prepare principals to improve student academic achievement at eligible schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 477. A bill to terminate Operation Choke Point; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 478. A bill to promote career readiness indicators and career counseling for students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FISCHER:

S. 479. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SCHUMER, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 480. A bill to amend and reauthorize the controlled substance monitoring program under section 399O of the Public Health Service Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 481. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 482. A bill to increase from $10,000,000,000 to $50,000,000,000 the threshold figure at which regulated depository institutions are subject to direct examination and reporting requirements of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 483. A bill to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 484. A bill to protect all patients by prohibiting the use of data obtained from comparative effectiveness research to deny or delay coverage of items or services under Federal health care programs and to ensure that comparative effectiveness research accounts for advancements in personalized medicine and differences in patient treatment response; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 485. A bill to prohibit the use of eminent domain in carrying out certain projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 486. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to ensure that all children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs are vaccinated, and allow exemptions only for children with underlying medical conditions, for whom vaccines are therefore medically contraindicated; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 487. A bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to allow the rebuilding, without elevation, of certain structures that are located in areas having special flood hazards and are substantially damaged by fire, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 488. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 489. A bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 490. A bill to achieve domestic energy independence by empowering States to control the development and production of all forms of energy on all available Federal land; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 491. A bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 492. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 493. A bill to reduce a portion of the annual pay of Members of Congress for the failure to adopt a concurrent resolution on the budget which does not provide for a balanced budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 494. A bill to authorize the exploration, leasing, development, production, and economically feasible and prudent transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain in Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ISAKSON:

S. 495. A bill to revoke the charters for the Federal National Mortgage Corporation and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation upon resolution of their obligations, to create a new Mortgage Finance Agency for the securitization of single family and multifamily mortgages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 496. A bill to prohibit the use of any Federal funds to finalize, implement, or enforce the proposed rule entitled ''Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. COONS, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 497. A bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BURR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MORAN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 498. A bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. COATS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 499. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to prevent concurrent receipt of unemployment benefits and Social Security disability insurance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. LEE, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 500. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey to a State all right, title, and interest in and to a percentage of the amount of royalties and other amounts required to be paid to the State under that Act with respect to public land and deposits in the State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 501. A bill to make technical corrections to the Navajo water rights settlement in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. COONS):

S. 502. A bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 503. A bill to amend the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act to extend trade preferences for certain articles imported from Haiti and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 504. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 505. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the Health Coverage Tax Credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 506. A bill to amend part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to exclude customary prompt pay discounts from manufacturers to wholesalers from the average sales price for drugs and biologicals under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. LEE, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 507. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to permit employers to pay higher wages to their employees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 508. A bill to amend the FLAME Act of 2009 to provide for additional wildfire suppression activities, to provide for the conduct of certain forest treatment projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 509. A bill to establish the African Burial Ground International Memorial Museum and Educational Center in New York, New York, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. CORKER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 510. A bill to require Senate confirmation of Inspector General of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. REED, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. WARREN, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 511. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to require that genetically engineered food and foods that contain genetically engineered ingredients to be labeled accordingly; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. COONS, and Mr. HELLER):

S. 512. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to safeguard data stored abroad from improper government access, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 513. A bill for the relief of Esther Karinge; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 514. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish the Promise Neighborhoods program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 515. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to provide relief during fiscal years 2016 and 2017 from the reductions in the discretionary spending limits imposed by sequestration; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 516. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to permit alternate standards and assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 517. A bill to extend the secure rural schools and community self-determination program, to restore mandatory funding status to the payment in lieu of taxes program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 518. A bill to require States to establish highway stormwater management programs; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. COONS, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 519. A bill to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to permanently reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 520. A bill to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to reauthorize the Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 521. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 522. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to extend the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. WARNER, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 523. A bill to coordinate the provision of energy retrofitting assistance to schools; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COONS, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 524. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to award grants to address the national epidemics of prescription opioid abuse and heroin use; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORKER (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. 525. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to reform the Food for Peace Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 526. A bill to sunset the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force after three years; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BURR, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SASSE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. COTTON, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. RISCH, Mr. WICKER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. COATS, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. REID, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. REED, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COONS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 527. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or in the final Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March in March of 1965, which served as a catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 528. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve the requirements regarding alternate standards and assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 529. A bill to improve the services available to runaway and homeless youth who are victims of trafficking, to improve the response to victims of child sex trafficking, to direct the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to identify strategies to prevent children from becoming victims of trafficking and review trafficking prevention efforts, to protect and assist in the recovery of victims of trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BLUNT:

S. Res. 73. An original resolution authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017; from the Committee on Rules and Administration; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WARNER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. Res. 74. A resolution declaring that achieving the primary goal of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease of the Department of Health and Human Services to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease by 2025 is an urgent national priority; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)):

S. Res. 75. A resolution designating the month of February 2015, as ''National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. LEE, Mr. HELLER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. RISCH, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COATS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ENZI, Mr. PAUL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. Res. 76. A resolution welcoming the Prime Minister of Israel to the United States for his address to a joint session of Congress; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. Res. 77. A resolution designating Friday, February 13, 2015, as ''$2.13 Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. Res. 78. A resolution relative to the death of Jerry Tarkanian, former head basketball coach of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS):

S. Res. 79. A resolution honoring Dean Edwards Smith, former head coach for the men's basketball team for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. REID, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 80. A resolution recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Lunar New Year; considered and agreed to.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. Res. 81. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that children trafficked for sex in the United States should not be treated or regarded as child prostitutes because there is no such thing as a ''child prostitute'', only children who are victims or survivors of rape and sex trafficking; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 82. A resolution commending Kathleen Alvarez Tritak on her service to the United States Senate; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 30

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 30, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions.

S. 149

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 149, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

S. 166

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 166, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 178

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to restore Americans' individual liberty by striking the Federal mandate to purchase insurance.

S. 223

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 223, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot program on awarding grants for provision of furniture, household items, and other assistance to homeless veterans to facilitate their transition into permanent housing, and for other purposes.

S. 239

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 239, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to apportionments under the Airport Improvement Program, and for other purposes.

S. 255

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 255, a bill to restore the integrity of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 258

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 258, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 262

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 262, a bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.

S. 269

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 269, a bill to expand sanctions imposed with respect to Iran and to impose additional sanctions with respect to Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 271

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 271, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to

receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 288

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 288, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to reform the National Labor Relations Board, the Office of the General Counsel, and the process for appellate review, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 301, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 308

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 308, a bill to reauthorize 21st century community learning centers, and for other purposes.

S. 336

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 336, a bill to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 entirely.

S. 338

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 338, a bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

S. 347

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 347, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the individual health insurance mandate not apply until the employer health insurance mandate is enforced without exceptions.

S. 356

At the request of Mr. LEE, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 356, a bill to improve the provisions relating to the privacy of electronic communications.

S. 373

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 373, a bill to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

S. 388

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 388, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to require humane treatment of animals by Federal Government facilities.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 404

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 404, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 409, a bill to amend the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act to require the Secretary of Defense to inform the Attorney General of persons required to register as sex offenders.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 466

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 466, a bill to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to improve the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care under the Medicaid and CHIP programs by developing maternity care quality measures and supporting maternity care quality collaboratives.

S. 467

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 467, a bill to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and for other purposes.

S. 469

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 469, a bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 5

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 5, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S.J. RES. 8

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 8, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures.

S. RES. 52

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 52, a resolution calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014.

S. RES. 65

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 65, a resolution supporting efforts to bring an end to violence perpetrated by Boko Haram, and urging the Government of Nigeria to conduct transparent, peaceful, and credible elections.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 478. A bill to promote career readiness indicators and career counseling for students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, preparing all students to be college and career-ready upon graduating high school is one of the central promises that public education and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA, should fulfill. However, career readiness has

all too often taken a back seat to a focus on traditional college preparation. Strong academic skills are essential to college preparation, but it takes much more to be truly ready for a career.

Today many students graduate high schools with little knowledge of the careers available to them and the technical skills needed to meet the demands of the 21st century job market. ''Career readiness indicators'' are factors that demonstrate a student's preparedness, including both academic and technical knowledge and skills, for postsecondary education and the workforce. By encouraging school districts to track and report on career readiness indicators, States can send a signal to schools, communities, parents, and students that it is critical to be prepared for the workforce regardless of postsecondary education plans. Additionally, it provides public data for employers to help locate their operations in regions with a high-skilled workforce.

This is why I am pleased to introduce with my colleagues, Senator PORTMAN and Senator BALDWIN, the Career Ready Act, which will amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to expand on these efforts by encouraging more states to report on courses in their school systems. This includes utilizing multiple indicators of career readiness when states report data to the federal government such as student participation in career and technical education courses or attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials or academic and technical skills including industry-recognized credentials, certifications, licenses, and postsecondary degrees. Tracking and publishing this data provides much-needed information for businesses and workforce leaders that is not provided under current law.

This bipartisan legislation also strengthens the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling grant program in current law by placing an emphasis on career guidance and providing professional development for school counselors to use labor market information and partnerships with community groups such as local workforce investment boards, businesses, industries, and regional economic development agencies to educate students on postsecondary opportunities. The Career Ready Act encourages schools to align career exploration course offerings and counseling to the workforce needs of the local community and coordinate with the requirements of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

I am proud to introduce this commonsense, bipartisan legislation to improve career readiness and career guidance to ensure students are prepared for the 21st century workforce. I strongly encourage my colleagues on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions committee to consider this legislation in any ESEA reauthorization.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 487. A bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to allow the rebuilding, without elevation, of certain structures that are located in areas having special flood hazards and are substantially damaged by fire, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Fire-Damaged Home Rebuilding Act.

This legislation is simple. It allows families living in federally-designated flood plains to rebuild their home in the event it is destroyed by a fire.

The bill allows communities to waive requirements that were meant to block reconstruction after floods, but which have been applied to block reconstruction of homes after fires and other natural disasters as well.

I was first made aware of this issue by a constituent from Sacramento, Jennifer Taylor. Her home in the Natomas neighborhood burned down, and she was denied when she applied for a permit to rebuild it. The county informed her that Federal floodplain regulations required her to elevate the home 20 feet above ground level because of existing deficiencies in the levee protecting her neighborhood.

Can you imagine what that would look like? Every house in the neighborhood at ground level, and one home towering 20 feet above the rest?

More importantly though, the cost would be exorbitant, and would not be covered by her insurance. Instead, the cost would be imposed on a family trying to get back on its feet after a personal tragedy.

When the home burned down, the family collected $71,000 from their insurance company. Contractors estimated the cost to restore the home to its original condition was $170,000—a significant burden, but one the family was willing to bear.

But when the family factored in the cost of elevating their home 20 feet, the cost skyrocketed. Contractors estimated the elevation project would cost an additional $200,000.

Just to restore their home to its previous size and condition, the family would owe $300,000 more than what they received from their insurance.

There is a fundamental issue of fairness at stake.

This family tragically lost their home and many of their personal belongings. But instead of helping the family during this difficult time, the Federal Government is instead blocking them from rebuilding. Why? Because the Federal Government has failed to maintain adequate flood protection.

It just doesn't seem fair.

The Fire-Damaged Home Rebuilding Act addresses this issue by allowing local communities to grant variances to federal flood plain regulations without jeopardizing their participation in the program.

The legislation allows waivers to be granted only if all of the following conditions are met: communities must already have taken steps to repair damaged levees, such as seeking Federal authorization of a levee project, and there must be previously existing plans to obtain the requisite 100-year flood protection in the near future.

The destroyed house must be within a deep floodplain where it would be too expensive and unsightly to elevate the home.

The new home must be built within the footprint of the destroyed structure.

The homeowner cannot qualify for new insurance discounts; and the property has never been associated with a claim to the National Flood Insurance Program.

These limitations will only allow families to rebuild very limited circumstances after tragedy strikes that is unrelated to a flooding event. The number of waivers local governments can approve is capped at ten per year so that this authority is not subject to abuse. This limit will ensure that waivers are used prudently and sparingly.

I strongly oppose new development in the flood plain. It is irresponsible to permit new homes or businesses to be constructed without adequate mitigation in an area where you know that flooding is likely.

The Federal floodplain regulations were put in place to block individual homeowners from voluntarily renovating and improving their homes. They were also designed to block homeowners from rebuilding after a flood. By doing so, the Federal Government limits its liability for future flood insurance claims.

Fire-damaged homes clearly represent an exception to these circumstances, however. So we need to adjust the law to eliminate an unfortunate and unintended consequence of an otherwise good policy.

City and county governments must be empowered to make case by case judgments about whether it makes sense to elevate damaged structures by 10, 15, or 20 feet when the rest of the neighborhood remains at ground level.

That is exactly what the Fire-Damaged Home Reconstruction Act does. It provides limited authority to local governments, which will allow them to do what makes sense for their communities and will allow families to rebuild after a fire or other non-flood disaster.

This is a commonsense piece of legislation and I hope my colleagues will work to quickly adopt the bill.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 491. A bill to lift the trade embargo on Cuba; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss our country's relationship with Cuba. I have long advocated modernizing our relationship

with Cuba. The current embargo has been in place for 50 years, and it has greatly constrained opportunities for American businesses by restricting commerce, by restricting our exports—things that are made in America—from going to a place that is only 90 miles off our shores and has 11 million people.

That is why today I introduce the bipartisan Freedom to Export to Cuba Act with Senators ENZI, STABENOW, FLAKE, LEAHY, and DURBIN. This bill lifts the trade embargo on Cuba and knocks down the legal barriers to Americans doing business in Cuba. This bill will help open up new economic opportunities for American businesses, which will mean more jobs. It will also boost opportunities for farmers—something the Chair knows well coming from the State of North Dakota, as we know well in the State of Minnesota. This will also allow Cubans to have access to these products, which we believe is good for their country, good for their people so that they can become a different country.

Freeing our businesses to pursue opportunities for development could greatly help the people of Cuba. Consider for example that Cuba only has a 2G cellular network and that only about one-fourth of the population has Internet access. Ultimately, I believe this legislation will help usher in a new era for Americans and Cubans shaped by opportunities for the future rather than simply a story of the past.

The process the President has jumpstarted to normalize our ties with Cuba is a positive step forward. My home State of Minnesota exported about $20 million in agricultural products to Cuba in 2013. I think people are surprised by that, but as many of us know, there are humanitarian exceptions to the current embargo. So our country is already exporting, and my State alone exported $20 million in products. With the President's action alone, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture estimates that exports could increase by another $20 million. The United States is already the fourth largest source of imports to Cuba based solely on authorized shipments of agriculture and medical supplies. Over the past decade we have been one of Cuba's top suppliers of food products. So it is not as if we don't already do business there, but unlike every other country, including our own neighbor to the north, Canada, we hamstring our businesses seeking to export their products there. Export and travel restrictions have continued to prevent Americans from seeking opportunities in Cuba, and the embargo prevents Cubans from obtaining food and other goods we take for granted in our country.

Cuban human rights activist Yoani Sanchez wrote:

> It is impossible for Cubans to buy staples like eggs or cooking oil without turning to the underground market. Rationing forces people to stand in line for hours for poultry and fish. On the Cuban government's 50th anniversary in 2009, it provided families with an extra half pound of ground beef, but that beef was not from the U.S. It was sponsored by the Venezuelan government . . . a meager gift nicknamed ''Hugo Chavez's Hamburger'' by everyday Cubans.

I say it is time for America to stop ceding credit for the hamburger to Venezuela. It is time that we made our hamburger accessible in Cuba. The Freedom to Export to Cuba Act will help us do that. It is simply a targeted repeal of the provisions in current law that keep the embargo in place, including restrictions that prevent American businesses from financing their own exports to the island and requirements for American farms to seek special licenses for any transaction with Cuba.

It is also important to emphasize what this bill does not do. There are many outstanding issues that many of my colleagues have discussed between our two countries that must be dealt with, especially our concerns about the Cuban Government's repressive policies. That is why this bill does not repeal provisions of current law that address human rights in Cuba or that allow individuals and businesses to pursue claims against the Cuban Government for property.

None of us is under any illusion about the nature of the Cuban Government. The Cuban Government must take serious steps to reform politically and economically. It must free political prisoners and stop arbitrarily arresting people for political speech. It must also take steps to liberalize its state-centric economic system if it truly hopes to allow its people to prosper and to benefit from growing commerce with the United States.

We do not minimize the importance of those issues, but we also know the embargo has not helped to solve them. Members on both sides of the aisle recognize that continuing along the same path with respect to Cuba has not achieved our objectives and in fact has constrained Americans' freedom to pursue business opportunities abroad. It has hindered our freedom to travel, which is why I also cosponsored the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act recently introduced by Senator FLAKE.

Both that bill and the Freedom to Export to Cuba Act that I have introduced today with a bipartisan group of Senators shows that we can work together in this new Congress to support a commonsense relationship between the United States and Cuba.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation. It is a chance to build on our current progress and take additional actions to forge a practical and positive relationship with the people of Cuba and the people of America.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 492. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing bipartisan legislation to provide support for environmental education in our Nation's classrooms. I thank Senators KIRK, DURBIN, WHITEHOUSE, HEINRICH, and BENNET for joining as original cosponsors of the No Child Left Inside Act of 2015.

Given the major environmental challenges we face today, it is important to prioritize teaching our young people about their natural world. Preparing the next generation to be stewards of our natural environment not only equips them with important skills and knowledge but also, as studies have shown, enhances achievement levels in science and other core subjects and increases student engagement. Another key benefit is that it promotes healthy lifestyles by encouraging kids to spend more time outside.

For more than 3 decades, environmental education has been a growing part of effective instruction in America's schools. Responding to the need to improve student achievement and prepare students for the 21st century economy, many states and schools throughout the Nation now offer some form of environmental education.

Indeed, according to the National Association for Environmental Education, 47 States and the District of Columbia have taken steps towards developing plans to integrate environmental literacy into their statewide educational initiatives. In Rhode Island, organizations such as the Rhode Island Environmental Education Association, Roger Williams Park Zoo, Save the Bay, the Nature Conservancy, and the Audubon Society, as well as countless schools and teachers, are offering educational and outdoor experiences that many children may never otherwise have, helping inspire them to learn. In partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education, these organizations have developed a statewide environmental literacy plan that is now being put into action.

Yet, environmental education is facing a significant challenge, and remains out of reach for too many children. With many schools being forced to scale back or eliminate environmental programs, fewer and fewer students are able to take part in related classroom instruction and field investigations, however effective or in demand these programs are.

The No Child Left Inside Act would increase environmental literacy among elementary and secondary students by encouraging and providing assistance to States for the development and implementation of environmental literacy plans and promoting professional development for teachers on how to integrate environmental literacy and field experiences into their instruction.

The legislation would also support partnerships with high-need school districts to initiate, expand, or improve their environmental education curriculum, and for replication and dissemination of effective practices. Finally, the legislation would support interagency coordination and reporting on environmental education opportunities across the Federal Government. This legislation has broad support among national and state environmental and educational groups.

In addition to the benefits that accrue to students, business leaders also increasingly believe that an environmentally literate workforce is critical for long-term success. Indeed, according to a 2011 survey by the GreenBiz Group and the National Environmental Education Foundation, 65 percent of respondents valued environmental and sustainability knowledge as a factor in making hiring decisions, and 68 percent believed that the importance of this knowledge would continue to grow in the future. We must ensure that our students are prepared with the knowledge that employers are looking for, and that increasingly includes environmental literacy.

For these reasons, I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor the bipartisan No Child Left Inside Act and to work together to include its provisions into the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. COTTON):

S. 493. A bill to reduce a portion of the annual pay of Members of Congress for the failure to adopt a concurrent resolution on the budget which does not provide for a balanced budget, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I join Senator CASSIDY of Louisiana, Senator GARDNER of Colorado, and Senator COTTON of Arkansas in introducing the Balanced Budget Accountability Act. By establishing the principle No Balanced Budget, No Pay, this legislation will bring fiscal responsibility to Washington. The American people deserve a balanced budget. Unfortunately, Washington remains unwilling to take the steps needed to get our country back on solid fiscal ground. The Balanced Budget Accountability Act reflects core principles that work: common sense business practices that protect hardworking taxpayers and making elected officials accountable for delivering results to the people they serve. It is what Washington needs to finally balance the budget.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 493

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Balanced Budget Accountability Act''.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Federal debt exceeds $18,000,000,000,000, continues to grow rapidly, and is larger than the size of the United States economy.

(2) The Federal budget has shown an annual deficit in 45 of the last 50 years.

(3) Deficits and the Federal debt threaten to shatter confidence in the Nation's economy, suppress job creation and economic growth, and leave future generations of Americans with a lower standard of living and fewer opportunities.

(4) It is the duty of Members of Congress to develop and implement policies, including balancing the Federal budget, that encourage robust job creation and economic growth in the United States.

(5) Members of Congress should be held accountable for failing to pass annual budgets that result in a balanced budget.

SEC. 2. REQUIRING ADOPTION OF BUDGET RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR BALANCED BUDGETS.

(a) ADOPTION OF BUDGET RESOLUTION.—Each House of Congress shall adopt a concurrent resolution on the budget for a fiscal year which provides that, for each fiscal year for which a budget is provided under the resolution (beginning not later than with the budget for fiscal year 2025)—

(1) total outlays do not exceed total receipts; and

(2) total outlays are not more than 18 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States (as determined by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the Department of Commerce) for such fiscal year

(b) CERTIFICATION BY CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE.—Upon the adoption by a House of Congress of a concurrent resolution on the budget for a fiscal year, the Director of the Congressional Budget Office shall transmit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the President pro Tempore of the Senate (as the case may be) a certification as to whether or not that House of Congress has met the requirements of subsection (a) with respect to the resolution.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with respect to the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016 and each succeeding fiscal year.

SEC. 3. EFFECT OF FAILURE TO ADOPT RESOLUTION.

(a) RULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 AND 2017.—

(1) FISCAL YEAR 2016.—

(A) HOLDING SALARIES IN ESCROW.—If the Director does not certify that a House of Congress has met the requirements of section 2(a) with respect to fiscal year 2016 before April 16, 2015, during the period described in subparagraph (B) the payroll administrator of that House of Congress shall deposit in an escrow account all payments otherwise required to be made during such period for the compensation of Members of Congress who serve in that House of Congress, and shall release such payments to such Members only upon the expiration of such period.

(B) PERIOD DESCRIBED.—With respect to a House of Congress, the period described in this subparagraph is the period that begins on April 16, 2015 and ends on the earlier of—

(i) the date on which the Director certifies that the House of Congress has met the requirements of section 2(a) with respect to fiscal year 2016; or

(ii) the last day of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

(2) FISCAL YEAR 2017.—

(A) HOLDING SALARIES IN ESCROW.—If the Director does not certify that a House of Congress has met the requirements of section 2(a) with respect to fiscal year 2017 before April 16, 2016, during the period described in subparagraph (B) the payroll administrator of that House of Congress shall deposit in an escrow account all payments otherwise required to be made during such period for the compensation of Members of Congress who serve in that House of Congress, and shall release such payments to such Members only upon the expiration of such period.

(B) PERIOD DESCRIBED.—With respect to a House of Congress, the period described in this subparagraph is the period that begins on April 16, 2016 and ends on the earlier of—

(i) the date on which the Director certifies that the House of Congress has met the requirements of section 2(a) with respect to fiscal year 2017; or

(ii) the last day of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

(3) WITHHOLDING AND REMITTANCE OF AMOUNTS FROM PAYMENTS HELD IN ESCROW.—The payroll administrator shall provide for the same withholding and remittance with respect to a payment deposited in an escrow account under paragraph (1) or (2) that would apply to the payment if the payment were not subject to paragraph (1) or (2).

(4) RELEASE OF AMOUNTS AT END OF THE CONGRESS.—In order to ensure that this subsection is carried out in a manner that shall not vary the compensation of Senators or Representatives in violation of the twenty-seventh article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the payroll administrator of a House of Congress shall release for payments to Members of that House of Congress any amounts remaining in any escrow account under this section on the last day of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

(5) ROLE OF SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall provide the payroll administrators of the Houses of Congress with such assistance as may be necessary to enable the payroll administrators to carry out this subsection.

(6) PAYROLL ADMINISTRATOR DEFINED.—In this subsection, the ''payroll administrator'' of a House of Congress means—

(A) in the case of the House of Representatives, the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, or an employee of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer who is designated by the Chief Administrative Officer to carry out this section; and

(B) in the case of the Senate, the Secretary of the Senate, or an employee of the Office of the Secretary of the Senate who is designated by the Secretary to carry out this section.

(b) RULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018 AND SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEARS.—If the Director of the Congressional Budget Office does not certify that a House of Congress has met the requirements of section 2(a) with respect to fiscal year 2018, or any fiscal year thereafter, before April 16 of the fiscal year before such fiscal year, during pay periods which occur in the same calendar year after that date each Member of that House shall be paid at an annual rate of pay equal to $1.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''Director'' means the Director of the Congressional Budget Office; and

(2) the term ''Member'' includes a Delegate or Resident Commissioner to Congress.

SEC. 4. SUPERMAJORITY REQUIREMENT FOR INCREASING REVENUE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate and the House of Representatives, a bill, joint resolution, amendment, conference report, or amendment between the Houses that increases revenue shall only be agreed to upon an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the

Members of that House of Congress duly chosen and sworn.

(b) RULES OF SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—Subsection (a) is enacted by Congress—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and as such it is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a bill, joint resolution, amendment, conference report, or amendment between the Houses that increases revenue, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 494. A bill to authorize the exploration, leasing, development, production, and economically feasible and prudent transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain in Alaska; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise, along with my colleague Senator SULLIVAN, to introduce a bill to open a small portion of the arctic coastal plain, in my home State of Alaska, to oil and gas development. I am introducing this bill today because I strongly believe that whether oil and gas exploration should be conducted on a small portion of the coastal plain is a question for Congress; not one for unilateral action by Federal agency.

The 1.5 million acres of the Arctic coastal plain that lie within the nonwilderness portion of the 19 million acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge are North America's greatest prospect for conventional onshore production. When Prudhoe Bay, the largest conventional oil field in North America and one of the 20 largest fields in the world was discovered in 1968, estimates at the time projected 9.6 billion barrels of oil would be recovered. The U.S. Geological Survey continues to estimate that this part of the coastal plain has a mean likelihood of containing 10.4 billion barrels of oil and 8.6 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, as well as a reasonable chance of economically producing 16 billion barrels of oil. With potential comparable to Prudhoe Bay, the coastal plain represents an opportunity to ensure the American energy renaissance continues and our domestic energy security is bolstered for decades to come.

Alaska used to provide that foundation for our country. At its peak in 1988, Alaska provided nearly 25 percent of America's domestic production. Today it represents barely 6 percent. Importantly, despite the Federal government owning almost 70 percent of the lands in Alaska, almost all of our oil production is from State lands. The people of Alaska are doing everything they can to contribute to America's energy security by promoting production from State lands. In the past two years the State of Alaska has passed oil tax reforms, improved State permitting and provided more than $1.2 billion in State tax credits to support the exploration and development of oil from State lands. The only production on federal estate comes from the Northstar project, a small man-made island that straddles state and federal waters in the Beaufort Sea.

For more than 30 years, my State has successfully balanced resource development with environmental protection. Alaskans have proven, over and over again, that these endeavors are not mutually exclusive, and with advances in technology, the footprint of development projects is only getting smaller. Yet as the Federal level, there is an astonishing refusal to acknowledge the record.

With new exploration and development projects on Federal lands stalled or outright blocked, Alaska faces a tipping point. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, an engineering marvel that has served as one of America's great energy arteries for decades is facing more and more challenges from lower throughput. A closure of TAPS would shut down all northern Alaska oil production, devastating Alaska's economy and deepening our dependence on unstable petrostates throughout the world. Exploration and development in the Arctic offshore and National Petroleum Reserve Alaska depend on the long-term viability of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System.

The bill I introduce today, would disturb no more than 2,000 acres of the vast coastal plain. To put this in perspective, 2,000 acres is less than ⅙ the size of the local Dulles Airport, or about 1/10 of 1 percent of the refuge. Since these areas are less than 60 miles from TAPS, development in the Coastal Plain is the quickest, most environmentally sound way to increase oil production in Alaska and ensure the pipeline will operate well into the future, providing jobs and supporting the economies of both Alaska and the United States.

The bill includes strong protection for fish and wildlife, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence resources, and the environment. Development would not move forward if it would cause significant adverse impacts to the coastal plain. The bill also ensures these protections are strong because it provides for strict consultation with the residents of the coastal plain; the City of Kaktovik as well as the regional government, the North Slope Borough. The bill also provides important impact aid to the local communities from the State's share of revenues due to it under the Mineral Leasing Act and Alaska's Statehood Act.

As we continue to struggle with long-term unemployment, and an unsustainable national debt, we need to pursue development opportunities more than ever. The shale oil and gas boom on 2 state and private lands in the Lower 48 has been the shining light as our economy struggles to recover from the recession. My bill offers us a chance to produce more of our own energy, for the good of the American people, in an environmentally-friendly way and with the meaningful impact of the local people.

For decades, Alaskans, whom polls show overwhelmingly support development of the coastal plain, have been asking permission to explore and develop the resources located there. Consistent with the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, ANILCA, the state of Alaska recently submitted a plan to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct minimal exploration activities in the coastal plain and was rejected. Despite the fact that the State was in court presenting its case, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released an updated Plan for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that puts areas like the Coastal Plain in de facto wilderness status as Wilderness Study Areas.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service states that they did not consider an oil and gas alternative, as requested by the State of Alaska, North Slope Borough, various Alaska Native Regional and Village Corporations as well as a broad spectrum of Alaskans, because they stated that the decision to conduct oil and gas development is one for Congress to make. I hope this Congress will rise to that challenge and have the common sense to allow America to help itself by developing a small portion of the coastal plain. This is critical to my State and the nation as a whole and one more step we can take to push back against the unilateral executive actions that are threatening our economy and very system of government.

With this in mind, Senator SULLIVAN and I will work to educate members of this chamber about the opportunity we have and the tremendous benefits it would provide. We will show why such development should occur—why it must occur—and how it can benefit all of us and help secure our energy security for decades to come.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BURR, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. MORAN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 498. A bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 498

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 ''Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. RECIPROCITY FOR THE CARRYING OF CERTAIN CONCEALED FIREARMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 926C the following:

''§ 926D. Reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of the law of any State or political subdivision thereof to the contrary—

''(1) an individual who is not prohibited by Federal law from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a firearm, and who is carrying a government-issued photographic identification document and a valid license or permit which is issued pursuant to the law of a State and which permits the individual to carry a concealed firearm, may possess or carry a concealed handgun (other than a machinegun or destructive device) that has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce in any State other than the State of residence of the individual that—

''(A) has a statute that allows residents of the State to obtain licenses or permits to carry concealed firearms; or

''(B) does not prohibit the carrying of concealed firearms by residents of the State for lawful purposes; and

''(2) an individual who is not prohibited by Federal law from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a firearm, and who is carrying a government-issued photographic identification document and is entitled and not prohibited from carrying a concealed firearm in the State in which the individual resides otherwise than as described in paragraph (1), may possess or carry a concealed handgun (other than a machinegun or destructive device) that has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce in any State other than the State of residence of the individual that—

''(A) has a statute that allows residents of the State to obtain licenses or permits to carry concealed firearms; or

''(B) does not prohibit the carrying of concealed firearms by residents of the State for lawful purposes.

''(b) CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS.—The possession or carrying of a concealed handgun in a State under this section shall be subject to the same conditions and limitations, except as to eligibility to possess or carry, imposed by or under Federal or State law or the law of a political subdivision of a State, that apply to the possession or carrying of a concealed handgun by residents of the State or political subdivision who are licensed by the State or political subdivision to do so, or not prohibited by the State from doing so.

''(c) UNRESTRICTED LICENSE OR PERMIT.—In a State that allows the issuing authority for licenses or permits to carry concealed firearms to impose restrictions on the carrying of firearms by individual holders of such licenses or permits, an individual carrying a concealed handgun under this section shall be permitted to carry a concealed handgun according to the same terms authorized by an unrestricted license of or permit issued to a resident of the State.

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt any provision of State law with respect to the issuance of licenses or permits to carry concealed firearms.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 926C the following:

''926D. Reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.''.

(c) SEVERABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, if any provision of this Act, or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of such provision or amendment to any person or circumstance is held to be unconstitutional, this Act and amendments made by this Act and the application of such provision or amendment to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this Act shall take effect 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. COONS):

S. 502. A bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the Smarter Sentencing Act, which I believe is a very critical piece of legislation.

I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this legislation in this Congress, and I thank the bipartisan coalition of Senators who have come together, led by Senator MIKE LEE from Utah and Senator DICK DURBIN from Illinois. Their leadership on this issue has been absolutely critical.

The Smarter Sentencing Act has essential front-end reforms. These are reforms for when a person gets to the point of incarceration. What they actually do is combat injustices in the Federal sentencing program. They address a real plague in our country; that is, mass incarceration.

Think about this: We are the land of the free. We are a nation that believes in liberty and justice. But we are singular in humanity for an awful distinction: We have 5 percent of the globe's population but we incarcerate 25 percent of the globe's incarcerated people. That is unacceptable unless you believe for some reason that Americans have a higher proclivity for crime, unless you believe we have something in our water that makes us more likely to do wrong, and that is not the case.

The challenge is that we have seen in the past three decades a profound over-incarceration driven by a drug war that has created unfortunate negative consequences to our society. I thank Members of Congress for stepping up in this Congress to speak to this issue. It is un-American that we should hold the largest amount of incarcerated people per population than any other country. It goes against the very strains of our society dedicated to liberty, dedicated to keeping government focused on what it should be doing, not overreaching, not becoming overly aggressive, not surrendering or taking the liberty unnecessarily of other Americans.

I would like to talk for a few minutes about this broken system. What is broken in our criminal justice system? Well, when about three-quarters of our Federal prisoners are actually nonviolent offenders—I am actually one of those people who believe that if you do a violent crime, you should pay a very hefty price for that, that we as a society should have a place where we take stern action against people who promulgate violence, who undermine civil society. But as we look at this mass-incarceration problem where 25 percent of the globe's prison population is in our country, we realize that three-quarters of those people in the Federal prison system are nonviolent offenders.

This is not our history. This is not our tradition. Over the course of all of our Nation's history, we did not have this problem. It has really been the last 30 years where we have witnessed the explosion in the U.S. Federal prison population. In those 30 years alone—think about this—in the last 30 years alone, the prison population at the Federal level has expanded by nearly 800 percent. That is a massive and unacceptable increase, especially when you realize this was driven by the incarceration of nonviolent offenders.

This expansion of our prison population had a harmful effect when those people were released because once someone has a nonviolent felony offense, it is hard to get a job, it is hard to get business licenses, and they cannot get Pell grants. Often those people get caught up and go back to being involved in the drug war. So what happens is that two out of three of those people get rearrested within 3 years.

We are paying for this broken system, this revolving door of arresting nonviolent offenders, releasing them, and bringing them back into our system. It is plaguing the Federal budget and, frankly, State budgets all around our country. Each year more than one-quarter of a trillion dollars is being spent on this broken criminal justice system—money that could be used to empower people to succeed, to repair our infrastructure, or, how about this, it could stay in taxpayers' pockets.

What makes this system worse is that it undermines our American ideals. As I look across the way from the Capitol Building where I stand now and see the Supreme Court, written above the Supreme Court building, at the top, is this ideal of equal justice under law. The ideal that everyone will be treated equally under the law. But this broken criminal justice system has disproportionately impacted certain Americans and not others, which undermines America's core values of fairness and equal treatment for all.

More than 60 percent of our prison system is comprised of racial and ethnic minorities. The painful reality is that if somehow African Americans or Latinos used drugs at different levels than Whites, that might explain the disparate impact. If they dealt drugs at different levels, yes, that might explain it. But that is not the case. African Americans engage in drug offenses at a lower rate than Whites but are incarcerated at a rate 10 times that of Whites.

What is alarming about the mass incarceration is that people are actually not committing more and more crimes. The National Research Council recently released a report confirming what numerous other studies have actually shown: Incarceration rates are actually not tied to crime rates. We have seen incarceration rates going up and up, but now crime rates are coming down.

What is perpetuating this explosion of our prison population? It is the war on drugs that has created over the last 30 years alone an over-criminalization of nonviolent individuals, which stacked our prison population full of Americans, disproportionately minority and disproportionately poor.

Please understand that the people paying the highest price for this are the poor in our country. The New York Times yesterday published an article detailing how our jails have become warehouses made up primarily of people too poor to pay bail or to hire lawyers or too ill with mental health or drug problems to adequately care for themselves. If you look at our prison population, you will see that poverty, race, mental illness—those are the folks who are being disproportionately incarcerated.

If we follow our core ideals of fairness, democracy, and justice—then we know that mass incarceration is not who we are. That is not right. That the times demand that we examine this broken system and do those commonsense things that are needed to make our justice system just, to work first and foremost for our safety, to not be a gross waste of taxpayer dollars, and to make sure basic ideas of fairness are fulfilled.

This is not just speculation. And what is so powerful about this moment in time, even though all I have said so far is compelling enough, is that we as Federal actors—the 100 Senators here, the 435 Congress men and women, the President and the Vice President—don't need to figure out a way forward, make it up, design legislation based on our own ideas. We actually only have to look at the pathway forward by looking at Governors and legislatures in the States. They are so burdened by the costs of this unruly system, a system that is now plaguing—the Federal Bureau of Prisons is plaguing our country with its cost. What the States are doing to bear that cost is they are finding pragmatic, commonsense, bipartisan ways to move forward.

In fact, what gets me excited as a Democrat is that we just have to look at the red States and what the red States are doing to reduce their prison populations. Let me give an example. States such as Texas, Georgia, and North Carolina are leading on this issue, and the Federal Government should follow.

Texas is a State known for law and order, and known for being tough on crime. Yet Texans realize that being smart on crime means saving taxpayer dollars, using that money efficiently and effectively, lowering crime, and guess what, hey, we can also lower our prison population and empower people to be successful in life and not slip down that slope back toward recidivism. They have made tremendous strides in Texas in adopting policies that are designed to reduce their prison population and lower recidivism.

In 2007, Texas boasted the fourth largest incarceration rate in the country. Faced with a budget projection that estimated by 2012 the State would need an additional 17,000 prison beds—think about that for a second. They saw that they were going to need to build more prisons, house 17,000 more prison beds, and it was going to cost them $2 billion in Texas. The State's legislature said: Enough of this madness. Enough of this craziness.

They enacted bold reforms that would act as a model for us in the Federal legislature. As a result, they passed this broad-based legislation. Texas was able to stabilize their prison population and avert that budgetary disaster.

Texas State Representative Jerry Madden, a Republican, noted in a recent hearing before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations that the crime rate is now at 1968 levels. They were able to close three prisons and six juvenile facilities, and remarkably the Texas prison system is now operating at a 96-percent capacity. Commonsense reforms.

Georgia is another State. They have made remarkable progress. They are showing that reducing the prison population can lead to dividends for taxpayers, and can lower crime. In fact, over the past 5 years, in terms of the racial disparities in incarceration, Georgia has reduced the number of Black men incarcerated in the State by 20 percent. And they haven't seen crime go up—quite the contrary. They have seen it go down.

These States are proving that they don't have to lock up more people to create that safety we desire. States such as New Jersey, Texas, California, Virginia, Hawaii, Wyoming, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Colorado, New York, South Carolina, Alaska, and Georgia have all seen drops in crime rates as they have been implementing commonsense criminal justice reform.

So let's be clear. I am advocating for the Smarter Sentencing Act, but we should also be moving for bold, broad-based criminal justice reforms, copying the successes of red States with Republican Governors. We should be looking at their innovations and following their commonsense solutions and mirroring their success at the Federal level.

I am speaking of reforms at the front end when people get arrested; reforms behind the wall—inside the prison system to address what goes on in prison and helping these people, and reforms on the back end when they come out of prison, to ensure they stay out of prison.

Front-end reforms going on around our country are exciting, such as sentencing reform. What about radical ideas such as letting judges make decisions about sentencing and stop trying to legislate it? Judges are the experts. They know of the brutality of a person's circumstances. They can design sentences.

These policy initiatives should address the entire system. Behind-the-wall efforts should focus on initiatives to change the way prisoners experience life behind bars. To get treatment and job training so they don't commit future crimes. This is commonsense stuff. We shouldn't send people to prison and have them become criminalized or undermine their ability to be successful adults when they come out.

We should also focus on that back end, this idea that we need reentry policies to help people get jobs, reconnect with their families, and become strong, full-fledged American citizens. I am speaking of things such as parole reform.

To move forward we need to think big. This is what I will be advocating for. We can tackle this by taking a systemic approach. We must look at a broad-based reform agenda.

I love the fact that we have conservatives and liberals united on this issue—Republicans and Democrats, red Staters and blue Staters. Criminal justice reform is not a partisan issue, it is an American issue.

In 2010, Senators on both sides of the aisle came together to improve our justice system by passing the Fair Sentencing Act, which the President signed into law. This was a bipartisan piece of legislation that reduced the sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine—drugs that are pharmacologically indistinguishable. They changed it from 100 to 1 to 18 to 1, and I thank Senators DURBIN, GRASSLEY, LEAHY, and GRAHAM for their leadership on this issue.

Last year I joined with Senator RAND PAUL from Kentucky. I don't know how many sentences are used by people that contain the names CORY BOOKER and RAND PAUL in them, but we agree on this issue. We have common ground, and we introduced the REDEEM Act. This legislation aims to keep juveniles out of the criminal justice system. We looked to stop acts that many other countries consider torture, such as taking juveniles and routinely putting them into solitary confinement where they are traumatized and often come out of those circumstances more likely to do harm to themselves or others. We are going to reintroduce that bill this year.

Just last month I sat on a criminal justice reform panel right here in the Halls of the Senate, hosted by Van Jones on the left and Newt Gingrich on the right. In the last few months I have talked to Grover Norquist, I have

talked to the Koch brothers' representative, their chief counsel, and I have talked to conservative think tanks and Christian evangelicals. All of us agree on this issue. This chorus of voices, this coalition, this courageous commitment to our country's ideals lets us know that whether you consider yourself a liberal or a conservative, whether you consider yourself moderate leaning, left or right, this is an area we can agree on. It will save taxpayer money, uphold our ideals of liberty and freedom, create safer communities, and empower individuals to be successful.

Today I am excited to have joined with Senators LEE, DURBIN, LEAHY, and CRUZ to support the Smarter Sentencing Act. We need to have this conversation about reducing Federal mandatory minimums. In fact, I love that the Urban Institute has stated that mandatory minimums for drug offenses is the single largest factor in the growth of the Federal prison population.

Let me repeat that. Mandatory minimums for drug offenses are the single largest factor in the growth of the Federal prison population. A key factor in that 800-percent growth in the last 30 years has been driven by nonviolent drug offenders and mandatory minimums.

This bill also would do other things. It would expand the Federal safety valve, giving judges greater discretion and allowing them to hand out their sentences. Those people who believe in separation of powers, let the judiciary have more space to hand down fairer sentences and not shackle them with laws made by legislators who don't know the particulars of a case. Many Federal judges have spoken out about mandatory minimums being unnecessarily restrictive for them in doing their job.

The bill would also make the Fair Sentencing Act retroactive, which would allow persons convicted under the old crack-powder cocaine disparity to now receive a fairer sentence. With the crack-cocaine law changed in 2010, an individual arrested today would receive a lesser sentence. So making this law retroactive to impact people sentenced for crack cocaine offenses prior to 2010 is only fair.

This bill could save a lot of money—hundreds of millions of dollars. It would give us some freedom not only to return some toward debt relief for this country—Lord knows we need to focus on that—but also to invest in other programs many people on both sides of the aisle support, such as reentry programs to help people stay out of prison and get back to a productive lifestyle. If enacted into law as the bill is currently scored, it would save $3 billion over the next decade alone. This is critically important.

So this is a call to the conscience of the Congress. Every single day we pledge allegiance to our flag. That is not something anybody in this Chamber does as sort of a routine, perfunctory salute. We say those words because they mean something, and we end with this ideal that is a light to all of humanity—this ideal of liberty and justice for all.

If we mean those words, then that, across the board, is what we should be pursuing in this body. We know in our country States are doing things to further uphold these ideals, that they are making commonsense reforms that are keeping people safe and lowering crime, commonsense reforms that are saving taxpayer dollars and relieving the burden on taxpayers and budgets, that they are passing reforms that liberate people from the shackles of an imprisonment that is unnecessary, that is directly addressing the painful disparities of race and poverty, and that it is empowering Americans, our brothers and sisters. In all of our holy texts it talks about the dignity of all people, whether they are behind bars or on our streets, the dignity of worth that empowers people to be successful, to have life and liberty and to pursue their happiness.

So I say I support reforming our criminal justice system. More importantly, I say let's support our ideals. Let's be a nation of liberty and justice for all. Let's follow the lead of courageous governors and legislatures and let's make this Nation even better than it is today. I urge all Senators to promptly pass the Smarter Sentencing Act through the Senate.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 517. A bill to extend the secure rural schools and community self-determination program, to restore mandatory funding status to the payment in lieu of taxes program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I am proud to introduce the Secure Rural Schools and Payment in Lieu of Taxes Repair Act with my colleague Senator CRAPO. The bill will ensure that counties across the nation will have three more years of Secure Rural Schools, SRS, payments. Additionally, the bill would restore mandatory funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes, PILT.

Because Congress failed to take action to reauthorize SRS before the end of the 113th Congress, counties across the country received SRS payments this week that represent a fraction of last year's payment, leaving counties struggling to find ways to fund schools, roads, and emergency services this year. Without certainty and stability, counties will be forced to make cuts to essential services, leaving residents and communities reeling. County payments are a lifeline for cash-strapped rural communities that are already facing shortfalls to pave roads, keep teachers in schools and firefighters on call. This bipartisan bill keeps up the commitment the government made to support rural counties in Oregon and across the country. I am glad to once again partner with Senator CRAPO to get this vital legislation across the finish line.

Right now, this bill is not funded. It will be. Senator CRAPO and I will work with our colleagues to find funding for these important programs that is satisfactory to the left and to the right.

Funding for counties is an issue that impacts almost every State in the country. As Congress considers this bill, I ask my colleagues to talk to county leaders in their home states, visit local communities struggling to fund critical services, and find out how SRS and PILT impact their budgets, their priorities, and their quality of life. Rural communities deserve better than to have politics delay funding for SRS, so I urge my colleagues to join Senator CRAPO and me in our efforts to reauthorize this critical program.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 518. A bill to require States to establish highway stormwater management programs; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to discuss the introduction of my latest legislative proposal to better control the harmful and volumes of polluted stormwater that is generated from our Nation's Federal aid highways. Highway stormwater is a growing threat to water quality, aquatic ecosystems and the fish and wildlife that depend on the health of these ecosystems. Moreover, the high volumes and rapid flow of stormwater runoff from highways and roads poses a very serious threat to the condition of our Nation's water and transportation infrastructure as well as personal property particularly in urban and suburban communities.

The Environmental Protection Agency has recognized that pollution from point sources have been steadily declining since the enactment of the Clean Water Act. Likewise, we have seen reductions in pollution from certain non-point sources like agriculture which are attributable in part to the success of a wide variety of USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service Programs and farming innovations in soil conservation and nutrient pollution management.

One non-point source sector where we are unfortunately seeing an increasing impact on water quality is from impervious surface that create rapidly moving high volumes of untreated polluted stormwater that rush off of road surfaces, erode unnatural channels next to and ultimately underneath roadways comprising the integrity of roadway infrastructure, and increases the stress on storm sewer systems shortening the useful life of this infrastructure and ultimately lead to the discharge of untreated pollution that is carried off roadways and into our lakes, rivers, streams, and coastal waters.

Impervious surfaces include most buildings and structures, parking lots and of course the nearly 9 million lane miles of roads across our country. The total coverage of impervious surfaces in an area is usually expressed as a percentage of the total land area.

The coverage increases with rising urbanization. In rural areas, impervious cover may only be 1 percent or 2 percent, however road surfaces comprise 80 percent–90 percent of a rural area's total impervious surfaces. In residential areas, impervious surface coverage ranges between 10 percent in low-density subdivisions to over 50 percent in more densely developed communities, where the composition of the impervious surface area coverage works out to be 50 percent roads. In dense urban areas, the impervious surface area is often over 90 percent the total land area, with roads comprising 60 percent–70 percent of that coverage.

According to EPA, urban impervious cover, not just roads, in the lower 48 adds up to 43,000 square miles—an area roughly the size of Ohio. Continuing development adds another quarter of a million acres each year. Typically two-thirds of the cover is pavement, roads and parking lots, and ⅓ is buildings.

According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, impervious surfaces compose roughly 17 percent of all urban and suburban lands in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The greatest concentration of impervious surfaces in the bay watershed is in the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Areas of DC, Maryland and Virginia. The Virginia Tidewater area, Philadelphia's western suburbs, and Lancaster, PA, are also regions in the watershed where impervious surfaces are greater than 10 percent of the total land area.

Rainfall on hard surfaces like roads and highways has a very destructive and turbulent affect on nearby waterways and infrastructure. For example, the rain events that occur over a week long period at the end of April brought nearly 8 inches of rain to the Baltimore-Washington region. The urban runoff from roads in Baltimore caused an embankment above the CSX railroad track along East 26th Street, between St. Paul and Charles Street, to collapse. Fortunately no one was injured though homes had to be evacuated for more than a month, nearly a dozen parked cars were destroyed and moreover movement of freight along CSX railroad was disrupted for more than a week. This event shows just how destructive and disruptive poorly managed stormwater from transportation infrastructure can be.

Some may chalk this up to a freak storm of unusually large proportion. It's true this storm was unusual, but so were the polar vortexes and all of the snow New England and Buffalo received this winter, and 2013's 3-mile wide tornado in Alabama, the ongoing drought in California. ''Unusual'' weather seems to becoming a lot more usual. As extreme weather events triggered by our changing climate become more frequent it is imperative that we incorporate better designs into our infrastructure to be better handle these types of events.

Under the Clean Water Act, stormwater is considered a non-point source and there are no requirements that stormwater be collected or treated. The exception being for localities where in order to meet the standards set in an MS4, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, permit a region may include its transportation infrastructure in its MS4 permit.

However, in most cases stormwater that falls on roadways washes oil, grease, asbestos brake-dust, nitrogen deposits from tailpipe emissions, trash, road salt and de-icing agents, and sediment into nearby waterways. Highway stormwater runoff is most often not treated or adequately managed.

While these organic and inorganic contaminants are legitimate threats to water quality, the greater concern with roadway runoff is the sheer volume and rapid flow rate in which stormwater leaves these hard surfaces and enters our waterways. Flows and volumes that cause roads to collapse in Baltimore.

Roads are designed for stormwater to flow off of the driving surface quickly, for safety reasons. When stormwater rushes off of road surfaces into storm drains it is usually piped straight into the nearest river or stream without removing contaminants, detaining any of the volume, or slowing down the flow. This creates an enormously destructive set of circumstances for our waterways.

Another example of the destructive force that persistent unmitigated and poorly managed highway runoff can have on the condition and safety of highway infrastructure is in Mobile Alabama along Highway 131 in the Joe's Branch Watershed. The Mobile Bay Estuary Program, part of the National Estuaries Program, in coordination with Alabama Department of Transportation is having to spent millions of dollars to reinforce a highway embankment to keep the highway from slipping down a hill and into the Joe's Branch Creek, restore the hydrology of the river, and help protect private property from the dangerous erosion that's been caused by poorly managed stormwater from Highway 131.

The Mobile Bay Estuary Program described the problem this way: ''In the Joe's Branch watershed, on the property of Westminster Village adjacent and parallel to Highway 131, a head cut stream is eroding at an accelerating rate, an ominous condition as ALDOT prepares to undertake improvements to the highway. Identified as a high priority stabilization area in the D'Olive Creek, Tiawasee Creek and Joe's Branch Watershed Management Plan, MBNEP has submitted a funding request to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management on behalf of its partners in Spanish Fort, Daphne, ALDOT and Westminster Village to undertake restoration of the stream using a cutting-edge technology called Regenerative Step Pool Storm Conveyance.''

The four entities involved are spending large amount money to repair a problem caused by stormwater damage that could have been prevented at a lower cost by incorporating better stormwater mitigation facilities into the design of the highway.

These high-volume/high-speed flows also hasten the deterioration of water infrastructure. A 2001 study on the erosive power of urban stormwater flows examined how excessive stormwater volumes and flow rates off of urban surface infrastructure caused more than $1 million in roadway and water infrastructure damage in the Cincinnati metropolitan areas in Ohio and Kentucky in a single year.

While there are serious water quality concerns with not adequately controlling roadway infrastructure runoff, there are serious infrastructure costs, that are ultimately passed on to taxpayers and ratepayers, that can be avoided if transportation authorities do more to control and manage stormwater runoff with the infrastructure assets they manage and build.

The increased incidence of flash flooding events that occur even during seemingly mild and routine storm events is a direct result of the growing percentage of impervious land cover in urban and suburban communities. Replacement of the ''greenscapes'' that are lost to pavement is essential to restoring hydrological balance to our urban and suburban communities and impaired watersheds.

According to USGS: an inch of rain on one square foot of pavement produces 1.87 gallons of stormwater, Scaled up, 1 inch of rain on one acre would produce 27,150 gallons of stormwater. Using FHWA design standards for interstate highway lane and shoulder widths, 12 feet per lane, 10 foot right shoulder, 2x, 4 foot left shoulder, 2x, 10 miles of a four lane interstate highway generates nearly 2.5 million gallons of polluted stormwater for every inch of rain. To put that into perspective for the Potomac and Anacostia River Watersheds: The Capital Beltway, not including its 48 interchanges, generates nearly 30 million, 29,920,946, gallons of polluted stormwater for every inch of rain that falls on the 64 mile 8 to 12 lane interstate highway loop. It is volumes of stormwater like that which cause dangerous streambank erosion.

Gillies Creek is an urban waterway located East of Downtown Richmond. It is a tributary of the James River which flows into the Chesapeake Bay. Gillies Creek is surrounded by industrial and residential development and also receives stormwater from State highway 33, Interstate 64, US 60, and hundreds of city streets including Stony Run Parkway which directly adjacent to the creek for several miles.

The banks and bed of this creek have eroded so badly as urban development around the creek has added more impervious surfaces to the watershed that streambed sheering has created cliffs more than 10 feet tall at spots along the creek. Trees supporting the bank continually fall into the creek and nearby roadways and other infrastructure as well as homes and business are at risk. Reducing the impacts of the storms by mitigating the flow and volume of stormwater in this watershed will protect against further erosion and save the cost of repair and eventual replacement of the assets located along this endangered creek.

The aim of this legislation is to improve highway designs to better manage stormwater to avoid the costly damage that poorly managed stormwater causes to infrastructure and nearby streams, rivers and coastal waters.

I held a hearing on this issue in the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee on May 13, 2014. I heard many ideas from both the minority and majority witnesses that were invited to present testimony at this hearing. I listened to the concerns of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and I have incorporated provisions into this bill that should alleviate concerns they may have had with previous attempts to better control highway stormwater.

My bill's approach to highway runoff management is one that I hope my colleagues of both parties can support. First of all it put States in the driver's seat for developing hydrological analysis and implementation of best management practices to control highway runoff. The objective of the legislation is to control and manage flow and volume of stormwater from highways not to treat runoff in order to meet water quality standards. By taking this sort of approach we avoid EPA's involvement in the process. Lastly, States would only need to apply these procedures to new construction on major reconfiguration projects that significantly increases the amount of impervious surface in the project area.

Title 23 of the U.S. Code states: ''transportation should play a significant role in promoting economic growth, improving the environment, and sustaining the quality of life'' through the use of ''context sensitive solutions.'' In 2008, the Government Accountability Office issued a report examining key issues and challenges that needed to be addressed in the next reauthorization of the transportation bill. That report highlighted the clear link between transportation policy and the environment. With 985,139 miles of federal aid highways stretching from every corner of the US, polluted highway runoff is no small problem facing our Nation's waters. I would urge my colleagues to join me trying to address this problem facing America's waterways and infrastructure.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 518

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 ''Highway Runoff Management Act''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY RUNOFF MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 330. Federal-aid highway runoff management program

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) COVERED PROJECT.—The term 'covered project' means a reconstruction, rehabilitation, reconfiguration, renovation, major resurfacing, or new construction project on a Federal-aid highway carried out under this title that results in—

''(A) a 10-percent or greater increase in impervious surface of the aerial extent within the right-of-way of the project limit on a Federal-aid highway or associated facility; or

''(B) an increase of 1 acre or more in impervious surface coverage.

''(2) EROSIVE FORCE.—The term 'erosive force' means the flowrate within a stream or channel in which channel bed or bank material becomes detached, which in most cases is less than or equal to the flowrate produced by the 2-year storm event.

''(3) HIGHWAY RUNOFF.—The term 'highway runoff ', with respect to a Federal-aid highway, associated facility, or management measure retrofit project, means a discharge of peak flow rate or volume of runoff that exceeds flows generated under preproject conditions.

''(4) IMPACTED HYDROLOGY.—The term 'impacted hydrology' means stormwater runoff generated from all areas within the site limits of a covered project.

''(5) MANAGEMENT MEASURE.—The term 'management measure' means a program, structural or nonstructural management practice, operational procedure, or policy on or off the project site that is intended to prevent, reduce, or control highway runoff.

''(b) STATE HIGHWAY STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each State shall—

''(A) develop a process for analyzing the erosive force of highway runoff generated from covered projects; and

''(B) apply management measures to maintain or restore impacted hydrology associated with highway runoff from covered projects.

''(2) INCLUSIONS.—The management measures established under paragraph (1) may include, as the State determines to be appropriate, management measures that—

''(A) minimize the erosive force of highway runoff from a covered project on a channel bed or bank of receiving water by managing highway runoff within the area of the covered project;

''(B) manage impacted hydrology in such a manner that the highway runoff generated by a covered project is below the erosive force flow and volume;

''(C) to the maximum extent practicable, seek to address the impact of the erosive force of hydrologic events that have the potential to create or exacerbate downstream channel erosion, including excess pier and abutment scour at bridges and channel downcutting and bank failure of streams adjacent to highway embankments;

''(D) ensure that the highway runoff from the post-construction condition does not increase the risk of channel erosion relative to the preproject condition; and

''(E) employ simplified approaches to determining the erosive force of highway runoff generated from covered projects, such as a regionalized analysis of streams within a State.

''(c) GUIDANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall publish guidance to assist States in carrying out this section.

''(2) CONTENTS OF GUIDANCE.—The guidance shall include guidelines and technical assistance for the establishment of State management measures that will be used to assist in avoiding, minimizing, and managing highway runoff from covered projects, including guidelines to help States integrate the planning, selection, design, and long-term operation and maintenance of management measures consistent with the design standards in the overall project planning process.

''(3) APPROVAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall—

''(A) review the management measures program of each State; and

''(B) approve such a program, if the program meets the requirements of subsection (b).

''(4) UPDATES.—Not later than 5 years after the date of publication of the guidance under this subsection, and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter—

''(A) the Secretary, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall update the guidance, as applicable; and

''(B) each State, as applicable, shall update the management measures program of the State in accordance with the updated guidance.

''(d) REPORTING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2)(A), each State shall submit to the Secretary an annual report that describes the activities carried out under the highway stormwater management program of the State, including a description of any reductions of stormwater runoff achieved as a result of covered projects carried out by the State after the date of enactment of this section.

''(2) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER PERMIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A State shall not be required to submit an annual report described in paragraph (1) if the State—

''(i) is operating Federal-aid highways in the State in a post-construction condition in accordance with a permit issued under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

''(ii) is subject to an annual reporting requirement under such a permit (regardless of whether the permitting authority is a Federal or State agency); and

''(iii) carries out a covered project with respect to a Federal-aid highway in the State described in clause (i).

''(B) TRANSMISSION OF REPORT.—A Federal or State permitting authority that receives an annual report described in subparagraph (A)(ii) shall, on receipt of such a report, transmit a copy of the report to the Secretary.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 3 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''330. Federal-aid highway runoff management program.''.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. COONS, Mr. CARPER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 519. A bill to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to permanently reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, authorized under P.L. 105–312 in 1998 and reauthorized by P.L. 107–308 in 2002, the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network helps several million visitors and residents discover, enjoy, and learn about the special places and stories of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Today, I am introducing legislation to permanently authorize this successful 17-year-old program.

For visitors and residents, the Gateways are the ''Chesapeake connection.'' The network members provide an experience of such high quality that visitors indeed connect to the Chesapeake emotionally as well as intellectually, and thus to the Bay's conservation. Through more than 160 of these sites, the Gateways Network partner sites and water trails enable visitors to experience the authentic Chesapeake.

The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure. The Chesapeake ranks as the largest of America's 130 estuaries and one of the Nation's largest and longest fresh water and estuarine systems. The Atlantic Ocean delivers half the bay's 18 trillion gallons of water and the other half flows through over 150 major rivers and streams draining 64,000 square miles within 6 states and the District of Columbia. The Chesapeake watershed is among the most significant cultural, natural and historical assets of our Nation.

The Chesapeake is enormously vast and diverse—to the extent that it is impossible to experience all the culture, history and natural beauty in any one place. That is why the gateways program is designed to connect and use the scores of existing public resources to collaborate on presenting the many chapters and tales of the bay's story. Visitors and residents go to more places for more experiences, all through a coordinated Gateways Network.

Beyond simply coordinating the network, publishing a map and guides, and providing standard exhibits at all Gateways, the National Park Service has helped gateways with matching grants and expertise for several hundred high-quality projects, developing sites to provide fishing, boating, and viewing access to the bay and its major tributaries. This is a great deal for the bay—it helps network members tell the Chesapeake story better and inspires people to care for this National Treasure, in addition to supporting local, State, and national water trails—and it's a good deal for the Park Service. It serves all 170+ gateways and their 10 million visitors. No other National Park can provide such a dramatic ratio of public dollars spent to number of visitors served.

With the National Park Service's expertise and support, gateways have made significant progress in their mission to tell the Bay's stories to their millions of members and visitors, extend access to the Bay and its watershed, and develop a conservation awareness and ethic. It is time to not only reauthorize the Chesapeake Gateways and Watertrails program, but make the annual $3 million reauthorization for this program permanent. It is my hope that the Congress will act quickly to adopt this legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 519

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 ''Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network Reauthorization Act''.

SEC. 2. PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 502(c) of the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; Public Law 105–312) is amended by striking ''for'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''for each fiscal year.''.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 520. A bill to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to reauthorize the Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. More than half of the bird species found in the U.S. migrate across our borders and many of these spend our winter in Central and South America. This bill promotes international cooperation for long-term conservation, education, research, monitoring, and habitat protection for more than 350 species of neotropical migratory birds. Through its successful competitive, matching grant program, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service supports public-private partnerships in countries mostly in Latin America and the Caribbean. Up to ¼ of the funds may be awarded for domestic projects.

This legislation aims to sustain healthy populations of migratory birds that are not only beautiful to look at but help our farmers by consuming billions of harmful insect and rodent pests each year, providing pollination services, and dispersing seeds. Migratory birds face threats from pesticide pollution, deforestation, sprawl, and invasive species that degrade their habitats in addition to the natural risks of their extended flights. Birds are excellent indicators of the health of an ecosystem. As such, it is troubling that, according to the National Audubon Society, half of all coastally migrating shorebirds, like the Common Tern and Piping Plover, are experiencing dramatic population declines.

The Baltimore Oriole, the State bird of Maryland and one whose song brightens all of the Northeastern U.S., has steadily declined in population despite being protected by federal law under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the State of Maryland's Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. Likewise, the iconic Red Knot bird, whose legendary 9,000 mile migration centers on a stopover in the Mid-Atlantic states, is decreasing in population quickly. Threats to these beloved Maryland birds are mainly due to habitat destruction and deforestation, particularly in the Central and South American countries where the birds winter. In addition, international use of toxic pesticides ingested by insects, which are then eaten by the birds, has significantly contributed to this decline. Conservation efforts in our country are essential, but investment in programs throughout the migratory route of these and countless other migratory birds is critical. This legislation accomplishes this goal.

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act has a proven track record of reversing habitat loss and advancing conservation strategies for the broad range of neotropical birds that populate the United States and the rest of the Western hemisphere. Since 2002, more than $50.1 million in grants have been awarded, supporting 451 projects in 36 countries. Partners have contributed an additional $190.6 million, and more than 3.7 million acres of habitat have been affected.

This legislation is cost-effective, budget-friendly, and has been a highly successful Federal program. This simple reauthorization bill will make sure that this good work continues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 520

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

SECTION 1. REAUTHORIZATION OF NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION ACT.

Section 10 of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 6109) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act $6,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020.

''(b) USE OF FUNDS.—Of the amounts made available under subsection (a) for each fiscal year, not less than 75 percent shall be expended for projects carried out at a location outside of the United States.''.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 521. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today marks an important day in history as our Nation continues to honor the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. There are many landmarks in my hometown of Baltimore that are significant to Civil War history, which I believe are in the Nation's interests to protect for future generations. As our Nation pays tribute to this trying time in our Nation's history, I am proud to reintroduce the President Street Station Study Act, which would initiate the process for preserving one such landmark in the heart of Baltimore. President Street Station played a crucial role in the Civil War, the Underground Railroad, the growth of Baltimore's railroad industry, and is a historically significant landmark to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln.

The station was constructed for the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore, PW&B, Railroad in 1849 and remains the oldest surviving big city railroad terminal in the United States. This historical structure is a unique architectural gem, arguably the first example and last survivor of the early barrel-vault train shed arches, also known as the Howe Truss. The arch-rib design became the blueprint for railroad bridges and roofs well into the 20th century and was replicated for every similarly designed train shed and roof for the next 20 years.

The growth of President Street Station and the PW&B railroad mirror the expansion of the railroad industry throughout the country in the latter half of the 19th century. This station played an essential role in making Baltimore the first railroad and sea-rail link in the nation and helped the city become the international port hub it is today.

In its heyday, President Street Station was the key link connecting Washington, D.C. with the northeast States. Hundreds of passengers traveling north passed through this station and, by the start of the Civil War, Baltimore had become our Nation's major southern railroad hub. Not surprisingly, the station played a critical role in both the Civil War and the Underground Railroad.

Perhaps the most famous passenger to travel through the station was President Abraham Lincoln. He came through the station at least four times, including secretly on his way to his first inauguration in 1861. President-elect Lincoln was warned by a PW&B private detective of a possible assassination plot in Baltimore as he transferred trains. While it is unclear if this plot existed and posed a serious threat, Lincoln nevertheless was secretly smuggled aboard a train in the dead of night to complete his trip to Washington.

Just a few months later, President Street Station served as a backdrop for what many historians consider to be the first bloodshed of the Civil War. The Baltimore Riot of 1861 occurred when Lincoln called for Union volunteers to quell the rebellion at Fort Sumter in Charleston. On this day in history, April 19, 1861, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania volunteers were met and attacked by a mob of secessionist and Confederate sympathizers. The bloody confrontation left four dead and 36 wounded. As the war continued, the Station remained a critical link for the Union. Troops and supplies from the north were regularly shuttled through the station to support Union soldiers.

It is well known that Maryland was a common starting point along the Underground Railroad and that many escaped slaves from Maryland's Eastern Shore plantations were destined for Baltimore and the President Street Station to travel north to freedom. Last year, Congress acted to honor Maryland's own Harriet Tubman, the Underground Railroad's most famous ''conductor'' by enacting the Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act, establishing the first set of National Historical Parks to commemorate the life of an African American woman. While Harriet Tubman personally led dozens of people to freedom, her courage and fortitude also inspired others to find their own strength to seek freedom. President Street Station was indeed a station on this secret network. Prior to emancipation in 1863, several renowned escapees, including Frederick Douglass, William and Ellen Craft, and Henry ''Box'' Brown, traveled through the Station, risking their lives for a better and freer life.

Others' journeys for a better life also passed through President Street Station. From its beginning and into the 20th century, Baltimore was both a destination and departure point for immigrants. New arrivals from Ireland, Russia, and Europe arriving on the eastern seaboard traveled by way of the PW&B railroads to the west.

For decades, President Street Station has long been recognized as having an important place in history: In 1992, it was listed on the National Register of Historic places and the city of Baltimore has dedicated it a local historical landmark. For many years it served as the Baltimore Civil War Museum, educating generations of people about the role Maryland and Baltimore played in the Civil War and the early history of the city. In recent years, the museum, run by dedicated volunteers from the Maryland Historical Society and Friends of President Street Station, have struggled to keep the station's doors open and keeping the station's character true to its historical roots. The area around President Street Station has changed dramatically over the decades, but the Station has worked to preserve its place in place in history. It has been many years since trains passed through the President Street Station and it is clear that today the best use for this building is to preserve the building and use it to tell station's American story.

President Street Station is an American historical treasure. This bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Street Station to evaluate the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Station as a unit of the National Park Service. President Street Station, a contributor to the growth of the railroad, and a vital player in the Underground Railroad, Lincoln Presidency and Civil War, is part of this history. I urge my colleagues to join me in giving this station the recognition it deserves and support this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 521

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 ''President Street Station Study Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) STUDY AREA.—The term ''study area'' means the President Street Station, a railroad terminal in Baltimore, Maryland, the history of which is tied to the growth of the railroad industry in the 19th century, the Civil War, the Underground Railroad, and the immigrant influx of the early 20th century.

SEC. 3. SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a special resource study of the study area.

(b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) evaluate the national significance of the study area;

(2) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the study area as a unit of the National Park System;

(3) consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the study area by the Federal Government, State or local government entities, or private and nonprofit organizations;

(4) consult with interested Federal agencies, State or local governmental entities, private and nonprofit organizations, or any other interested individuals; and

(5) identify cost estimates for any Federal acquisition, development, interpretation, operation, and maintenance associated with the alternatives.

(c) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study required under subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with section 8 of Public Law 91–383 (16 U.S.C. 1a–5).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are first made available for the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the results of the study; and

(2) any conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. REID, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr.

BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 522. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to extend the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, we have made great strides in recent years ensuring that Americans of all ages have access to quality health care. Part of this success comes from the Children's Health Insurance Program created in 1997 as a joint State-Federal health insurance program for low- to moderate-income children and pregnant women.

Because of CHIP, 10 million children, including 130,000 children in my State—most of whom are sons and daughters of working parents who are in low-income jobs and not making enough money to afford insurance and for employers that typically don't offer insurance—have access to health care today—health care they may not have received otherwise.

We know CHIP works not just in the number of children insured under the program but because of the flexibility CHIP provides States and the quality of care children receive. It works. It works for children, it works for parents, and it works for communities.

That is the good news. The bad news is, even though the law is on the books until 2019, the funding for CHIP will expire in September. That is why I am proud to introduce legislation today with my colleagues Senators STABENOW, WYDEN, CASEY, and Leader REID to protect the CHIP program and to extend its funding to match the authorization until 2019.

The Protecting and Retaining our Children's Health Insurance Program—PRO-CHIP—Act is straightforward, it is common sense, and will provide much needed budget predictability for our States.

The Republican Governor of my State supports CHIP. He understands they need it in Ohio and across the country sooner rather than later so they can properly budget and plan and avoid gaps in health care for vulnerable children.

Again, these 130,000 children in my State alone are overwhelmingly sons and daughters of working parents who don't make enough money to pay for health insurance out of pocket, and who are working at companies and businesses that don't provide health insurance.

I am honored that 30 of our Senate colleagues have already joined as cosponsors. Providing health insurance to low-income children isn't just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. Children stay healthier, families function better, neighborhoods are better off, and children do better in school as a result, with fewer sick days. They feel better when they are at school because they have a family doctor, because they have health insurance.

We know it works. Listen to these numbers: Thanks to CHIP, the number of uninsured children has fallen by half, from 14 percent in 1997—when this bill passed with bipartisan support, and it has been extended and reauthorized a couple of times since—to a record low of 7 percent in 2012.

In nearly every State of the Union, Governors planning their State budgets and parents planning their family budgets are relying on us to extend CHIP now. We should not go right up to the deadline, as some are now talking about in terms of shutting the government down. We should not go up to the deadline but do it now. It would provide a sigh of relief for parents, not only for financial reasons but because CHIP means better access to comprehensive care for their kids.

Think about the anxiety parents face knowing they have insurance today under CHIP but not being certain they will have it this time next year. We should act together to protect this vital program that provides comprehensive health care coverage for 10 million children. States will start to roll back their CHIP program and funding for the program will expire at the end of September if we don't act soon.

This has always been bipartisan. It should continue to be. I look forward to working with all my colleagues to prioritize children's health and help pass this PRO-CHIP legislation as soon as possible.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 529. A bill to improve the services available to runaway and homeless youth who are victims of trafficking, to improve the response to victims of child sex trafficking, to direct the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to identify strategies to prevent children from becoming victims of trafficking and review trafficking prevention efforts, to protect and assist in the recovery of victims of trafficking, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, I am introducing a measure that would help us make progress in the fight against domestic human trafficking, a terrible crime. This legislation, titled the Combating Human Trafficking Act of 2015, has three objectives. First, it would encourage federal agencies to devote existing grant resources to initiatives that are designed to protect runaway and homeless youth from human traffickers. Second, it would update the authorizing language for the cyber tipline of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to ensure that the statute specifically references ''child sex trafficking.'' Third, and finally, this legislation would help ensure that trafficking victims' housing needs are met and equip Congress with more information on the best practices to combat human trafficking.

The first title of this measure is based on legislation introduced by U.S. Congressman JOSEPH HECK of Nevada in January. It is titled the Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act of 2015. Similar language passed the House on January 26 by a unanimous voice vote. This part of the bill would improve the support provided specifically to runaway and homeless youth who are trafficking victims. This title also would enable the Secretary of Health and Human Services to devote existing grant resources to training grantees' personnel on the effects of human trafficking on runaway and homeless youth. Finally, this title would allow the HHS Secretary to provide street-based services to such victims.

The second title of the bill, based on a measure introduced by U.S. Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY of Ohio, would amend the Missing Children's Assistance Act to ensure that the phrase ''child sex trafficking'' is incorporated into the statutory language that authorizes the cyber tipline of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Nearly identical language already passed the U.S. House of Representatives earlier this year.

The final title of this legislation is known as the Human Trafficking Prevention, Intervention and Recovery Act of 2015, after a bill introduced by U.S. Congresswoman KRISTI NOEM of South Dakota. It would charge the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking with several duties, such as identifying best practices and strategies to combat human trafficking and cataloging the anti-trafficking activities of various State and Federal agencies. This task force, which was created under the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act, must provide a report within one year of its review and findings, under the legislation.

The third title of this legislation also calls for the Government Accountability Office to report to Congress on governmental and law enforcement efforts to combat domestic human trafficking. This title also recognizes that minors who are trafficking victims in the United States are in desperate need of housing. It would ensure that certain grants, which are available from the U.S. Department of Justice under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, can be used for initiatives to assist trafficking victims with their

housing needs. Shelters and facilities that are seeking to expand or develop services to trafficking survivors would be eligible to apply for these grant funds, under this title of the legislation. Nearly identical language passed the House last month.

I urge my colleagues to pass this vitally important legislation. I also want to extend my appreciation to my colleague from Illinois, Mr. KIRK, who has agreed to join me as an original cosponsor of this measure.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 73—AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE FOR THE PERIODS MARCH 1, 2015 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2015, OCTOBER 1, 2015 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2016, AND OCTOBER 1, 2016 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Mr. BLUNT submitted the following resolution; from the Committee on Rules and Administration; which was placed on the calendar:

S. RES. 73

Resolved,

SECTION 1. AGGREGATE AUTHORIZATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of carrying out the powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, and under the appropriate authorizing resolutions of the Senate, there is authorized for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, in the aggregate of $57,801,217, for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, in the aggregate of $99,087,800, and for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017, in the aggregate of $41,286,584, in accordance with the provisions of this resolution, for standing committees of the Senate, the Special Committee on Aging, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Indian Affairs.

(b) AGENCY CONTRIBUTIONS.—There are authorized to be paid from the appropriations account for ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations'' of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for agency contributions related to the compensation of employees of the committees for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017.

SEC. 2. COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $2,463,834, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $4,223,716, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $1,759,882, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $40,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 3. COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Armed Services is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,783,845, of which—

(1) not to exceed $46,667 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $17,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $6,486,591, of which—

(1) not to exceed $80,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $30,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,702,746, of which—

(1) not to exceed $33,334 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $12,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 4. COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,119,153, of which—

(1) not to exceed $8,370 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $503 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $5,347,119, of which—

(1) not to exceed $14,348 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $861 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,227,966, of which—

(1) not to exceed $5,978 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $358 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such

committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 5. COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Budget is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,534,372, of which—

(1) not to exceed $35,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $21,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $6,058,924, of which—

(1) not to exceed $60,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $36,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,524,552, of which—

(1) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $15,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 6. COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,879,581, of which—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $6,650,710, of which—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,771,129, of which—

(1) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $50,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 7. COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,219,522.

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $5,519,181.

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,299,659.

SEC. 8. COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,060,871, of which—

(1) not to exceed $4,666.67 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $1,166.67 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $5,247,208, of which—

(1) not to exceed $8,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $2,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,186,337, of which—

(1) not to exceed $3,333.33 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $833.33 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 9. COMMITTEE ON FINANCE.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Finance is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $4,710,670, of which—

(1) not to exceed $17,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $5,833 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $8,075,434, of which—

(1) not to exceed $30,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $3,364,764, of which—

(1) not to exceed $12,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $4,166 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 10. COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,889,028, of which—

(1) not to exceed $58,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $11,600 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $6,666,904, of which—

(1) not to exceed $100,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,777,877, of which—

(1) not to exceed $42,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $8,400 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 11. COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $5,105,487, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $8,752,264, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $3,646,777, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 12. COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules and S. Res. 445, agreed to October 9, 2004 (108th Congress), including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $5,591,653, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $9,585,691, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $3,994,038, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(e) INVESTIGATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The committee, or any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee, is authorized to study or investigate—

(A) the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches of the Government including the possible existence of fraud, misfeasance, malfeasance, collusion, mismanagement, incompetence, corruption or unethical practices, waste, extravagance, conflicts of interest, and the improper expenditure of Government funds in transactions, contracts, and activities of the Government or of Government officials and employees and any and all such improper practices between Government personnel and

corporations, individuals, companies, or persons affiliated therewith, doing business with the Government, and the compliance or noncompliance of such corporations, companies, or individuals or other entities with the rules, regulations, and laws governing the various governmental agencies and the Government's relationships with the public;

(B) the extent to which criminal or other improper practices or activities are, or have been, engaged in the field of labor-management relations or in groups or organizations of employees or employers, to the detriment of interests of the public, employers, or employees, and to determine whether any changes are required in the laws of the United States in order to protect such interests against the occurrence of such practices or activities;

(C) organized criminal activity which may operate in or otherwise utilize the facilities of interstate or international commerce in furtherance of any transactions and the manner and extent to which, and the identity of the persons, firms, or corporations, or other entities by whom such utilization is being made, and further, to study and investigate the manner in which and the extent to which persons engaged in organized criminal activity have infiltrated lawful business enterprise, and to study the adequacy of Federal laws to prevent the operations of organized crime in interstate or international commerce, and to determine whether any changes are required in the laws of the United States in order to protect the public against such practices or activities;

(D) all other aspects of crime and lawlessness within the United States which have an impact upon or affect the national health, welfare, and safety, including investment fraud schemes, commodity and security fraud, computer fraud, and the use of offshore banking and corporate facilities to carry out criminal objectives;

(E) the efficiency and economy of operations of all branches and functions of the Government with particular reference to—

(i) the effectiveness of present national security methods, staffing, and processes as tested against the requirements imposed by the rapidly mounting complexity of national security problems;

(ii) the capacity of present national security staffing, methods, and processes to make full use of the Nation's resources of knowledge and talents;

(iii) the adequacy of present intergovernmental relations between the United States and international organizations principally concerned with national security of which the United States is a member; and

(iv) legislative and other proposals to improve these methods, processes, and relationships;

(F) the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of all agencies and departments of the Government involved in the control and management of energy shortages including their performance with respect to—

(i) the collection and dissemination of accurate statistics on fuel demand and supply;

(ii) the implementation of effective energy conservation measures;

(iii) the pricing of energy in all forms;

(iv) coordination of energy programs with State and local government;

(v) control of exports of scarce fuels;

(vi) the management of tax, import, pricing, and other policies affecting energy supplies;

(vii) maintenance of the independent sector of the petroleum industry as a strong competitive force;

(viii) the allocation of fuels in short supply by public and private entities;

(ix) the management of energy supplies owned or controlled by the Government;

(x) relations with other oil producing and consuming countries;

(xi) the monitoring of compliance by governments, corporations, or individuals with the laws and regulations governing the allocation, conservation, or pricing of energy supplies; and

(xii) research into the discovery and development of alternative energy supplies; and

(G) the efficiency and economy of all branches and functions of Government with particular references to the operations and management of Federal regulatory policies and programs.

(2) EXTENT OF INQUIRIES.—In carrying out the duties provided in paragraph (1), the inquiries of this committee or any subcommittee of the committee shall not be construed to be limited to the records, functions, and operations of any particular branch of the Government and may extend to the records and activities of any persons, corporation, or other entity.

(3) SPECIAL COMMITTEE AUTHORITY.—For the purposes of this subsection, the committee, or any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee, or its chairman, or any other member of the committee or subcommittee designated by the chairman is authorized, in its, his, her, or their discretion—

(A) to require by subpoena or otherwise the attendance of witnesses and production of correspondence, books, papers, and documents;

(B) to hold hearings;

(C) to sit and act at any time or place during the sessions, recess, and adjournment periods of the Senate;

(D) to administer oaths; and

(E) to take testimony, either orally or by sworn statement, or, in the case of staff members of the Committee and the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, by deposition in accordance with the Committee Rules of Procedure.

(4) AUTHORITY OF OTHER COMMITTEES.—Nothing contained in this subsection shall affect or impair the exercise of any other standing committee of the Senate of any power, or the discharge by such committee of any duty, conferred or imposed upon it by the Standing Rules of the Senate or by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946.

(5) SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.—All subpoenas and related legal processes of the committee and any duly authorized subcommittee of the committee authorized under S. Res. 253, agreed to October 3, 2013 (113th Congress) are authorized to continue.

SEC. 13. COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $5,461,388, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $9,362,379, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $3,900,991, of which—

(1) not to exceed $200,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 14. COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $1,375,819, of which—

(1) not to exceed $43,750 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $7,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $2,358,546, of which—

(1) not to exceed $75,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $12,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of

such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $982,728, of which—

(1) not to exceed $31,250 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $5,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 15. COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $1,520,944, of which—

(1) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $2,607,332, of which—

(1) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $1,086,388, of which—

(1) not to exceed $25,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 16. COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under the Standing Rules of the Senate, in accordance with its jurisdiction under rule XXV of such rules, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by paragraphs 1 and 8 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $1,283,522, of which—

(1) not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $3,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $2,200,323, of which—

(1) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $5,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $916,801, of which—

(1) not to exceed $8,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $1,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 17. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions imposed by section 104 of S. Res. 4, agreed to February 4, 1977 (95th Congress), and in exercising the authority conferred on it by such section, the Special Committee on Aging is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $1,399,763, of which—

(1) not to exceed $3,055 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $3,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $2,399,594, of which—

(1) not to exceed $6,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $6,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $999,831, of which—

(1) not to exceed $2,500 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $1,500 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 18. SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions under S. Res. 400, agreed to May 19, 1976 (94th Congress), as amended by S. Res. 445, agreed to October 9, 2004 (108th Congress), in accordance with its jurisdiction under sections 3(a) and 17 of such S. Res. 400, including holding hearings, reporting such hearings, and making investigations as authorized by section 5 of such S. Res. 400, the Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $3,217,448, of which not to exceed $10,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $5,515,626, of which not to exceed $17,144 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $2,298,177, of which not to exceed $7,143 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i)

of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))).

SEC. 19. COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—In carrying out its powers, duties, and functions imposed by section 105 of S. Res. 4, agreed to February 4, 1977 (95th Congress), and in exercising the authority conferred on it by that section, the Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized from March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017, in its discretion—

(1) to make expenditures from the contingent fund of the Senate;

(2) to employ personnel; and

(3) with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned and the Committee on Rules and Administration, to use on a reimbursable, or nonreimbursable, basis the services of personnel of any such department or agency.

(b) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015.—The expenses of the committee for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015 under this section shall not exceed $1,184,317, of which—

(1) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the training of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(c) EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016 PERIOD.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016 under this section shall not exceed $2,030,258, of which—

(1) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for training consultants of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

(d) EXPENSES FOR PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2017.—The expenses of the committee for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017 under this section shall not exceed $845,941, of which—

(1) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for the procurement of the services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof (as authorized by section 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i))); and

(2) not to exceed $20,000 may be expended for training consultants of the professional staff of such committee (under procedures specified by section 202(j) of that Act).

SEC. 20. SPECIAL RESERVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Within the funds in the account ''Expenses of Inquiries and Investigations'', there is authorized to be established a special reserve to be available to any committee funded by this resolution as provided in subsection (b) of which—

(1) for the period March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the amount equal to $7/12^{th}$ of the appropriations for the account that are available for the period October 1, 2014 through September 30, 2015;

(2) for the period October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the appropriations for the account that are available for that period; and

(3) for the period October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017, an amount shall be available, not to exceed 7 percent of the amount equal to $5/12^{th}$ of the appropriations for the account that are available for the period October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—The special reserve authorized in subsection (a) shall be available to any committee—

(1) on the basis of special need to meet unpaid obligations incurred by that committee during the periods referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a); and

(2) at the request of a Chairman and Ranking Member of that committee subject to the approval of the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SENATE RESOLUTION 74—DECLARING THAT ACHIEVING THE PRIMARY GOAL OF THE NATIONAL PLAN TO ADDRESS ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO PREVENT AND EFFECTIVELY TREAT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE BY 2025 IS AN URGENT NATIONAL PRIORITY

Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WARNER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 74

Whereas the number of individuals in the United States with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (referred to in this preamble as ''Alzheimer's'') is as high as 5,200,000, which is more than double the number in 1980;

Whereas based on the trajectory of Alzheimer's, as many as 16,000,000 individuals in the United States may have Alzheimer's by 2050;

Whereas the increasing prevalence of Alzheimer's and other dementias is a global health crisis that afflicts an estimated 44,000,000 individuals worldwide as of December, 2013 and may afflict over 135,000,000 individuals by 2050;

Whereas Alzheimer's is a leading cause of death in the United States with new data indicating that more than 500,000 deaths each year are attributable to the disease;

Whereas Alzheimer's is the only disease among the top 10 causes of death in the United States without an effective means of prevention, treatment, or cure;

Whereas Alzheimer's places an enormous financial strain on families, the health care system, and State and Federal budgets;

Whereas the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) and the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) are estimated to bear more than two-thirds of the total costs of this care in 2015;

Whereas a RAND Corporation study published in 2013 and commissioned by the National Institute on Aging found that Alzheimer's is the costliest disease in the United States, costing more than cancer and heart disease;

Whereas in 2013, an estimated 15,500,000 family members and friends of individuals with Alzheimer's provided those individuals with 17,700,000,000 hours of unpaid care, an amount valued at more than $220,000,000;

Whereas Alzheimer's disease has a disproportionate impact on many populations including women, African Americans, and Latinos;

Whereas the global cost of Alzheimer's exceeds $600,000,000,000 each year, an amount equal to approximately 1 percent of the world's gross domestic product;

Whereas in December 2013, the G-8 nations met and adopted a political declaration supporting the goal of a cure or disease-modifying therapy for dementia by 2025 as well as collectively and significantly increasing resources committed to dementia research;

Whereas Alzheimer's takes an emotional and physical toll on caregivers that results in a higher incidence of chronic conditions, such as heart disease, cancer, and depression among caregivers;

Whereas the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease of the Department of Health and Human Services enables family caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's to provide care while maintaining personal health and well-being;

Whereas the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease supports informal caregivers by—

(1) identifying the support needs of caregivers;

(2) developing and disseminating modes for intervention;

(3) providing information that caregivers need, particularly in crisis situations; and

(4) assisting caregivers in maintaining personal health and well-being;

Whereas a strong and sustained research effort is the best tool to slow the progression and ultimately prevent the onset of Alzheimer's;

Whereas while the cost to the Medicare and Medicaid programs of caring for Alzheimer's patients is estimated to be $153,000,000,000 in 2015, the United States, through the National Institutes of Health, will spend about $586,000,000 on Alzheimer's research in 2015;

Whereas the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services created by the National Alzheimer's Project Act (42 U.S.C. 11225) has testified before Congress that the United States must devote at least $2,000,000,000 each year to Alzheimer's research to reach the goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's by 2025; and

Whereas the public members of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services unanimously agree with the testimony of the Chairman regarding the amount of money required to reach the goal for 2025: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) is committed to strengthening the quality of care and expanding support for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (referred to in this resolution as ''Alzheimer's'') and family caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's;

(2) declares that achieving the primary goal of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's by 2025 is an urgent national priority;

(3) recognizes that bold action and considerable increases in funding are necessary to meet that goal;

(4) encourages greater collaboration between the United States and other global governments, particularly the G-7 nations, to advance a global Alzheimer's and dementia research plan;

(5) supports innovative public-private partnership and the pursuit of innovative financing tools, incentives and other mechanisms to accelerate the pursuit of disease-modifying therapies; and

(6) strives to—

(A) double the amount of funding the United States spends on Alzheimer's research in fiscal year 2016; and

(B) develop a plan for fiscal years 2017 through 2020 to meet the target of the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care,

and Services for the United States to spend $2,000,000,000 each year on Alzheimer's research.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, Alzheimer's is a terrible disease that takes a tremendous personal and economic toll on the individual, the family, and society. In addition to the human suffering it causes, Alzheimer's costs the United States an estimated $226 billion a year, including $153 billion from the Medicare and Medicaid Programs. These costs will only skyrocket as the baby boom generation ages. Already our Nation's costliest disease, Alzheimer's is projected to cost more than $1.1 trillion if nothing is done to change its current trajectory. It is now estimated that nearly one in two of the baby boomers reaching age 85 will develop Alzheimer's. As a consequence, chances are that members of the baby boom generation will either be spending their golden years suffering with Alzheimer's or caring for someone who has it. In many ways Alzheimer's has become the defining disease of this generation.

If we are to prevent Alzheimer's from becoming the defining disease of the next generation, it is imperative that we dramatically increase our investment in Alzheimer's research. At a time when the United States is spending some $226 billion a year caring for Alzheimer's patients, we are spending less than three-tenths of 1 percent of that amount—under $600 million a year—on research. This makes no sense. We currently spend $4.5 billion a year for cancer research, $3 billion a year for research on HIV-AIDS, and $2 billion for cardiovascular research—all investments that have paid dividends.

Surely we can do more for Alzheimer's given the tremendous human and economic price of this devastating disease. Investments in research for other diseases have yielded tremendous results. We see that with cancer, with HIV/AIDS. Patients have access to new treatments, and death rates for some of these diseases are decreasing. At the same time, mortality due to Alzheimer's is escalating.

Alzheimer's is one of our Nation's leading causes of death, with recent data revealing that each year more than 500,000 deaths are attributable to Alzheimer's and other dementia, 6 times the amount previously estimated. Moreover, Alzheimer's is the only one of our Nation's top 10 deadliest diseases without an effective means of prevention, treatment or a cure.

Fortunately there is promising research that holds hope for Alzheimer's patients and their families. The research community is poised to make important advances through clinical trials and by investigating new therapeutic targets, but adequate funding is critical to achieve this promise. The National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease was authorized by the bipartisan National Alzheimer's Act, which I coauthored with then-Senator Evan Bayh.

The national plan has as its primary goal to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease by the year 2025. The chairman of the advisory council that was created by the act, Dr. Ronald Petersen of the Mayo Clinic, has testified before Congress that the United States should be devoting $2 billion a year at a minimum to Alzheimer's research in order to reach that goal.

A dramatic increase in funding for Alzheimer's research will not just save lives, it will also save money. According to a report issued by the Alzheimer's Association last year, a Federal investment of $2 billion a year between now and the year 2025, as recommended by the experts on the Alzheimer's Advisory Council and the scientific community more broadly, would be recouped within the first 3 years after a treatment delaying the onset of Alzheimer's by just 5 years becomes available.

I am therefore pleased to be introducing today, with my colleagues Senators KLOBUCHAR, MIKULSKI, WARNER, DURBIN, and STABENOW, a resolution declaring that the goal of preventing and effectively treating Alzheimer's is an urgent national priority. In recognition of the fact that bold action and considerable increases in funding are necessary to meet that goal, our resolution states that the Senate will strive to double the amount of funding the United States spends on Alzheimer's research in fiscal year 2016 and that we will develop a plan to meet the target of $2 billion over the next 5 years.

Our bill is supported by a number of organizations including the Alzheimer's Association, UsAgainstAlzheimer's, the Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease—or the LEAD Coalition—and the Alzheimer's Foundation of America.

I ask unanimous consent that the letters from these organizations be printed in the RECORD.

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

LEAD—LEADERS ENGAGED ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE,
February 11, 2015.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chairman, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COLLINS: As executive director of Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease (the LEAD Coalition), I write to thank you for your inspirational leadership in reintroducing the Senate resolution to strengthen care and support, encourage greater international collaboration, incentivize private sector research, double federal investments in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research in FY 2016, and bring annual federal investments to at least $2 billion by 2020. Your resolution is an important next step toward each of these vital goals and the LEAD Coalition will continue to work arm-in-arm with you and your colleagues to realize the resolution's promise.

There are few more compelling or complex issues to confront our aging society now and over the coming decades than Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (including vascular, Lewy body or frontotemporal dementia). Its place as a national priority was made clear by the effort you led resulting in unanimous congressional passage of the National Alzheimer's Project Act. That law directed creation of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease and, as you know, the National Plan's goal number one is to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by 2025.

In fact, as your resolution highlights, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are an urgent national priority that impose enormous costs to our nation's health and prosperity, costs that are skyrocketing. Today, more than five million Americans have dementia at an annual cost to our economy exceeding $200 billion. Alzheimer's disease contributes to the deaths of approximately 500,000 Americans each year, making it the third leading cause of death in the United States. If the current trajectory of the disease persists, between 13 million and 16 million Americans will have dementia in 2050 and total costs of care are projected to exceed (inflation adjusted 2014 dollars) $1 trillion annually. The federal government, through Medicare and Medicaid payments, shoulders an estimated 70 percent of all such direct care costs.

Globally, the stakes of American scientific leadership are higher still. Today, 44 million people have dementia with annual costs exceeding $600 billion or about one percent of the world's GDP. If the current trajectory of the disease persists, upwards of 135 million persons worldwide will have dementia in 2050. American scientific leadership is nowhere more urgent than in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Congress, the President and NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins have overcome enormous obstacles to increase funding and prioritization of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research over the past several years. The National Institute an Aging (NIA) and other NIH institutes—such as the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development—are supporting a number of promising research projects to: understand the genetic risk factors, address the disproportionate impact on women, African Americans, Hispanics, and persons with intellectual disabilities; and pursue cutting-edge but costly and time consuming trials aimed at preventing or substantially slowing disease progression by administering treatments much earlier in the disease process. These resources of time, talent and treasure are precious and indefensibly scarce. We owe it to the taxpayers, to the research community and—most of all—to people living with, or at risk of, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to provide adequate and necessary resources proportionate to the disease burden, unmet medical need, and our nation's ethical and moral compass.

The broad, diverse, and unified Alzheimer's disease and related dementias community—working together as the LEAD Coalition—deeply admires and appreciates your remarkable leadership on this and so many other issues of vital importance to our nation's cognitive health, economic well-being, and global scientific leadership. We look forward to working with you for passage of the resolution and subsequent congressional action on each of its goals.

Sincerely,

IAN KREMER, Esq.,
Executive Director,
LEAD Coalition.

USAgainstAlzheimers,
February 10, 2015.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
Chairman, Special Committee on Aging, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN COLLINS: On behalf of USAgainstAlzheimers, the national movement committed to mobilizing the nation around the goal of stopping Alzheimer's by 2020, I am writing to applaud you for recognizing the mounting threat of Alzheimer's and dementia and for leading the call for the level of public resources that are necessary to stop this disease before it destroys our nation's health and finances.

As you are well aware from your extensive history of leadership against Alzheimer's and dementia, more than five million Americans are currently suffering from this disease, and millions more are impacted as family members and caregivers. Economic estimates suggest that Alzheimer's disease costs the nation upwards of $200 billion each year, with about 70 percent of costs shouldered by Medicare and Medicaid. Direct care costs of Alzheimer's have been found to be larger than similar costs of cancer and heart disease, and a groundbreaking 2014 study from Rush University indicates that more than 500,000 deaths each year are attributable to Alzheimer's disease, six times more than the levels that have been reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Fortunately, thanks to your leadership several years ago, our nation has a National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease that established as goal one preventing and effectively treating the disease by 2025, a mere 10 years away. As your resolution recognizes, while we can set bold goals, we simply will not achieve them absent the appropriation of necessary resources. I commend you for being a champion in Congress behind measures to substantially increase the amount of public resources committed to Alzheimer's disease research so we can reach the level of $2 billion in annual funding that multiple experts have estimated as being needed to maximize our chances of achieving the 2025 goal.

I understand the multiple fiscal challenges confronting the nation. At the same time, we must recognize that the question is not whether or not we will pay for Alzheimer's. We are paying, dearly, today, and we will pay even more tomorrow unless we redouble efforts to achieve scientific breakthroughs and develop therapies and means of prevention. Your resolution outlines a sensible track to achieve the necessary level of funding within a timeframe during which we can achieve the necessary impact, and makes clear that preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease must be a national priority.

Thank you, again, for your tremendous leadership on behalf of all Americans impacted by this disease.

Sincerely,

GEORGE VRADENBURG,
Founder and Chairman.

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2015.

Hon. SUSAN COLLINS,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. AMY KLOBUCHAR,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR COLLINS AND SENATOR KLOBUCHAR: On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association and its nationwide network of advocates, thank you for your continued leadership on issues and legislation important to Americans with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association proudly supports your most recent Alzheimer's resolution, which supports the goals of National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease.

The Alzheimers Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimers care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease and other dementias through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's.

As one of our nation's strongest voices on behalf of Americans living with Alzheimer's, you know that more than 5 million Americans are living with the disease, and without significant action, as many as 16 million Americans will have Alzheimer's by 2050. A 2013 study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and published in the New England Journal of Medicine further confirmed that Alzheimers disease is the most expensive disease in America. Additionally, as the baby boomer generation ages, one in eight will develop Alzheimer's. This explosive growth will cause Alzheimers costs to Medicare and Medicaid to increase from $153 billion today to nearly $800 billion in 2050 (in today's dollars) and threatens to bankrupt families, businesses and our health care system. Unfortunately, our work is only growing more urgent.

The passage of the National Alzheimer's Project Act in 2010, and the subsequent release of the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease, marks a new era for Alzheimers disease and other dementias. Achieving the first goal of the National Plan, to prevent and effectively treat Alzheimer's disease by 2025, and supporting individuals with the disease and their caregivers are critical to the success of this legislation.

The Alzheimers Association deeply appreciates your continued leadership on behalf of all American's living with Alzheimer's. If you have any questions about this or any other legislation, please contact Rachel Conant, Director of Federal Affairs, at rconant@alz.org or at 202.638.7121.

Sincerely,

ROBERT EGGE,
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs, Alzheimer's Association.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, we have to face the facts that if we do not invest in Alzheimer's research at the levels the experts tell us is necessary to develop effective treatments for this disease or perhaps a means of prevention or eventually a cure, this disease is going to continue to cause untold suffering not only for its victims but for its families, and it will bankrupt America 's health care system.

I urge our colleagues to join us as cosponsors. I want, in particular, to recognize my partner in this effort, the Senator from Minnesota, Ms. KLOBUCHAR. The home of the Mayo Clinic is in her State. She has been stalwart in supporting the efforts to increase funding for Alzheimer's research.

With that, I am very pleased to yield to my partner, Senator KLOBUCHAR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor to join my friend and colleague from Maine, Senator COLLINS, who has for so long been a leader on this issue. I thank her for that and thank her for her very strong remarks.

This is a horrible disease. Senator COLLINS did a very good job of going through the costs to our country. Mr. President, 5.2 million Americans are already living with Alzheimer's, and by 2050 an estimated 13.5 million Americans will be living with the disease. Also, $226 billion is being spent in 2015 caring for individuals with Alzheimer's, and by 2050 costs will reach $1.1 trillion.

Those are the numbers. They are pretty stunning numbers, but I think we all know we are not just here to talk about the numbers. We are here to talk about the people. Every single Senator in this Chamber knows someone who is suffering from Alzheimer's or someone who has died from Alzheimer's. So this resolution, yes, it is about the numbers and being smarter about how we spend our money to prevent this horrible disease from occurring in the first place, but it is also for that daughter who goes to see her mom every day in the assisted living care facility and with each and every day her mom's memory slips away to the point where she does not remember who she is anymore.

It is for that wife who has valiantly cared for her husband as it gets harder and harder and harder as he goes wandering around the neighborhood and gets lost. She does not know if she can leave him at home anymore. That is what this is about. Every single person in this Chamber and every single person back home knows of someone who suffers from this disease.

The only way to stem the tide of this devastating disease is through, as the great Senator from Maine mentioned, through research. Yes, a lot of that research is going on in Minnesota, both at the University of Minnesota and at the Mayo Clinic. If we were able to delay the onset of Alzheimer's by just 5 years, similar to the effect that anticholesterol drugs have had on preventing heart disease, we would be able to significantly cut the government's spending on Alzheimer's care, but more importantly we would be able to give these families extra years, extra time, less time battling this disease.

We all know the answers to Alzheimer's will not just drop out of the sky. If that was true, it would have been cured a long time ago. It will take dedicated scientists, advanced research initiatives, and skilled doctors with knowledge of the disease to conduct trials and care for as many patients as possible until we find a cure.

That is why we are coming together for this important resolution, which resolves simply that the Senate will strive to double the funding the United States spends on Alzheimer's research in 2016 and will develop a plan to meet the target of $2 billion a year in Alzheimer's research funding over the next 5 years.

As Senator COLLINS mentioned, this effort is led on the national level by Dr. Ronald Petersen, a Minnesota native and a leading researcher. He agrees this is the time to move forward to get this research done. What kind of research are we talking about? I remember first hearing about some of the

work Mayo had done and realizing they were focusing on trying to identify this disease early to be able to figure out if people were getting it early.

I thought: That is great, but how does that help? They still have the disease. What I learned is the earlier they can identify the disease, then the earlier they can start those trials so they can tell what is working or not. If they wait too long to identify the disease, it is nearly impossible to tell what kind of potential cures work and what do not.

This is a very important part of this initiative, which is to be able to immediately identify what those risk factors are when they think someone actually has Alzheimer's. Two years ago the United States launched the BRAIN Initiative, which is a national research effort to map the human brain in hopes of finding new ways to prevent and cure brain diseases. Similar to the Human Genome Project, I think we can expect this initiative to truly be a game-changer that stimulates the next generation of scientific development.

There is always more knowledge we need to get. There are always more treatments to discover. There are more diseases to cure. That is why it is so important that we continue funding and actually increase funding to the National Institutes of Health. Earlier this year I introduced, with Senator DURBIN and others, a bill to boost funding for NIH by 5 percent a year and also other key Federal research agencies. The American Cures Act would reverse the trend of declining Federal investment in medical research and fuel the next generation of biomedical discoveries.

I care a lot about this. During the government shutdown I will never forget Senator COLLINS once again led the effort to find our way out of that with 14 of us in a bipartisan effort. I gave my entire salary to NIH because I wanted to make the point that every day we go without developing that cure for Alzheimer's, without supporting our scientists who are doing that work, is another day where someone else dies of this disease. It is another loved one we lose.

Another effort I think is very important when we look at this is precision medicine. We should be supporting efforts to further the field of precision medicine, which holds the promise of revolutionizing the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases. By better understanding genetic variations within diseases such as Alzheimer's, we can develop targeted, more effective treatments.

Of course caregivers are the last thing I wish to talk about. If you know someone with Alzheimer's, then you also know their family member or their friend who is taking care of them. Many of the caregivers have children themselves. That is why they are called the sandwich generation. They are literally sandwiched between taking care of their own children and taking care of their aging mother or father.

Just as we addressed the needs of moms and dads in the 1970s, started working on things such as childcare benefits, we must now address the needs of our working sons and daughters and those who are simply devoting their lives to taking care of an aging relative, someone with Alzheimer's. This goes on every day. People have decided to quit their jobs or they have to decide to take a different job or they have to decide to go part time simply to take care of their loved one.

In 2013 more than 15 million family members and friends cared for someone with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, often at the expense of their own jobs and their own well-being. That is why I am continuing to work on legislation called the Americans Giving Care to Elders Act that would give family caregivers a tax credit and other assistance to help alleviate the financial burdens that come with caring for a loved one.

So these are some ideas, but we know at its core the best thing to do is to stop this terrible disease from the beginning. That means living up to the expectations the people of this country have for us; that is, to do what is best for them; that is, to put forward the dollars we need to do the research.

I know some great doctors in Minnesota and across the country who will put that money to good use.

Let's go forward, let's cure this disease, and we call on the Senate to pass the resolution Senator COLLINS and I are submitting.

SENATE RESOLUTION 75—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2015, AS ''NATIONAL TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH''

Mr. DURBIN (for Mr. REID of Nevada (for himself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 75

Whereas although dating violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking affect women regardless of age, teenage girls and young women are especially vulnerable;

Whereas a 2013 survey by the Center for Disease Control found that nearly 10 percent of high school students reported physical victimization and 10 percent reported sexual victimization from a dating partner in the 12 months before they were surveyed;

Whereas according to the Center for Disease Control, nearly 1,500,000 high school students experience physical abuse from a dating partner each year;

Whereas a 1997 Commonwealth Fund survey found that more than ¼ of high school girls had been either sexually abused, physically abused, or abused by a date or boyfriend;

Whereas the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that females between the ages of 16 and 24 experience intimate partner violence at a rate that is almost triple the national average;

Whereas in 2008, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency reported that approximately 1 in 3 adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a rate that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting young people;

Whereas a 2012 study, as part of an independent evaluation of Start Strong: Building Healthy Teen Relationships, an initiative aimed at building healthy relationships among middle school youth, found that teen dating violence behaviors were common even among seventh grade students, with nearly 1 in 6 students reporting physical dating violence;

Whereas according to data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, almost 20 percent of teenage girls who were exposed to physical dating violence did not attend school on 1 or more occasions during the 30 days preceding the survey because the girls felt unsafe at school or on the way to or from school;

Whereas schools are unequipped to handle the issue of teen dating violence, as a recent study by Ball State University found that—

(1) 81 percent of school counselors reported that they did not have a school protocol on how to respond to an incident of teen dating violence; but

(2) 61 percent of school counselors reported that they had assisted victims of dating-related violence in the past 2 years, despite a lack of formal training for some of the counselors;

Whereas a study published in Pediatrics suggests that teen dating violence ''is a substantial public health problem'' because victims of teen dating violence are—

(1) at increased risk of mood and behavior problems as young adults; and

(2) at increased risk for future violent relationships;

Whereas girls victimized by a teen boyfriend reported more heavy drinking, smoking, depression, and thoughts of suicide, and teens of both sexes who were in aggressive relationships were 2 to 3 times more likely to be in violent relationships as young adults;

Whereas being physically or sexually abused makes teenage girls up to 6 times more likely to become pregnant and more than twice as likely to contract a sexually transmitted disease;

Whereas according to the 2009 Parent/Teen Dating Violence Poll by Liz Claiborne Inc., although 82 percent of parents are confident that they could recognize the signs if their child was experiencing dating abuse, 58 percent of parents could not correctly identify all of the warning signs of abuse;

Whereas 74 percent of teenage boys and 66 percent of teenage girls report that they have not had a conversation with a parent about dating abuse in the past year;

Whereas 1 in 4 teens in a relationship report having been called names, harassed, or put down by a partner through the use of a telephone, including through texting;

Whereas according to the 2010 College Dating Violence and Abuse Poll by Liz Claiborne Inc., 43 percent of college women who date report experiencing abusive dating behaviors;

Whereas 70 percent of college students who experienced relationship abuse failed to realize that they were in an abusive relationship at the time, and 60 percent of college students who were in an abusive relationship said that no one stepped in to help them;

Whereas the severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to be greater in cases where a pattern of violence was established during adolescence;

Whereas primary prevention programs are a key part of addressing teen dating violence, and successful examples of these programs include education, community outreach, and social marketing campaigns that are culturally appropriate;

Whereas educating middle school students and the parents of middle school students about the importance of building healthy relationships and preventing teen dating violence is key to deterring dating abuse before it begins;

Whereas skilled assessment and intervention programs are necessary for young victims and abusers; and

Whereas the establishment of the month of February 2015, as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month will benefit schools, communities, and families regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or sex: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of February 2015, as ''National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month'';

(2) supports communities that are empowering teenagers to develop healthier relationships throughout their lives; and

(3) calls upon the people of the United States, including young people, parents, schools, law enforcement officials, State and local officials, and interested groups to observe National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month with appropriate programs and activities that promote awareness and prevention of teen dating violence in their communities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 76—WELCOMING THE PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED STATES FOR HIS ADDRESS TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. LEE, Mr. HELLER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MORAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. COLLINS, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. RISCH, Mr. DAINES, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. COATS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ENZI, Mr. PAUL, and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 76

Whereas, since its founding in 1948, Israel has been a strong and steadfast ally to the United States in the Middle East, a region characterized by instability and violence;

Whereas the United States-Israel relationship is built on mutual respect for common values, including a commitment to democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, free-market principles, and ethnic and religious diversity;

Whereas the strong cultural, religious, and political ties shared by the United States and Israel help form a bond between our countries that should never be broken;

Whereas Israel continues to serve as a shining model of democratic values by regularly holding free and fair elections, promoting the free exchange of ideas, and vigorously exercising a form of democratic government that is fully representative of its citizens;

Whereas nations such as Iran and Syria, as well as designated foreign terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah and Hamas, refuse to recognize Israel's right to exist, continually call for its destruction, and have repeatedly attacked Israel either directly or through proxies;

Whereas, in particular, the Government of Iran's ongoing pursuit of nuclear weapons poses a tremendous threat both to the United States and Israel;

Whereas the negotiations between the so-called P5+1 countries and Iran over its illicit nuclear weapons program are entering a key phase, and Congress has heard the perspectives, both publicly and privately, of a number of close allies involved in the negotiations; and

Whereas the United States is committed to ensuring that Israel, as a strong and trusted ally, maintains its qualitative military edge: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) warmly welcomes the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, on his visit to the United States, which provides a timely opportunity to reinforce the United States-Israel relationship;

(2) eagerly awaits the address of Prime Minister Netanyahu before a joint session of the United States Congress;

(3) reaffirms its commitment to stand with Israel during times of uncertainty;

(4) continues to strongly support Israel's right to defend itself from threats to its very survival; and

(5) reaffirms its unequivocal and bipartisan support for the friendship between the people and Governments of the United States and Israel.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to speak on another matter, and that is an event that should be a historic and momentous event that is scheduled to take place on the other side of the Capitol early next month. For the third time since he has been Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu will be speaking to a joint session of Congress.

In his invitation, the Speaker of the House indicated that the reason for the invitation is because of the grave threats radical Islam and the Iranian regime pose to our security and our way of life. I cannot think of a more timely or a more critical subject for the American people to hear about from one of the world's great leaders.

For some reason, some people are trying to turn this into a public controversy, but to me and I imagine to many others, it is mystifying and somewhat disappointing. The reasons for supporting and defending the nation of Israel are obvious: Both of our countries are pluralistic democracies with a staunch commitment to liberty, equality, and human rights; both of our countries are threatened by radical Islam; and both of our countries have responded to that threat while remaining free and open societies. Those are the reasons why most Americans stand with Israel and why U.S. aid to Israel enjoys such overwhelming support among Members of both parties here in Congress. Indeed, we have no closer Middle Eastern ally than Israel and I would argue no bigger Middle Eastern adversary than the country of Iran.

I would also argue that we have no bigger foreign policy challenges than stopping the Iranian drive for nuclear weapons and keeping those weapons out of the hands of terrorists. A nuclear Iran would make this world a far more dangerous place. For starters, it would dramatically increase Iranian leverage, Iranian power, and Iranian aggression in the Middle East. We must remember that this is the same regime that has continued to violently target the United States since 1979. It is the same regime that has been on the State Department's terrorism blacklist since 1984. It is the same regime that not too long ago was plotting to blow up a restaurant right here in Washington, DC.

I was reminded that 1983, with the bombing of our Embassy in Beirut—a largely forgotten historical moment—was the beginning of America's deadly encounter with the political Islamist movement. It was also the birth of the Shiite political entity we know today by the name of Hezbollah, supported by Iran.

Perhaps most poignantly, the Government of Iran refuses to recognize Israel's right to exist, has continually called for its destruction, and has repeatedly attacked Israel either directly or through proxies. Make no mistake—Iran's ongoing pursuit of nuclear weapons poses a tremendous threat to the United States and to our ally Israel.

Given the very clear and present danger to the nation of Israel and the dangers they face on a perpetual basis from their neighbors in the region—Iran—the U.S.-Israel alliance has never been more important than it is today.

Israel is a shining model of democratic values for nations around the world. It is a great example for others to follow in the Middle East. The strong cultural, religious, and political ties shared by the United States and Israel have helped form a bond between our countries that should never be broken.

Now more than ever, the people of Israel need reassurance that we remain committed to seeing that their nation, as a strong and trusted ally, maintain its qualitative military edge in the face of ongoing threats from nations such as Iran and Syria and terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah. That is why today we have filed a resolution here in the Senate welcoming Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu when he addresses a joint session of Congress next month. This resolution reaffirms the Senate's commitment to stand with Israel during times of uncertainty. It reaffirms this body's strong support for Israel's right to defend itself from threats to its very survival. And it reaffirms the Senate's unequivocal support for the friendship between the governments of our two nations.

As of this morning a majority of the Senate has signed on as a cosponsor to

this resolution, and this afternoon we are signing a ''Dear Colleague'' letter, which, as the Presiding Officer knows, invites all 100 Senators to join in support of this resolution. I hope the rest of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in welcoming the Prime Minister to Washington so we can continue to work together as he articulates in graphic detail, as no one else can, the threat of a nuclear Iran. During this time of such great instability and danger in the Middle East, the United States cannot afford to waver in our commitment to one of our closest and most important allies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 77—DESIGNATING FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2015, AS ''$2.13 DAY''

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 77

Whereas $2.13 per hour is the Federal minimum wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) as a cash wage under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) (referred to in this preamble as the ''Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee'');

Whereas when the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee was established in 1966, such wage was linked to the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1));

Whereas while the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee increased in 2009, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee has not changed in more than 20 years;

Whereas in the 1980s, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee reached 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee, and in 2015, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee is only 29 percent of the $7.25 per hour Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee;

Whereas tipped employees work in many occupations, including working as restaurant servers, airport attendants, hotel workers, valets, and salon workers;

Whereas $2.13 per hour is such a low wage that tipped employees are dependent on the discretional contributions of consumers for the majority of their income;

Whereas 7 States have 1 minimum wage for both tipped employees and covered nonexempt employees, and the restaurant industry has continued to thrive in such States;

Whereas in States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee that is higher than $2.13 per hour, the poverty rate for tipped employees is lower than the poverty rate for tipped employees in States without such a higher minimum wage for tipped employees;

Whereas restaurant servers have a poverty rate that is 3 times higher than the poverty rate of the general workforce and are nearly 2 times more likely to depend on the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) than the general workforce;

Whereas States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee of $2.13 per hour have a poverty rate for employees of color that is more than 10 percent higher than such poverty rate in States that require the same minimum wage for tipped employees as other covered nonexempt employees;

Whereas women account for 67 percent of all tipped employees and approximately 70 percent of food servers and bartenders;

Whereas 25 percent of all tipped employees are parents who work hard to support their families;

Whereas the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that from 2008 to 2018, the food preparation and serving sector, as defined by the Bureau, would add more than 1,000,000 jobs;

Whereas such food preparation and serving sector has a mean wage of $24,860, nearly $25,000 less than the mean wage for all occupations in the United States; and

Whereas raising the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee would provide hardworking people in the United States with more just wages, lift families in the United States out of poverty, and provide economic security to tipped employees in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate designates Friday, February 13, 2015, as ''$2.13 Day''; and

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that the cash wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) should be increased to 70 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)).

SENATE RESOLUTION 78—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF JERRY TARKANIAN, FORMER HEAD BASKETBALL COACH OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID of Nevada) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 78

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian was born August 8, 1930, in Euclid, Ohio, graduated from Fresno State in 1955, and earned a Master's degree from the University of Redlands in 1956;

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian is survived by his wife, 4 children, and 11 grandchildren;

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian never had a losing season during the 19 years he coached the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) men's basketball team from 1973 to 1992, leading the ''Runnin' Rebels'' to a 509-105 record, 4 Final Four appearances, and the 1990 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Men's Basketball National Championship;

Whereas UNLV won the 1990 championship game by defeating the Duke University Blue Devils 103 to 73, the highest margin of victory in a championship game in NCAA Division I history;

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian unified the Las Vegas community, and became beloved by Nevadans and many more throughout the United States who watched as Tarkanian coached his teams to victory in the Thomas & Mack Center (also known as ''the Shark Tank''), often while nervously chewing a towel at courtside;

Whereas over the course of a 38-year career that spanned high school, junior college, Division I of the NCAA, and the National Basketball Association, Jerry Tarkanian won 990 career games and received the 1983 United Press International Coach of the Year award;

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian's immeasurable contributions to the game of basketball, which included his signature usage of the amoeba defense to wear down opposing teams, were recognized when he was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame in 2013; and

Whereas Jerry Tarkanian's off-the-court contributions to Las Vegas and the entire State of Nevada are admired and deeply appreciated by all who call Nevada home: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of Jerry Tarkanian; and

(2) requests the Secretary of the Senate to prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Jerry Tarkanian.

SENATE RESOLUTION 79—HONORING DEAN EDWARDS SMITH, FORMER HEAD COACH FOR THE MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 79

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith, born in Emporia, Kansas, on February 28, 1931, spent 44 years dedicating himself to the sport of collegiate basketball;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith was educated at the University of Kansas and was a member of the men's basketball team for the University of Kansas, which won a National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the ''NCAA'') title in 1952;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith served as an assistant coach for the men's basketball team for the University of Kansas in 1953 after he graduated;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith served as an assistant coach for the men's basketball team for the United States Air Force Academy from 1954 through 1958;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith coached the men's basketball team for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as an assistant coach from 1958 through 1961, and as the head coach from 1961 through 1997;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith, during his time at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, led the men's basketball program to 11 appearances in the semifinals of the NCAA tournament (commonly known as the ''Final Four''), 2 NCAA championships in 1982 and 1993, and 1 National Invitation Tournament in 1971, becoming the most successful men's collegiate basketball coach at the time of his retirement with 879 career victories;

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith led the men's basketball team for the United States to a gold medal in the 1976 Olympics; and

Whereas Dean Edwards Smith made invaluable contributions to his community, State, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) has profound sorrow and deep regret at the announcement of the death of Dean Edwards Smith; and

(2) requests the Secretary of the Senate to prepare an official copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of Dean Edwards Smith.

SENATE RESOLUTION 80—RECOGNIZING THE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF LUNAR NEW YEAR

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. REID, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 80

Whereas Lunar New Year begins on the second new moon following the winter solstice, or the first day of the new year according to the lunisolar calendar, and extends until the full moon 15 days later;

Whereas February 19, 2015, marks the first day of Lunar New Year for calendar year 2015;

Whereas the 15th day of the new year, according to the lunisolar calendar, is called the Lantern Festival;

Whereas Lunar New Year is often referred to as ''Spring Festival'' in various Asian countries;

Whereas many religious and ethnic communities use lunar-based calendars;

Whereas Lunar New Year began in China more than 4,000 years ago and is widely celebrated in East and Southeast Asia;

Whereas the Asian diaspora has expanded the Lunar New Year celebration into an annual worldwide event;

Whereas Lunar New Year is celebrated by millions of Asian Americans, and by many non-Asian Americans, in the United States;

Whereas Lunar New Year is celebrated with community activities and cultural performances;

Whereas participants celebrating Lunar New Year travel to spend the holiday reuniting with family and friends; and

Whereas Lunar New Year is traditionally a time to wish upon others good fortune, health, prosperity, and happiness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the cultural and historical significance of Lunar New Year;

(2) in observance of Lunar New Year, expresses its deepest respect for Asian Americans and all individuals throughout the world who celebrate this significant occasion; and

(3) wishes Asian Americans and all individuals who observe this holiday a happy and prosperous new year.

SENATE RESOLUTION 81—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT CHILDREN TRAFFICKED FOR SEX IN THE UNITED STATES SHOULD NOT BE TREATED OR REGARDED AS CHILD PROSTITUTES BECAUSE THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A ''CHILD PROSTITUTE'', ONLY CHILDREN WHO ARE VICTIMS OR SURVIVORS OF RAPE AND SEX TRAFFICKING

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 81

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that hundreds of thousands of children in the United States are at risk of being commercially exploited through sex trafficking;

Whereas children as young as 11 years old may be subjected to the commercial sex market as victims of sex trafficking;

Whereas many child victims of sex trafficking have experienced previous physical or sexual abuse, vulnerabilities that traffickers exploit to manipulate the victims into a life of sexual slavery through sex trafficking;

Whereas many child victims of sex trafficking are hidden in plain view, standing at bus stops, in runaway and homeless youth shelters, and advertised online; and

Whereas many child victims of sex trafficking who have not yet attained the age of consent are arrested and detained for juvenile prostitution or status offenses directly related to their exploitation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, and Labor, and all other relevant Federal entities, to treat children trafficked for sex as victims or survivors of rape and sex trafficking;

(2) supports efforts to arrest and prosecute sex traffickers and buyers of children trafficked for sex, in accordance with applicable State and Federal sex trafficking statutes, and State child protection laws against abuse and statutory rape, in order to take all necessary measures to protect the most vulnerable children in the United States;

(3) supports survivors of child sex trafficking, including efforts to raise awareness of this tragedy and of the comprehensive services necessary to heal from the trauma of sexual violence and exploitation;

(4) urges lawmakers, law enforcement, the media, and the public to reframe the trafficking of children for sex as an act of violence against children and not as mere vice, prostitution, or sex work, because there is no such thing as a ''child prostitute'', only children who are victims or survivors of rape and sex trafficking; and

(5) supports an end to the demand for children in the commercial sex market, by supporting efforts to ensure that children in the United States are not for sale and that any person who is trafficking or purchasing a child for sex shall be punished under the full force of the law.

SENATE RESOLUTION 82—COMMENDING KATHLEEN ALVAREZ TRITAK ON HER SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 82

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak, a native of Louisiana, began her career as a 7th grade history teacher before coming to work in the Office of Secretary of the Senate in 1984;

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak, has served the Senate with distinction as a staff member in the Senate Document Room, as an assistant Bill Clerk, as Bill Clerk, as an assistant Legislative Clerk and as Legislative Clerk;

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak set many milestones in Senate history, including becoming the first female Bill Clerk, the first female Legislative Clerk and, in 1991, the first female to take a roll call vote in the Senate;

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak has, since 2008, served as the Senate's Legislative Clerk and Director of Legislative Services, supervising 36 employees and has at all times discharged her duties faithfully;

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak's distinctive southern accent is known to all in the Senate the press gallery and the C–SPAN audience;

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak has earned the respect and affection of the Senators, their staffs and her colleagues for her dedication to the institution of the Senate; and

Whereas Kathie Alvarez Tritak now retires from the Senate after 30 years to spend more time with her husband, John, and their daughter, Georgia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate expresses its appreciation to Kathie Alvarez Tritak and commends her for her lengthy, faithful and outstanding service to the Senate.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to Kathleen Alvarez Tritak.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 251. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARDIN) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 52, calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 251. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. CARDIN) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 52, calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: ''That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of the Russian Federation for its illegal imprisonment of Nadiya Savchenko;

(2) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to immediately release Nadiya Savchenko;

(3) calls on the United States, its European allies, and the international community to aggressively support diplomatic efforts to release Nadiya Savchenko; and

(4) expresses solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Regulatory Relief for Community Banks and Credit Unions.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 9:45 a.m.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mark Baba, a detailee on the Finance Committee, be allowed on the Senate floor for the remainder of the day.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Maj. Warren Bruce, a Marine fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of the legislative session.

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

AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES BY COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 18, S. Res. 73.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 73) authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 73) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF UKRAINIAN FIGHTER PILOT NADIYA SAVCHENKO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 52 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 52) calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014.

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the plight of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko. My resolution, S. Res. 52., which Senators WICKER, BROWN, RUBIO, and GARDNER have co-sponsored, calls for the release of former Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who has been languishing in Russian prisons since she was abducted by pro-Russian forces in eastern Ukraine last July and illegally transferred across the border in handcuffs and with a bag over her head.

In the 8 months Nadiya has been incarcerated on specious and unsubstantiated charges, she has endured interrogations, involuntary psychiatric evaluations, and solitary confinement in the same pretrial detention center where Sergei Magnitsky was tortured and killed in 2009. The resolution is especially timely as Nadiya is in the 62nd day of a hunger strike. Her health is rapidly deteriorating. Her situation is critical. And yet, on Tuesday, a Moscow court extended her detention until May 13, ignoring clear evidence compiled by the defense proving her non-involvement in the deeds the Russian authorities claim as justification for holding her.

Nadiya is yet another victim of the Putin regime's lawlessness, brutality, and contempt for human life. And we need to recognize that this isn't just about her; it's a highly visible manifestation of Putin's contempt for a Ukraine that wishes to remain free, independent, and democratic. She was elected in absentia to the Ukrainian parliament in October and a member of Ukraine's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, PACE. As such, she enjoys diplomatic immunity and PACE has called for her immediate release.

According to the September Minsk agreements between Russia and Ukraine, hostages on both sides were supposed to be released. Russia has made a mockery of the Minsk agreements, just as it has the Helsinki Final Act and numerous other Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, agreements. The illegal detention of Nadiya and other Ukrainian citizens represents yet another violation of international agreements and the norms of civilized behavior. S. Res. 52 sends a strong message of solidarity to the Ukrainian people and calls on the Putin regime to release Nadiya immediately. I am pleased the Senate is poised to pass this important resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Cardin amendment to the resolution be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the preamble be agreed to; and the motions 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 amendment (No. 251) in the nature of a substitute was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To provide a complete substitute)

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: ''That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of the Russian Federation for its illegal imprisonment of Nadiya Savchenko;

(2) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to immediately release Nadiya Savchenko;

(3) calls on the United States, its European allies, and the international community to aggressively support diplomatic efforts to release Nadiya Savchenko; and

(4) expresses solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

The resolution (S. Res. 52), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 52

Whereas Nadiya Savchenko is the first-ever female fighter pilot in Ukraine's Armed Forces and is an Iraqi war veteran;

Whereas in the ongoing conflict in Eastern Ukraine, Nadiya Savchenko volunteered her services to the Ukrainian Aidar battalion;

Whereas Nadiya Savchenko was elected in absentia from the Batkivshchyna Party to Ukraine's Parliament in October 2014, and appointed to the Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) as a representative from Ukraine;

Whereas as a member of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Lieutenant Nadiya Savchenko was conducting operations in eastern Ukraine against pro-Russian forces in the summer of 2014 when she was captured and taken into captivity;

Whereas during her mission in Eastern Ukraine, she was captured by the Donbas People's Militia, detained on Ukrainian territory, deprived of rights to due process, and illegally transferred to the Russian Federation to stand trial on unsubstantiated charges of terrorism;

Whereas, since July 2014, Nadiya Savchenko has endured involuntary psychiatric evaluations and solitary confinement;

Whereas Nadiya Savchenko is currently entering her sixth week of a hunger strike as a symbol of her protest;

Whereas Nadiya Savchenko is denied access to urgently needed medical attention and access to legal counsel;

Whereas the Minsk Protocol of September 2014, signed by Ukraine and the Russian Federation, calls for the ''immediate release of all hostages and illegally held persons'';

Whereas appeals have been made to the United Nations Human Rights Council and the International Red Cross to secure Nadiya Savchenko's release;

Whereas the international community, including representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and of the United States, have urged her immediate release;

Whereas, on January 26, 2015, the opening day of the Parliamentary Assembly, the global community embarks on a public campaign to bring attention to the plight of Nadiya Savchenko and demand her immediate release; and

Whereas the Government and people of the United States express concern about the deteriorating health of detained pilot Nadiya Savchenko and her continued illegal imprisonment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of the Russian Federation for its illegal imprisonment of Nadiya Savchenko;

(2) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to immediately release Nadiya Savchenko;

(3) calls on the United States, its European allies, and the international community to aggressively support diplomatic efforts to release Nadiya Savchenko; and

(4) expresses solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed en bloc to the consideration of the following Senate resolutions that were submitted earlier today: S. Res 78 regarding Jerry Tarkanian; S. Res. 79 regarding Dean Smith; S. Res. 80 regarding the Lunar New Year; and S. Res. 81 regarding trafficking.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

COMMENDING KATHLEEN ALVAREZ TRITAK ON HER SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 82, which was 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. 82) commending Kathleen Alvarez Tritak on her service to the United States Senate.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. 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. 82) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

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

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during this adjournment of the Senate, running until February 23, 2015, the majority leader and the junior Senator from Missouri be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses or by order of the Senate.

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

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 64, adopted March 5, 2013, appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate National Security Working Group for the 114th Congress: DIANNE FEINSTEIN of California (Democratic Administrative Co-Chairman), BARBARA A. MIKULSKI of Maryland (Democratic Co-Chairman), JACK REED of Rhode Island (Democratic Co-Chairman), ROBERT MENENDEZ of New Jersey (Democratic Co-Chairman), RICHARD J. DURBIN of Illinois, BILL NELSON of Florida, BENJAMIN L. CARDIN of Maryland, ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., of Pennsylvania, and HEIDI HEITKAMP of North Dakota.

The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 113–146, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Commission on Care: Dr. Ikram Khan of Nevada, Phillip Longman of the District of Columbia, and Dr. Marshall Webster of Pennsylvania.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16 THROUGH MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted, on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, February 16, at 4:45 p.m., and Thursday, February 19, at 10 a.m. I further ask that the Senate adjourn on Thursday, February 19, until 3 p.m. Monday, February 23, and that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day. I ask that following leader remarks, Senator HOEVEN be recognized to deliver Washington's Farewell Address; further, that following the reading of Washington's Farewell Address, the Senate recess until 4:30 p.m., and that upon reconvening the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R.

240. Lastly, I ask that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the mandatory quorum call in relation to the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 240 be waived, and that the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 240 occur at 5:30 p.m. Monday, February 23.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2015, AT 4:45 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:34 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 16, 2015, at 4:45 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

BRODI L. FONTENOT, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, VICE DANIEL M. TANGHERLINI, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

DEBORAH WILLIS, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2020, VICE CAROL M. SWAIN, TERM EXPIRED.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ANN ELIZABETH DUNKIN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE MALCOLM D. JACKSON, RESIGNED.

JANE TOSHIKO NISHIDA, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE MICHELLE DEPASS, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

SETH B. CARPENTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE MATTHEW S. RUTHERFORD, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CHARLES C. ADAMS, JR., OF MARYLAND, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND.

SARAH ELIZABETH MENDELSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

UNITED NATIONS

SARAH ELIZABETH MENDELSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MARY CATHERINE PHEE, OF ILLINOIS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

DAVID MICHAEL BENNETT, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2018, VICE THURGOOD MARSHALL, JR., TERM EXPIRED.

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 general

LT. GEN. ELLEN M. PAWLIKOWSKI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM M. KNIGHT

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. JOHN B. COOPER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 8036 AND 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MARK A. EDIGER

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

BRIG. GEN. JOHN L. DOLAN

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. LEE K. LEVY II

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

LT. GEN. KENNETH E. TOVO

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) LAWRENCE B. JACKSON
REAR ADM. (LH) SCOTT B. J. JERABEK
REAR ADM. (LH) LUKE M. MCCOLLUM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) CHRISTINA M. ALVARADO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. KATHERINE A. MCCABE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. GRAFTON D. CHASE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DANIEL V. MACINNIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPTAIN ALAN D. BEAL
CAPTAIN DARREN J. HANSON
CAPTAIN BRIAN S. HURLEY
CAPTAIN ANDREW C. LENNON

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 12, 2015:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ASHTON B. CARTER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ARIC MATTHEW STOREY

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Aric Matthew Storey. Aric is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Aric has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Aric has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Aric has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Aric Matthew Storey for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LOS ALAMOS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Los Alamos Historical Society for its work to preserve the history of Los Alamos and its advocacy for the Manhattan Project National Park.

The Los Alamos Historical Society has done much to promote the history of Los Alamos. As the largest historical society in New Mexico, the Los Alamos Historical Society plays an important educational role in the community by managing the Los Alamos Historical Museum and Archives, producing lecture series, and publishing books on the area history. Moreover, the Los Alamos Historical Society helped to create the ''Voices of the Manhattan Project,'' a public archive of the oral history collections of Manhattan Project veterans and their families. Not only has the Los Alamos Historical Society helped preserve and communicate the story of Los Alamos for future generations of New Mexicans, but it has also helped spread Los Alamos's legacy to visitors from around the globe.

The Los Alamos Historical Society has also been a strong advocate for the creation of the Manhattan Project National Park. The Manhattan Project changed the course of the 20th century and has had an enduring effect on American and world history. The new National Park will help future generations understand both the positive and negative impacts of the project, as well as recognize the individuals who played a key role in the national security of our nation. I thank the Los Alamos Historical Society for its efforts to ensure that the legacy and people of the Manhattan Project will not be forgotten, and I applaud the Historical Society for all that they have done to protect and promote the history of Los Alamos.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NIKI TSONGAS

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast a vote on Roll Call 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56 on February 2, 2015 and February 3, 2015. I was in Massachusetts during the severe weather that struck New England and was unable travel to Washington.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted Yes on Roll Call 51 (H.R. 361), Roll Call 52 (H.R. 615); H.R. 623 (Roll Call 53) and Roll Call 56 (approving the Journal). I would have voted No on Roll Call 54 (previous question on H. Res. 70), and Roll Call 55 (H. Res. 70).

I would have voted in favor of H.R. 361 in order to enhance the medical preparedness of the Department of Homeland Security. I would have voted in favor of H.R. 615 in order to increase the ability of agencies within the Department of Homeland Security to communicate more effectively with each other. Finally, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 623 in order to determine possible ways to use social media to effectively prepare for and respond to natural disasters and terrorist attacks.

I would have voted against Roll Call 54, a previous question. Had Roll Call 54 failed, Democrats would have been allowed to bring the American Manufacturing Jobs for Students Act to the floor. I would have voted against H. Res. 70, a resolution that allowed the majority to bring a bill to the floor that would repeal the Affordable Care Act. Should the repeal bill become law, funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program would be ended and 3 million young Americans would be kicked of their parents' health plans. Further, an estimated 10 million people would lose their insurance coverage.

BISHOP GUILFOYLE BRINGS HOME THE TITLE

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Bishop Guilfoyle Marauder Football team, who capped off an undefeated season beating the Clariton Bears in the Division ''A'' State Championship.

Led by Coach Wheeler, BG's offense plowed through their opponents, posting 715 points this season and while I don't hold it against them, it became obvious BG was destined for a championship when I watched them defeat my nephew Michael Shuster and the Camp Hill Lions 62–21.

But the saying is: Defense wins championships.

And in the final minutes of the PIAA State Championship, the Marauder defense dug in and held the goal-line, defending multiple Clairton red-zone scoring attempts, securing the Maurader's 1-point lead, 19–18 straight to the Title.

And the character displayed by these young men gave all of us another reason to be proud to call Central Pennsylvania home.

I would also like to give special recognition to the seniors for dedicating their time and efforts to a team sport that they love. Many of these seniors have played football together since 4th grade, and for some of them the State Championship will serve as their last game of football, albeit a good note to go out on:

Berger, B. Chadbourn, McCloskey, Gormley, Kitt, Livoti, Luther, Miller, Price, and Wolf.

And the rest of the team: Hagg, Yasulitis, Coyler, Leamer, Degol, S. Donoughe, Little, Kozak, Keating, Irwin, Frederick, Runk, Green, Brumbaugh, Yahner, Callahan, Trexler, E. Chadbourn, Luther, Donnelly, Trybus, Freidenberger, Conrad, Ramsey, Ferrell, Leamer, P. Donoughe, Labroila, Georgiana, Pleva, Wills, Yasulitis, Berish, and Patterson.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention the Marauder's honorary captain, who truly exemplifies the spirit of Bishop Guilfoyle Football—Jorden McClure.

Congratulations to Coach Wheeler, and all of Bishop Guilfoyle for bringing home the State Championship.

HONORING COLE MICHAEL KOSTELAC

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Cole Michael Kostelac. Cole is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Cole has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Cole has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Cole has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Cole Michael Kostelac for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE WASKOM HIGH SCHOOL WILDCATS, 2014 3–A, DIV II STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to recognize today the outstanding season of the Waskom Wildcats football team, who completed the season by capturing the title of 2014 Class 3A Division II Texas State Champions for the first time in the entirety of Waskom's history.

The championship series proved difficult for the Wildcats, but it was not a difficulty that these skilled and devoted athletes could not overcome. In the State semi-final game, the Wildcats trailed the Sonora Broncos until the third quarter, when their defense held the Broncos back while their offense prevailed with a final score of 25–21 to win the game and usher them into the state championship title game.

After the scoreless first quarter of the state title game, the tenacious Waskom Wildcats scored their first touchdown to take the lead over the Newton Eagles, but the Eagles battled back to take an 8–7 lead. In an amazing show of resilience and ability, just fifteen seconds later, the Wildcats ran the ball 88 yards to score a touchdown and take the lead once again. From that play on, the Wildcats only increased their lead. Scoring six touchdowns and running 350 total yards of offense, the Wildcats ended an extraordinary and victorious game with a final score of 41–22.

The Wildcats are a perfect representation of what can be accomplished when a team possesses both perseverance and resolve with proper guidance from the coaching staff. Although the Wildcats suffered a loss during the first game of their season, their determination remained steadfast, and they recovered to end the season with a stellar record of 13–2.

The exceptional athletes who comprise this team of champions are Kevin Johnson, Keileon Johnson, Trace Carter, Jaire Jackson, Junebug Johnson, Kaleb Haynes, Eric Stephens III, Pedro Rodriguez, Lucas Norton, Cullum Ditmore, Dylan Harkrider, Jake Gillard, Chan Amie, Mike Reason, Kyle Kyker, Dillon Benton, Michael Jaeger, Kyle McInnis, Hernan Rico, Victor Tapia, John Lumpkin, Tony Ratcliff, Morgan Browning, Jose Chavarria, Kyle Adams, Brandon Latham, Logan O'Connor, Christian Smith, Jack Smith, Dylan Powell, Jeremy D'Agostino, Hunter Johnson, Jacob Bennett, Dylan Hudson, Matt Norris, Bradley Cochran, Ty Carter, Jason Jinks, Tay Green, Vicente Segura, and Matt Padron.

The athletic staff and faculty who led the Wildcats to victory must be congratulated, because no team, no matter how talented and committed can rise to the pinnacle of being State Champions without proper direction, correction, and motivation. Led by Head Coach & Athletic Director Whitney Keeling, the Coaching Staff includes Jeremy Kubiak, Greg Pearson, Daniel Swaim, Jeff Lyles, Gary Wilson, Vencent Lee, David Higginbotham, Matt Goode, and Lorenza Thomas; the Ball Boys include Paxton Keeling, Trent Higginbotham, Jalynn Washington, LaZavion Thomas, and Benito Sanchez. And, of course, if a school and school district is not committed to its athletic program and all the life lessons it provides, the team does not have the opportunity to excel. So thanks and congratulations go to the School Principal Andy Chilcoat and his staff, as well as Superintendent Jimmy E. Cox and all of his staff.

It is with great pride that I join with the citizens of Waskom, as well as the entire First District of Texas, in congratulating the Waskom Wildcats on their first State Championship and their impressive season. This outstanding accomplishment is now preserved in the United States CONGRESSIONAL RECORD which will endure as long as there is a United States of America.

HONORING UNIVERSITY OF OREGON PROFESSOR DAVID FRANK

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize University of Oregon (UO) Professor David Frank. In his 32 year career at the UO, Professor Frank has taught, mentored, and inspired generations of students. He has shaped the study of speech and debate as the dean of the Robert D. Clark Honors Program at the UO and as the longtime director of the UO Forensics Program. For his exemplary work and for his leadership, the UO college debate tournament has been renamed the David Frank Tournament of Scholars.

Professor Frank is renowned for his wit, rhetorical flair, and passion for the principles of debate. He is the recipient of five teaching awards, including three university wide recognitions and a career achievement award in forensics. He has overseen the UO Forensics Program since 1981, which won three national championships and international recognition, with a team competing in the semifinal round at the 2006 World Universities Championship in Dublin, Ireland.

As a University of Oregon graduate, it is my pleasure to highlight the outstanding accomplishments of Professor Frank. I am also proud to note that Oregon forensics dates to the founding of the university in 1876. One of the very first intercollegiate debates in America occurred in 1891 between Oregon and Willamette University. The style of debate now known as policy cross-examination was developed at the University of Oregon in the 1930s.

The UO hosts the first David Frank Tournament of Scholars later this month, an honor Professor Frank so richly merits.

HONORING LORI SAROYA

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lori Saroya for her contributions and tireless efforts in promoting justice, civil rights and mutual understanding among the Minnesota Islamic community and all peoples of faith. As Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on Islamic American Relations (CAIR) Mrs. Saroya has been at the forefront of building coalitions and improving Muslim relations across the state.

Mrs. Saroya was raised in Bloomfield, Iowa. She received her undergraduate degree from St. Catherine University and her Juris Doctor from Hamline University. As a child of the only Muslims in a small town she and her family were subject to messages of hate and unfair treatment. She took these early life experiences and turned them into positive actions. While still in high school Mrs. Saroya organized the Iowa Conference on Islam at the University of Iowa.

Recognizing a lack of Muslim civil rights advocacy groups in Minnesota she decided to fill the void. In 2007, she co-founded the Minnesota chapter of CAIR. The organization has quickly become a powerful voice for Muslim civil liberties and advocacy across the state. CAIR–MN successfully fought for and won the establishment of the Abu Huraira Islamic Center in St. Anthony, MN despite misguided local opposition. CAIR–MN asked the Justice Department to investigate, which led to a negotiated agreement with the city and the opening of a magnificent new center for gatherings and prayer. In 2014, Mrs. Saroya along with members of CAIR–MN led the first ever Jewish-Muslim Youth Day at the Minnesota Legislature. This ground breaking interfaith program trains students on successfully engaging in dialogue with legislators on the pressing issues of racial profiling, immigration, and safe schools. CAIR–MN has become the go-to legal source for those in the Muslim community. Since 2007 the organization has provided hundreds of Muslims with free legal aid and has become a driving force in fighting unlawful discrimination and bullying in work, schools, and the public sphere.

CAIR–MN's outstanding work has been recognized time and time again on the state and national level. Among some of the organization's many awards include the ''Nonprofit Mission and Excellence Anti-Racism Award'' from the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the ''Pro Bono Difference Maker Award'' from the American Bar Association. It is through achievements such as these that Mrs. Saroya became the recipient of the prestigious Bush Foundation Fellowship for $100,000 in 2014. This fellowship stands as a testament and a capstone to the truly amazing work that Ms. Saroya did in her time as Executive Director. Through this grant she will be able to take even greater leaps in her advocacy work.

Thanks to Ms. Saroya's outstanding efforts and hard work, CAIR–MN has immensely benefited the Muslim community in Minnesota. I applaud Ms. Saroya's extraordinary work in advancing the civil rights of the Muslim community and fostering a more vibrant and culturally understanding Minnesota. On behalf of the people of Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District, I wish you continued success and impact in your future advocacy work.

COMMEMORATING THE LIVES OF ISIL'S VICTIMS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the horrific ongoing brutality of ISIL and mourn the senseless loss of life in the Middle East.

Just yeterday, the United States confirmed the death of Kayla Mueller, the fourth American to die while a hostage of ISIL. Ms. Mueller had dedicated her young life to serving the struggling people of Syria as they endure a civil war and violence from many sides.

In recent weeks, we have also learned of the murder of two Japanese citizens, Kenji Goto and Haruna Yukawa, and Jordanian Air Force Pilot Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh. These most recent casualties join American, British, and Russian captives as victims of ISIL's deranged ideology. All these victims, and their families, will be in our thoughts and prayers.

As co-chair of the Congressional Study Group on Japan, I was especially appalled that ISIL executed the Japanese captives in response to Japan pledging non-military aid to support the victims of ISIL's terror. Millions of Iraqi and Syrian refugees are in desperate need of assistance, and I applaud Japan for standing with the United States and a coalition of nations committed to confronting ISIL's barbarity.

The continued murder of foreign captives and the ongoing atrocities committed against tens of thousands of Iraqis and Syrians are a stark reminder that we cannot allow ISIL to continue unchecked. Instead, as international community we must remain united in our resolve to stop this evil and help work toward a stable, peaceful Middle East.

HONORING CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL GRAVES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Michael Graves. Christopher is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Christopher has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Michael Graves for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

BUFFALO STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three outstanding members of the senior class at Buffalo State College, Hillary Kollar, Olivia Luciani, and Ashley Wallace. As members of the Buffalo State women's basketball team, these students are known as leaders among their peers and teammates. I commend these young women for their dedication to academics and athletics and congratulate them on the completion of their college careers.

Hillary Kollar played for Buffalo State as a Guard and majored in Fashion Merchandising. Hillary comes from Johnstown, New York where she attended Johnstown High School.

A graduate of East Syracuse Minoa High School in Syracuse, New York, Olivia Luciani studied Public Communication while at Buffalo State and also played as a Guard for the basketball team.

Ashley Wallace comes from Lockport, New York and attended Starpoint High School. Ashley was a Forward who majored in Childhood Education at Buffalo State. Balancing the responsibilities demanded of student athletes is a true challenge, and each of these students handled the test with dignity and grace. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these extraordinary Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. Their dedication and drive will propel them to success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, in February, our nation commemorates the significant milestones in Black History as we pay homage to the individuals who shaped America's history. I am proud that many of the great Black leaders and movements in our history came from Harlem. As the epicenter of the Black cultural movement of the 1920s known as the Harlem Renaissance, the historic neighborhood was home to luminaries such as James Baldwin, Madame C.J. Walker, and Duke Ellington. Recently, many great political leaders have called Harlem home, including David Dinkins, Basil Paterson, and Percy Sutton. Our congressional district continues to be a bastion of Black social, political, and artistic development.

I am fortunate to have many excellent organizations in the District that promote Black culture, history, and advancement. Our rich heritage is preserved through the efforts of The Link's Incorporated, 100 Black Men of New York, Coalition of 100 Black Women, Harlem Mothers SAVE, New York Urban League, NAACP New York State Conference, NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch, Jazzmobile, Inc., Masjid Malcolm Shabazz Mosque, Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, United Clergy Caucus, Mobilizing Preachers and Community (MPAC), Clergy With a Purpose and Community, United Baptist Missionary Association, Baptist Ministers' Conference of New York & Vicinity, Faison Firehouse Theatre, New Heritage Theater Group, Impact Reparatory Theatre, Manna House, The Falu Foundation, The Caribbean Cultural Center, The Pan-Hellenic Council of New York, The Mama Foundation, and Gospel for Teens.

Throughout Black History Month, we celebrate the contributions of Blacks in every facet of our society: Jackie Robinson of the Brooklyn Dodgers and Bill Russell of the Boston Celtics redefined sports and helped propel the civil rights movement; Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and Rep. Shirley Chisholm left an indelible mark in government, Louis Armstrong and Langston Hughes influenced generations of musicians and poets. And civil rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and my dear friend Rep. JOHN LEWIS forever changed the course of our nation.

As we mark the 50th Anniversary of the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, we pay tribute to our leaders who fought tirelessly for our rights and the artists who communicated the feelings of generations of Black Americans. Today, the rallying call of Black Lives Matter has regenerated a new movement of young social activists such as The Justice League NYC as the struggle continues to raise awareness for justice and equality throughout urban America. Let us honor the memory of the great men and women who paved the path of Black culture and achievement and commit to preserving our history by striving to build on their legacy.

CONGRATULATING KARL KILDOW

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Karl Kildow on his retirement after 38 years of working in the education industry as both an educator and an advocate.

Mr. Kildow was born in San Diego, California and spent his youth in San Diego and Tustin, California. After completing his high school education, Mr. Kildow attended California State University Fullerton, where he received a degree in Social Science.

After college, Mr. Kildow dedicated his life to the noble profession of teaching. His first teaching job was at Needles High School in Needles, California. While there, he taught English, mathematics, history, and physical education and coached the school's basketball team. In addition launching his career as an educator in Needles, he also met his wife Sandy there.

Mr. Kildow settled in Visalia where he taught at Divisidero Middle School, Mt. Whitney High School, and Redwood High School teaching English, for 1 year, 18 years, and 8 years, respectively. During this time period he received an English credential and got involved in the Visalia Unified Teachers Association (VUTA) and the National Educators Association (NEA).

He served as the President of the VUTA for 12 years and currently is an NEA Director.

After 38 years of teaching and advocating on behalf of students and teachers alike, Mr. Kildow will be retiring later this year.

Educators and students throughout the Central Valley of California have been extremely fortunate to have had someone as talented and dedicated as Mr. Kildow working on their behalf. Mr. Kildow touched the lives of countless individuals throughout his career. The Central Valley has benefitted greatly from his insight and perspective.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Karl Kildow for his 38 years of dedicated public service as an educator in the Central Valley and congratulating him on his recent retirement.

RUNNING FOR A CAUSE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate The Fellowship for hosting their 5th annual Run4theChildren race in Katy, Texas. This race raises funds to help families overcome the barriers to adopting children. This wonderful charity event allows families in our community grow and share their love.

Over 160 million orphan children in the world are looking for homes. Sadly, many families that would love to make an orphaned child a member of their family face costly huge financial barriers that can run upwards of $30,000. Run4theChildren addresses this problem head on. In the past four years, the annual event has raised $80,000 for grants to help families who want to adopt children.

I commend The Fellowship for extending the warmth of their ministry to all the families they have connected with new sons and daughters and all individuals who seek to participate in the race. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to The Fellowship for hosting its 5th annual Run4theChildren race.

RECOGNIZING THE THORNTON FAMILY'S SERVICE TO McDONALD COUNTY, MO

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor the Clifford and Susie Thornton family on their well-deserved recognition as the 2015 honoree at the McDonald County Schools Foundation's second annual Heart of Education Banquet.

The Thornton family has blessed McDonald County with their dedication to community service and development. Clifford and Susie opened their family-owned pharmacy in Noel in 1979 and ran this small business for 29 years. They are the proud parents of three McDonald County Schools graduates, all of which have greatly contributed to the community's betterment.

Clifford and Susie's son Matt served as executive director of the McDonald County Community Development Council. While there, Matt played an influential role in the creation of the McDonald County Schools Foundation.

Their son Mike continued in the family profession and is now a pharmacist and small business owner in Anderson within the McDonald County community. Mike is also the current McDonald County Schools Foundation president.

Clifford and Susie's daughter Suzanne Schmidt also remains embedded in the local education as a nurse for the McDonald County School District. She is an avid supporter of the school's sports and extracurricular activities.

I urge my colleagues to join in congratulating the family of Clifford and Susie Thornton as the 2015 McDonald County Schools Foundation honoree.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes 69–70 due to a family emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on #69 and yes on #70.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF BAKERSFIELD

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Junior League of Bakersfield. This milestone provides us the opportunity to reflect on the importance of civic responsibility and volunteerism, demonstrated so admirably by the Junior League of Bakersfield's five decades of outstanding service to the community.

In 1952, a few women formed one of the first exclusively service-oriented societies in Bakersfield: the Community League of Kern County. This organization of mothers and daughters from around our community sought to organize for the good of their city as an all-volunteer association. And there was plenty of work to do. 1952 was also the year of the White Wolf Fault Earthquake, a 7.2 magnitude disaster which demolished downtown Bakersfield. In the aftermath, the League began immediately helping our neighbors.

From its first days, the League concerned itself with the vulnerable in Bakersfield. Incorporating as a chapter of the Association of Junior Leagues of America in 1965, the Junior League focused its energies on assisting children and the elderly. While singlehandedly executing long-term projects, such as the construction of the 1966 Bakersfield Community House for Seniors, the Junior League prefers to partner with local institutions for joint projects. In the past fifty years, it has raised more than a million dollars and volunteered hundreds of thousands of hours to help those in need, including hospitalized children, teen mothers, the mentally and physically disabled, the addicted, the homeless, and the abused. Generous in its charity, judicious in its management, our Junior League has long been noted for the efficacy with which it directs resources to those whom would benefit most.

In the years ahead, the League will concentrate on sustaining the Girls Achievement Program, an initiative aimed at protecting emancipated youth, for which they have already granted tens of thousands of dollars to local organizations. The Junior League represents the best part of Bakersfield's social conscience. On behalf of the Bakersfield community, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Junior League of Bakersfield on 50 years of accomplishments as we look forward to many more.

HONORING JEFFREY RYAN REYNA

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeffrey Ryan Reyna. Jeffrey is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeffrey has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeffrey has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jeffrey has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeffrey Ryan Reyna for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING SUPER BOWL HERO MALCOLM BUTLER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkably talented individual, Malcolm Butler, who is a native of Mississippi. Butler was born into a family of five children in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Mr. Butler is a prime example of learning from one's mistakes and taking advantage of being given a second chance.

Despite only playing football at the cornerback position his freshman and senior years at Vicksburg High School, Butler was able to receive a scholarship from Hinds Community College after graduating in 2009. After some setbacks in his first season, Butler was dismissed from the team midseason. However, he did not let prior mistakes define him, and as he made major adjustments in his life, he was invited to rejoin the team.

Butler went on to play at Division II University of West Alabama in 2012, where he played exceptionally both seasons. His junior

year, he started in all 12 games and recorded 49 tackles and 5 interceptions; the following year he had 45 tackles, 2 interceptions, and a blocked field goal. His seasons were so remarkable that he was named All-Gulf South Conference both years.

Despite such success at West Alabama, Butler went undrafted. Fortunately, he was invited to attend a tryout for the New England Patriots to make their roster going into training camp. With odds that were not in his favor, Butler managed to be a standout player at that tryout, and he ultimately made the team.

Butler had a solid season this year on the Patriots team, playing 52 snaps on special teams and 182 on defense. Though he didn't play in the playoffs versus the Ravens and only 15 snaps against the Colts, Butler made a name for himself in this year's Super Bowl. After the Patriots struggled against Seahawks wide receiver Chris Matthews throughout the first half, the Patriots made adjustments and substituted Butler in the game.

New England was able to contain Matthews, and they held the lead 24–20 with two minutes left in the game. Butler came through in two crucial plays in the home stretch. In the first, after swatting the ball into the air, Butler manages to force receiver Jermaine Kearse out of bounds after Kearse caught it. Two plays later, Butler made a game-winning interception, the first of his NFL career.

Butler's example is proof that one's mistakes do not define him. His persistence, combined with his shrewd football acumen, has cemented his role in NFL history. Malcolm Butler is yet another example of Mississippi's tradition of producing fine athletes that are also honorable human beings.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,132,368,869,938.98. We've added $7,505,491,821,025.90 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

BUFFALO STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize five outstanding members of the senior class at Buffalo State College, Roderick Epps, Justin Best, Chris Thompson, Larry Rivers, and Chris Cartwright. As members of the Buffalo State men's basketball team, these students are known as leaders among their peers and teammates. I commend these young men for their dedication to academics and athletics and congratulate them on the completion of their college careers.

Roderick Epps studied Health and wellbeing while at Buffalo State and comes from Uniondale, New York where he attended Uniondale High School. Roderick played the position of Guard during his time on the basketball team.

While at Buffalo State Justin Best majored in Economics & Finance and also played the position of Guard. Justin's hometown is Sleepy Hollow, New York, and he graduated from Sleepy Hollow High School. An economics major, Chris Thompson played for Buffalo State as a Forward. He hails from Far Rockaway, New York where he attended Channel View High School.

A fellow Forward, Larry Rivers studied Criminal Justice during his time at Buffalo State. A native of Syracuse, New York Larry attended Fowler High School.

Chris Cartwright comes from Binghamton, New York and is a graduate of Binghamton High School. He is a communications major and played at Guard for Buffalo State.

Balancing the responsibilities demanded of student athletes is a true challenge, and each of these students handled the test with dignity and grace. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these extraordinary Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. Their dedication and drive will propel them to success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

H.R. 596, A BILL TO REPEAL THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, once again, House Republicans are wasting America's time with another pointless vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. If this bill were to become law, it would rip away affordable health insurance coverage from millions of Americans, allow insurance companies to once again deny coverage based on pre-existing health conditions, and increase costs for seniors with Medicare.

We could spend our time debating and voting on legislation to promote economic growth and ensure that American workers share in the economic gains that they help produce. We could debate and vote on ways to boost middle-class take-home pay through targeted tax reforms, paid for by reducing tax giveaways to special interests and the wealthy. We could have a vote in the House—at long last—on bipartisan immigration reform legislation, or on a plan to replace meat-ax sequestration spending cuts with a smarter deficit-reduction plan.

Instead, we vote for the 56th time on whether to repeal or undermine a law that has already done so much to make insurance companies more accountable, hold down the growth of health spending, and improve American families' economic security by making sure they all have access to affordable health insurance. The Affordable Care Act is not perfect. Like Medicare and Social Security before it, the law will benefit from adjustments over time. If Republicans were serious about improving the United States' health care system, we would sit down and hammer out real improvements to the Affordable Care Act based on what we have learned as the law has taken effect. Instead, we are voting on a bill that basically says we can pretend that more than four years' worth of public- and private-sector actions implementing the Affordable Care Act to make affordable health care in this country a reality can simply be swept aside. This is nothing more than a Tea Party talking-point fantasy masquerading as a piece of legislation. And after four years, we are still waiting for the Republican majority to fulfill their promise to develop a replacement for the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, I am very curious to see how Congressional Republicans will square this vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act with their much-vaunted promise to develop a balanced budget. The Republican budgets for the last two years would not have come anywhere close to balancing without the revenues and health care savings generated by the Affordable Care Act. There is a glaring inconsistency here.

Enough is enough. It is time for our Republican colleagues to get over their fixation on bashing the Affordable Care Act and instead get on with the real work of rebuilding a prosperous American middle class.

TRIBUTE TO DAN ATWOOD

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Temecula, California are exceptional. Temecula has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated people who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Dan Atwood is one of these individuals. On February 21, 2015, Dan will be honored at the Temecula Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala where he will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.

After moving to California in the 1970s, Dan quickly immersed himself into the automotive industry, eventually purchasing his first dealership in 1987. Launching forward from there, Dan opened a second dealership, Temecula Toyota. Dan's business has been a staple of the community which continually keeps pace with the ever-expanding region. In the twenty-five year span that the dealership has been operating, it has always been under the watchful eyes of the Atwood family, even as the dealership has grown to employ over two hundred employees.

Dan has given his time to the community not only as a businessman, but as a dedicated citizen committed to improving and strengthening the Temecula region. He has continually served numerous organizations in order to give back to the community that has always supported his endeavors. The groups that Dan is involved in span from nationally recognized non-profits, such as Habitat for Humanity, to locally started organizations such as the Balloon and Wine Festival. For over ten years,

Dan has also opened his doors to Safe Alternative for Everyone and their highly successful Denim and Diamonds fundraiser, bringing in hundreds of thousands of dollars to benefit victims of domestic abuse. Additionally, the gates of the Atwood Estate Winery, another Atwood venture, are often opened on multiple occasions during the year to host fundraisers benefiting the community. As a firm believer in the future of tomorrow, Dan has worked to never miss a chance to participate in events that benefit the youth of the community. From sponsoring events to providing full-ride college scholarships, to serving as a mentor at the Boys & Girls Club, Dan has invested himself in the future generations of community leaders.

In light of all Dan Atwood has done for the community of Temecula, the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce announced Dan to be their Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. Dan's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of Temecula, California. He has been the heart and soul of many community organizations and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many local citizens are grateful for his service and salute him as he receives this prestigious award.

A TRIBUTE TO SYDNEY GIBSON KING

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as the nation celebrates Black History Month, I rise to celebrate a Philadelphia treasure, Mrs. Sydney G. King. Because of her love and dedication to dance and her desire to train Black ballerinas, Mrs. King opened the Sydney School of Dance in the 1940s for aspiring African American dancers who were not allowed to attend white dance studios in post war segregated Philadelphia.

Born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1919, King came to Philadelphia with her family when she was just two years old and at an early age began studying ballet under the tutelage of dance pioneer Essie Marie Dorsey.

For more than six decades the Sydney School of Dance trained hundreds of Black children and many went on to receive national and international recognition in the dance world.

Those students include dance professionals such as: Joan Meyers Brown, the founder and director of the much acclaimed Philadanco; Billy Wilson, famed director/choreographer and soloist with the National Ballet of Holland; Broadway performer Betsy Ann Dickerson; singer/actress Lola Falana; Carol Johnson, a former principal dancer with the Eleo Pomare Dance Company and founder of an aboriginal dance company in Australia; and Arthur Hall, founder of the Afro American Dance Ensemble.

These dance greats in no way diminish the accomplishments of hundreds of her other students who did not choose careers in dance but because of the empowering and esteem building training at the Sydney School of Dance they are today proud and successful professionals in a variety of fields.

Mrs. King, the mother of three children, is a widow and now at the age of 95 sums her life's dedication to dance by saying simply she wanted to, "train and create Black ballerinas."

WELCOME HOME COLONEL SAM JOHNSON

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, flying in his F–4 Phantom over North Vietnamese was Air Force pilot Colonel SAM JOHNSON. On his second tour of duty in Vietnam, Colonel JOHNSON was flying with the fighter squadron called Satan's Angels, when his plane was shot down by ground fire. It was April, 16, 1966 and Colonel JOHNSON became a POW.

Colonel JOHNSON was a career pilot who had already flown 62 combat missions during the Korean War and was on his 25th in Vietnam in his F–4. On that fateful day in April, a foreign land claimed him captive. He was in the Vietnam prisoner of war camp for 7 years, but Colonel JOHNSON never wavered.

He was put through serious torment for those 7 years; one can't even imagine the hell he lived.

Because of the way he would not give in to torture and interrogation, the enemy moved him to the famous Hanoi Hilton, or "Alcatraz," as it was appropriately coined. It was as bad a POW camp that ever existed. Alcatraz was where they put the most obstinate men. The POWs, calling themselves the "Alcatraz gang," were so hard-nosed they had to be segregated. The North Vietnamese even had a name for Colonel SAM JOHNSON, "Die Hard."

For 7 years, Colonel JOHNSON was beaten and tortured, but they got no information out him. He was a pillar of patriotism and strength. He never broke. All of his patriotic stubbornness landed him in solitary confinement, where he remained for 4 years. He was subjected to a cell that was 3- by 9-feet. During those 4 years, all that was in the cell was a light bulb above his head that the enemy kept on for 24 hours a day. During the nighttime, they put him in leg irons, and during those 4 years, he never saw or talked to another American. It was brutal, it was harsh, it was cruel, it was mean.

While he was in the POW camp, he and other POWs communicated with each other using a code by tapping on the wall. It was then, that Colonel JOHNSON memorized the names of the other POWs in captivity. He kept this memory close so that when he escaped or was released, he would be able to tell their loved ones who they were and where they were.

The enemy laughed at Colonel JOHNSON. They made fun him. And his response "Is that the best you can do?" He entered the prisoner of war camp a strong and sturdy 200 pounds. On a diet of weeds, pig fat and rice, he lost 80 pounds, but never let it get to him.

After 7 years of confinement, captivity and nightmare, he was released, 42 years ago, on February 12, 1973. Today we proudly celebrate his "returnniversary."

After his release, Colonel JOHNSON continued to serve in the United States Air Force, serving for a total of 29 years. After he left the Air Force, he served in the Texas State House. He had his own business and in 1991, he came to the United States House of Representatives, where he still serves and represents the folks from the great state of Texas.

He is tenacious, unyielding and more than anything he is patriotic. He was willing to risk his own life in a foreign land for people just like you and me. Not only is the Texas Delegation lucky to have such a man serving alongside them, but so is the House of Representatives.

Just simply saying thank you could never suffice. I am honored to know such a man and call him my friend.

To Colonel SAM JOHNSON and all who served in Vietnam: welcome home, welcome home, welcome home.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING GARY MICHAEL BRUNER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Gary Michael Bruner. Gary is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Gary has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Gary has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Gary has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Gary Michael Bruner for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING NAACP'S 106TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to celebrate Founder's Day (February 12) and recognize the 106th Anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the largest and the oldest, the baddest and the boldest, and the only premier civil rights organization in the world dedicated to fighting for the social justice and equality of Blacks in America, and for people of color everywhere. Over the years, the NAACP has played pivotal roles in efforts ranging from universal suffrage to wrongful death investigations. Their continued contributions to the pursuit of equality are a testament to the organization's leadership and its hard-working members.

I commend the New York State Conference and our leader, Dr. Hazel N. Dukes, and the

Mid-Manhattan branch of the NAACP for its unwavering commitment to our community. This branch provides vital mentoring and youth development programs and actively encourages activism in our community. Dedicating themselves to the five game changers—civic engagement, education, health, economic development and sustainability, and public safety and criminal justice, the Mid-Manhattan Branch continues to forge new victories ahead. I am proud of their many accomplishments and steadfast defense of the rights of all the people of New York City, because they are ''All in for Justice and Equality!''

During Black History Month, it is essential that we recognize the significant contributions the NAACP has made to the Civil Rights movement. Recently, I cosponsored legislation honoring and praising the NAACP on the occasion of its 106th anniversary. America is stronger and more diverse today because of the NAACP's commitment to fighting for the rights of Black Americans.

TRIBUTE TO DOUGLAS MAGNON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the remarkable Douglas Magnon who passed away on Wednesday, February 4, 2015 in California. Doug was a pillar of the community in Riverside, California and he will be deeply missed.

Doug was a man of many passions, most notably was for motor racing. Sparked early on in his childhood through accompanying his father, Raymond, to races at the Riverside International Raceway, Doug was inspired to launch the Riverside International Automotive Museum. By means of his active leadership and profound knowledge of automobiles, the museum quickly received resounding support from the greater racing community that still continues today. The Riverside International Automotive Museum is one of the most highly regarding racing collections in Northern America with its extensive collection of unmatched artifacts and materials from throughout racing history. However, Doug did not stop there. In 2013, with the support and partnership of friend Paul Kinsella, the two opened up Newport Italian, a motorcycle dealership specializing in Vespa, Moto Guzzi and Aprilla.

When not hitting high speeds, Doug could often be found honing his culinary skills and sharing his Italian recipes with the community. In 2012, Doug and his sister opened the family restaurant Magnone Trattoria & Market, for which Doug not only created the menus, but also served as executive chef.

As an avid supporter of the Riverside community, Doug also freely gave his time and talents to many local organizations such as the Riverside County Philharmonic and the University of California, Riverside. In addition to serving as a mentor to young and aspiring individuals, Doug would often inspire anyone he crossed paths through his generous heart and unabashed enthusiasm for life.

Doug was the loving husband to Evonne, son to Raymond and Elaine, brother to Deanna, Cheryl, Patti and Ryan, and devoted uncle to many nieces and nephews. On Sunday, February 15, 2015, a memorial service celebrating Doug's extraordinary life will be held. Doug will always be remembered for his incredible contributions to business, his work ethic, generosity, and love of family. The way in which Doug lived his life should serve as reminder to others that the power of an individual with drive, perseverance and a strong work-ethic can do great things. His dedication to his work, family and community are a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Doug's family and friends; although Doug may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remains and will never be forgotten.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. JAMES L. EDWARDS FOR HIS 25 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF ANDERSON UNIVERSITY

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. James L. Edwards on the occasion of his retirement. For 25 years Dr. Edwards has served as President of Anderson University. He is the longest serving president of a university in Indiana's history and has contributed so much to the community. The people of the Fifth Congressional District of Indiana are forever grateful for Dr. Edwards' contributions and commitment to Anderson University and the Hoosier community.

In 1990, Dr. Edwards became the fourth President of Anderson University since its establishment in 1917. He took office July 1, 1990, however his relationship with the school goes back decades before that. Dr. Edwards is a graduate of Anderson University, receiving his bachelor's degree from the school and later his master's degree from the Anderson University School of Theology. Prior to his tenure as President he held two positions with Anderson University, first as Director of Student Recruitment (1966–1970) and later as Director of Church and Alumni Relations (1972–1975).

Growing up as the son of a minister in Ohio, Dr. Edwards has a long history with the church. His expertise and contributions to the church are not limited to his time with Anderson University. After completing his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Anderson University, he went on to receive his Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy and Leadership at the Ohio State University. As an ordained minister he has more than 30 years of experience, most notably as Senior Pastor of the Meadow Park Church in Columbus, Ohio as well as other churches throughout Indiana and Michigan. He also served at the national level as President and CEO of Warner Press, a publishing house for the Church of God, where he directed the work of the largest religious publisher in Indiana.

During his tenure as President he presided over the Anderson School of Theology, a graduate program for the training of ministers, the same program from which he received his master's degree. He recognized the importance of resource development and led campaigns that raised more than $205 million for the school, which included the construction of several campus buildings. Dr. Edwards was not just involved locally, but also at state and national levels. At the state level, he served as chair of the board for Independent Colleges of Indiana and was a member of the Steering Committee of the Indiana Leadership Prayer Breakfast. He served at the national level on the Board of Directors of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities as well as director of the board of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

Dr. Edwards' leadership was most evident at home. He showed extensive commitment to community at the local level in Anderson, Indiana. He has served on the board of directors for many groups, including the Madison County Community Foundation, the Corporation for Economic Development of Madison County, First Merchants Bank of Central Indiana, St. Vincent Anderson Regional Hospital, Citizens Banking Company, and the United Way. Additionally, he served on the Ministries Council of the Church of God and is a member of the Rotary Club of Anderson, where he was honored with the 2003 Community Image Award.

On behalf of the grateful constituents of Indiana's Fifth Congressional District, I congratulate Dr. Edwards on the occasion of his retirement. We congratulate him on his remarkable career and extend a huge thank you for all of the wonderful contributions he has made to the Hoosier community, to our state, and our nation. I wish the very best to Dr. Edwards, his wife, Deanna, his three children, and his six grandchildren as he enjoys a well-deserved retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call #69, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 719, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

On Roll Call #70, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 720, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

TRIBUTE TO MARTIN J. ZANINOVICH

HON. KEVIN McCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a great American, a self-made man, a son of immigrants and founder of an agricultural colossus—Martin J. Zaninovich, who passed away on December 9, 2014 in Santa Barbara at the age of 91.

Martin's father John left Croatia on the eve of the First World War as the Austro-Hungarian Empire teetered toward dissolution. In California, John married Mary, another Yugoslavian émigré, and found in the San Joaquin Valley the familiar arid climate and rich soils of his Dalmatian homeland. On a small farm outside Porterville the Zaninovichs raised grapes

and children too, two sons and three daughters by 1940. Martin came first in 1923, and after attending high school in Porterville, he left the valley for the University of Southern California.

The Second World War swept Martin into the United States Army and across the Pacific to the small island of Okinawa. Returning in 1947 to Delano, California, Martin married Margaret Surjak and co-founded Jasmine Vineyards with his cousin Vincent. The farm marked the beginning of Martin's rise in the table grape industry just as it began to take off. In 1961, production stood at 450 thousand tons. By 2003, output had swollen to 730 thousand tons as aggressive marketing more than doubled domestic per capita consumption.

It was not an easy accomplishment. Facing weak demand in the late 1960s, Martin convinced his fellow growers to pool their resources and press the California legislature to pass the Ketchum Act, which elevated the table grape industry to parity with California's other agricultural commodities. Martin—who at various times chaired the South Central Farmers Committee, the California Fresh Fruit Association, and the Delano Grape Growers Products to promote and expand the market—accompanied the California Table Grape Commission he helped found on its first international trade mission to Japan in 1973.

As a staunch conservative with a firm belief in individual enterprise and market economics, Martin constantly pursued policies and goals on behalf of valley growers. His work ethic went hand in hand with his philanthropy; Martin was one of the original founders of the California State University Bakersfield and a board member of Mercy Hospital.

Martin is survived by his wife, Margaret, and their three children: Katina, Sonya and Jon. Today, Martin's family operates his vineyards with the same hard work and discipline he personified so well. The San Joaquin Valley has lost one of its champions, formidable and tireless, another of those citizens for whom the greatest generation was named. On behalf of our community, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the life and legacy of Martin Zaninovich, and offering our condolences to his family.

SERVING WITH HONOR

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lt. Cheryl Hillegeist on her impending promotion to the rank of captain in the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office. This promotion will make her the highest-ranking female officer ever to serve the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office. As a resident of Fort Bend County, I sleep better at night knowing officers like Lt. Hillegeist are on patrol looking out for my family and the great folks who call our diverse county home.

Hillegeist's distinguished career in law enforcement has spanned three decades. While working with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and the Fort Bend County Sheriff's office, her exemplary character and actions encouraged her rapid rise through the ranks and the earned the recognition and gratitude of her community. This well deserved promotion is a reflection of her stellar commitment to protecting our county.

I thank Lt. Cheryl Hillegeist for her dedication to service and extraordinary conduct in the discharge of her public duties. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional of Texas, congratulations again to Hillegeist for being promoted to captain in the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office.

RECOGNIZING CANADA CONSUL GENERAL ROY B. NORTON'S VISIT TO SPRINGFIELD, MO

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give Consul General of Canada Roy B. Norton an enthusiastic welcome and wish him well on his visit to Southwest Missouri.

Consul General Norton represents Canadian interests in Missouri as well as in Illinois and Wisconsin. He focuses on trade, investment, environmental, cultural and academic policy areas.

Missouri and Canada's alliance runs deep in trade, impacting nearly 164,000 jobs in the state.

Canada is a strong partner with not only Missouri, but the U.S. as a whole. There is deep appreciation for the resources Canada offers such as energy and agricultural trade and our mutual national security interests as we partner to protect our shared borders, our homelands from shared enemies abroad and assisting the defense of our allies from theirs.

I am honored to recognize Consul General Norton, his representation of Canada and the valuable partnership the great state of Missouri and Canada share. I welcome him to my home state and continue looking forward to a strong future and alliance ahead.

HONORING MATTHEW LAWRENCE KNOPP

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew Lawrence Knopp. Matthew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Matthew has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew Lawrence Knopp for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE LONG SERVICE OF MARGARET ''PEGGY'' THERESA GIERIE

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the long and distinguished service to the country of one of my constituents, Margaret ''Peggy'' Theresa Gierie, who is turning 90 and is, I believe, among our nation's oldest federal employees.

Ms. Gierie comes from a long line of military service. She had a great grandfather who fought in the Battle of Gettysburg, her father survived gas attacks in World War I, and her husband was a U.S. Army Air Corps navigator in World War II. Ms. Gierie added to that legacy in 1945 by enlisting in the WAVES, a women's division of the U.S. Navy in which she served as a telegrapher at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. Her service earned her a World War II Victory Medal.

Ms. Gierie went on to attend college and work at several different jobs while raising three children with her husband.

At this point in her story, no one would have faulted her for taking a well-earned rest in retirement. She has done no such thing. Ms. Gierie re-entered the workforce after her husband of 50 years passed away. And since 2007, she has found a new way to serve the country—as a receptionist at the Sanford Vet Center, which offers a range of services to Maine veterans and their families.

In her time there, she has become a familiar and welcome face to the clients who often come to appointments early just to chat with her. At the same time, she handles demanding duties with a positive attitude, professionalism, dedication, and, above all, a never-ending supply of energy. She goes above and beyond for every veteran who calls or comes through the door.

Mr. Speaker, I truly admire Ms. Gierie for her incredible service, and would like to thank her for the difference she has made in the lives of Maine veterans and wish her a very happy 90th birthday.

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 644 AND H.R. 636

HON. RYAN A. COSTELLO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of 2 bills that will bring tax certainty to small businesses and families in my District.

It is legislation that will make a number of tax provisions permanent. I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation.

We have to fix the tax code for everybody—including hardworking small businesses and families.

I have traveled my District and have heard from many small businesses and families who are looking for tax relief.

H.R. 644—The Fighting Hunger Incentive Act will promote charitable giving which will

benefit all communities. It encourages contributions to local food banks such as the Chester County Food Bank in Exton, by making permanent a food-inventory donation in our tax code.

H.R. 636—America's Small Business Tax Relief Act will give small businesses certainty to grow and plan for the future.

We can all agree on the fact that our tax code needs reformed and simplified.

If we move to put these reforms in place we can continue to work towards comprehensive tax reform that is simpler, flatter, fairer, with lower rates for everyone.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL FREIGHT NETWORK TRUST FUND ACT OF 2015

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the National Freight Network Trust Fund Act of 2015 along with my Co-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional PORTS Caucus TED POE. This legislation will provide a guaranteed dedicated funding source, at no additional expense to taxpayers, to serve our nations freight movement.

The Port of Los Angeles is in my backyard and when I came to Congress, I was surprised that there was a lack of focus on ports and freight transportation in general. One of the reasons I co-founded the PORTS Caucus is to educate Members about the importance of freight transportation to our nation's economy.

We are a consumer economy. Whether it is a "mom and pop" store on the corner or a large retailer like Target, we don't think twice when we go to these stores to purchase groceries, toys, or clothing. When we go to the store, we expect that milk and the Barbie dolls are on the shelf.

We also want to ensure that goods Made in America—including manufacturing and agriculture—are able to be shipped efficiently across our nation's highways and rail to our ports for export, which is crucial to our nation's continued economic success.

Ultimately, in MAP–21—our last surface transportation bill—we were successful in including provisions to start the conversation about developing a national freight transportation network.

The problem is that today there are not enough funds to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent—let alone make the necessary investment to modernize and increase the efficiency of our freight network. That will not keep our economy global competitive as we continue progressing through the 21st Century.

For example, goods that leave the Port of Los Angeles take 48 hours to arrive in Chicago and takes 30 hours to travel across the city. This bottleneck is unacceptable and means higher costs for consumers, more congestion, more pollution, and less jobs. The bottom line is that we need to fund our nation's freight network.

If we fail to fund our ports, we will lose our competitive edge and add costs to our goods. A USDOT report, Freight Transportation: Improvements and the Economy, estimates the cost of carrying freight on the highway system at between $25 and $200 an hour. Unexpected delays can increase the cost of transporting goods by 50 to 250 percent.

To keep our nation's freight network globally competitive, I am introducing the National Freight Network Trust Fund Act of 2015, which would create a dedicated source of funding for essential projects to improve and modernize our freight network at no new cost to the public.

This legislation would create a National Freight Network Trust Fund and deposit 5% of all import duties collected by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at Ports of Entry into the Fund to be spent only on freight transportation. Neither businesses nor taxpayers would incur any new cost because it uses a small percentage of funds our CBP officials already are collecting at the border as freight enters our nation.

Five percent of import duties amounts to roughly $2 billion in the Trust Fund every year at our current rate of imports, a level that would help address the nation's infrastructure funding deficit and allow us to make essential investments in the freight network.

This legislation would create the National Freight Network Trust Fund as an off-budget trust fund to only serve the roads of the National Freight Network and those roads and rail that connect the Network to Ports of Entry.

The legislation would also direct the Secretary of Transportation to work in accordance with the National Freight Strategic Plan to identify improvements to the National Freight Network, on-dock rail, and roads and rail that connect the Network to Ports of Entry, which show the greatest need in providing for the movement of freight and goods across the United States. It would also provide grants at the Secretary's discretion to State, regional and local transportation authorities to make freight network improvements.

This bill will infuse billions back into the economy every year, help create good paying American jobs and keep our nation's ports strong and globally competitive.

This is a win for our ports and for our nation's economy. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

RECOGNIZING STELLA M. KOCH ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend my good friend, Stella M. Koch, on the occasion of her retirement after a distinguished career with the Audubon Naturalist Society, where she led conservation and environmental education and protection efforts throughout Northern Virginia and the Commonwealth. Safeguarding our natural environment has been more than a profession for Stella, it's been her passion. She truly embodies the famous epithet of the late Connecticut Governor Ella Grasso, "bloom where you're planted."

Stella's environmental advocacy took root in the classroom, when she taught biology and was the science department chair at the Edmund Burke School in Washington, D.C., from 1977 to 1991. A fortuitous call to the Audubon Naturalist Society to inquire about working with its membership on Chesapeake Bay and land conservation issues ultimately led to her being hired by ANS to join its Virginia conservation staff, where she has spent the past 24 years. Through her professional duties and personal engagement in multiple community organizations, Stella has played a vital role in virtually every major environmental initiative in Northern Virginia for the past quarter century.

I was pleased to be among the first to recruit Stella into our effort more than 20 years ago, and she has been a wonderful partner ever since. At the time, I was president of the Fairfax Federation of Citizen's Associations and convinced Stella to become the Federation's Environmental Chair. She wasted no time, diving into weighty issues during her two-year tenure, including helping to prevent a planned roadway from splitting Huntley Meadows Park in southern Fairfax and blocking a private effort to bring public sewer service and new development to Mason Neck, an environmentally sensitive area along the Potomac most notable for its National Wildlife Refuge that was created to protect local bald eagles.

During this time she was instrumental in establishing the Virginia Environmental Network, and its successor the Virginia Conservation Network, which coordinated the activities of local and regional environmental groups across the Commonwealth. Through the Audubon Naturalist Society and her local civic engagement, Stella successfully pushed back on the proposed Disney theme park in Haymarket. Building on the public interest in the region's growth generated by that experience, the environmental community launched an effort that led to the creation of the Coalition for Smarter Growth to focus on educating people and community leaders about the importance and value in building more livable communities with mass transit connections and walkability.

Stella was first appointed to serve on the County's Environmental Quality Advisory Committee in 1996. She has since been reappointed by me and my successor as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Sharon Bulova. Stella has served as chairman of the Committee for several years, and she also serves as one of the County's appointees to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. Under Stella's leadership, the Committee has become an influential voice, filing an annual report with the Board of Supervisors that serves as the blueprint for most local efforts to improve and protect our natural environment—addressing air quality; climate change; ecological resources; energy efficiency; hazardous materials; land use and transportation; noise, light, and visible pollution; solid waste; water resources; and wildlife. It has become a model nationwide.

Stella was instrumental in crafting Fairfax County's 20-year Environmental Agenda, the first such long-range vision ever adopted by the County, addressing all facets of the environment from improving air quality to preserving more of the county's green spaces to providing recreational options for residents. As a result of that plan, the County's Environmental Improvement Program won its first Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties, and we built on that success with the Cool Counties initiative, a national effort to help local governments reduce

their carbon footprint. Stella also served as one of my appointees to the Tysons Land Use Task Force, a multi-year effort to re-envision the National Capital Region's second largest economic center as a transit-oriented, walkable, green city served by the new Silver Line rather than a collection of disjointed office parks reachable only by automobile. Today, thanks to the leadership of Stella and so many others, that vision is becoming a reality.

In addition to her work in our local community, Stella works on regional water quality issues. She has served on the Boards of the Center for Watershed Protection and the Potomac River Keeper, and as a Virginia appointee to the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Chesapeake Bay Council. Stella also is a founding member of the Fairfax League of Conservation Voters, which assesses the environmental agendas and records of candidates for local public office for endorsement. Her many accomplishments were recognized by the National Association of Biology Teachers' Outstanding Biology Teacher Award in 1989, the Virginia Wildlife Federation's Water Conservationist of the Year award in 1992, and the Fairfax County Park Authority's Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award, which was named for our late friend and fellow champion for the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Stella Koch on her retirement and thanking her for many years of dedicated and selfless service. Thankfully, she is only retiring from her professional duties. In fact, she'll now have even more time to continue sharing her expertise and advocating for our environmental agenda. Much like the saplings, stream restoration, conservation easements, and many other projects in which she has had a hand, our community will continue to benefit from Stella's handiwork for generations to come. On behalf of a truly grateful community, I wish her all the best in this semi-retirement.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN KELLIHER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Temecula, California are exceptional. Temecula has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. John Kelliher is one of such individual. On February 21, 2015, John will be honored at the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Gala where he will receive the Citizen of the Year award.

Grapeline Wine Tours was founded and introduced in Temecula, California by John and his wife, Kim, in June of 2002. The company's reach now spans through Santa Barbara County and Paso Robles. Prior to their inception, Temecula did not offer many options regarding wine tour operators. Grapeline Wine Tours has now grown to become the largest wine tour operator in Southern and Central California, shuttling over 20,000 visitors through the beautiful vineyards of Temecula. John's Grapeline venture has become so successful, the business has announced their upcoming expansion to Northern California, encompassing wine regions in Sonoma.

Over the past ten years, Temecula has now become even more of a destination for travel and tourism as over hundreds of thousands come to visit the region. Much of this can be accredited to promising businesses such as Grapeline Wine Tours that encourage fun-filled experiences in Southwest County.

In the course of Grapeline Wine Tour's progression, John has won a variety of awards and accolades for its success. The business and its founders have won awards including the 2005 Sterling Business of the Year from the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Hospitality Award and Tourism Professional of the Year Award from the Temecula Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau in 2013. With unmatched depth and experience, Grapeline Wine Tours is sure to be successful in their future endeavors throughout California.

John Kelliher's tireless passion for the Southwest County has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Temecula, California. I am proud to call John a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he receives the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DANE A. MILLER

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Dr. Dane A. Miller, a pioneer in his field and a remarkable Hoosier.

Dane was a loving and devoted husband to his wife of 48 years, Mary Louise. Respected and beloved by his colleagues, Dane revolutionized the orthopedic industry when he co-founded Biomet. There, he served as the company's CEO for 29 years, increasing the number of Biomet employees from just eight to more than 6,000 during his tenure. In his spare time, Dane loved helping others and was able to give back to his community by serving both as Director of Kosciusko Community Hospital and as a member of the President's Council for Grace College and Seminary.

Dane Miller was also my friend, and I am grateful for his support of my career. Like so many other elected leaders in Indiana over the last several decades, I could always count on Dane for wise counsel and a straight answer. He will be missed.

Today, it is my privilege to honor the life of Dane A. Miller. My thoughts and prayers go out to Dane's family, and may God comfort those he left behind with His peace and strength.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF GARLAND LEE THOMPSON, SR., FOUNDER OF THE FRANK SILVERA WRITERS' WORKSHOP

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of Garland Lee Thompson, Sr., a New York theatre producer, writer, director, actor, and co-founder and Executive Director of the Frank Silvera Writers' Workshop. Garland Lee Thompson, Sr. will be memorialized and honored in a Three Act Performance Tribute on Saturday, February 14, 2015, which would have been his 77th Birthday. Garland was recently honored at the ''Harlem is . . . Theater'' Exhibition at The Interchurch Center in New York, that was on view through January 6, 2015.

Act 1: At 11:00 a.m., New York's theatre and film elite will gather at St. James Presbyterian Church at 409 West 141st Street on St. Nicholas Avenue in Harlem, New York for a memorial tribute in remembrance of Garland Lee Thompson, Sr.

Act 2: At 3:00 p.m., Garland Thompson, Jr. and Sean C. Turner will host an afternoon of readings, poetry, and performances, concluding with a birthday celebration and reception in Garland's honor at the Johnson Theater for the New City, located at 155 First Avenue, between 9th and 10th Streets.

Act 3: The Final Act will take place on Thursday, August 6, 2015 at Harlem's historic National Black Theatre, located at 2031 5th Avenue and Dr. Barbara Ann Teer Way, where Garland created the Readers Theatre Series at the prestigious National Black Theatre Festival.

Born on February 14, 1938 in Muskogee, Oklahoma, Garland Lee Thompson, Sr., passed on November 18, 2014. He was 76 years old. He is survived by his two children, Alexandria Dionne and Garland Lee Thompson, Jr.; his two grandchildren, Colson Oliver and Hazel Duncan; his sisters Shirley Thompson and Addie Jean Haynes; his brother, Jim Thompson; his nephews, Dr. Bryan Haynes and Oscar Haynes Jr.; his niece Karen Haynes; and a host of other cousins and relatives.

Garland is best known to television audiences as Transporter Technician Ensign Wilson on the classic original series, ''Star Trek.'' He also appeared in several other popular television series, including ''Bewitched'' and ''Perry Mason.''

Garland co-founded the Frank Silvera Writers' Workshop in 1973, along with famed actor/director Morgan Freeman, director/actress Billie Allen Henderson, and journalist Clayton Riley, as a living memorial to the life, and work of his mentor, the late actor, director, teacher and producer, Frank Silvera. Under Garland's reputation, for the past 41 years, the Writers' Workshop built a prestigious reputation as a nationally and internationally renowned playwright's development theater for emerging, featured and established writers and artists of color from all over the world. With the workshop, Garland passed on decades of wisdom to rising and established artists of all walks of life. Members of the

workshop included the late Ruby Dee, poet Mari Evans, scholar Larry Neal, and playwright Ntozake Shange.

Mr. Speaker, Garland Lee Thompson, Sr. was also a founding member of the Harlem Arts Alliance, Incorporated and served on the Board of Directors. It should also be noted that while Garland did not land many large roles, his greatest impact may have been behind the scenes, where he worked to pass on his gifts to other budding playwrights. Garland's genius and generosity will be greatly missed by all of us. The theater community has lost a colleague, friend, and dedicated actor and producer. I ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring the theatrical life and legacy of Mr. Garland Lee Thompson, Sr.

25 YEARS YOUNG

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Austin Parkway Elementary School for celebrating its 25th anniversary on Tuesday, January 27th. The faculty, interscholastic programs, and volunteer network of Austin Parkway Elementary are vital to providing a quality education for the students.

As Austin Parkway Elementary celebrates 25 years of excellence, the community joined faculty and students in recognizing past principals. Their contributions have helped cultivate generations of leaders and their honorable service laid the groundwork for the strong educational foundation this school represents.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Austin Parkway Elementary School on celebrating 25 years of quality education for the community. We look forward to its continued success.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LINCOLN PENNY

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our 16th President Abraham Lincoln and his first and most enduring monument, the United States penny. Just three years after adoption of the U.S. Constitution, Congress passed The Coinage Act in 1792 and established the U.S. Mint. In 1793, the first federal building constructed in the then-capital city of Philadelphia, minted the first circulating coins, 11,178 copper cents. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that the Mint was and remains in my own district and that it continues to produce high quality products for the American people. And true to its Philadelphia roots, the first pennies were designed by one of our town's most famous sons, Benjamin Franklin.

In 1909, after several design and composition changes, the penny's design was changed to honor President Lincoln, the first real person to appear on an American coin. The Lincoln penny is the longest used design of any American coin, and its release was timed to honor his 100th birthday.

The Lincoln penny was the first U.S. coin to carry the motto ''In God We Trust,'' and it preceded by five years the construction of the Lincoln Memorial. For generations of Americans, the penny has served as a memorial to the first President assassinated in office, as well as a reminder of the brutal Civil War that threatened to end the American experiment, and the liberation of the enslaved African.

Mr. Speaker, the penny is the most common and most highly circulated coin in the United States. 62 percent of the 11.2 billion new coins put into circulation by the U.S. Mint in fiscal year 2013 were pennies. The Mint has shipped 90 billion new pennies since 2000. We can clearly see that demand for the penny remains high and we need to keep minting it.

I am proud that my own City of Philadelphia was the first and longest running producer of the penny. As we celebrate President Lincoln's 206th birthday, I am pleased to honor him, and the coin that commemorates his place in our history.

CONGRATULATING JAY OSBORNE, NIXA HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL COACH, ON HIS MILESTONE 500TH WIN

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Coach Jay Osborne, head coach of the Nixa High School's men's basketball program, on his 500th career win.

Coach Osborne reached this impressive feat of 500 wins in his 23rd season at Nixa High School, a public school located in Nixa, Missouri, right outside of Springfield. With this win, Coach Osborne is now one of only 54 Missouri basketball coaches to reach 500 wins.

Through his tenure as head coach, Coach Osborne's teams have reached one state championship title in 1999, eight district championships, and won seven Blue and Gold Tournaments. On top of this impressive record, Coach Osborne has led his teams into three state final four appearances.

Coach Osborne's exemplary devotion to coaching is a testament of his hard work and dedication to the Nixa High School students, both on and off the court. The Nixa community is justifiably proud of Coach Osborne and the Nixa basketball program. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on his well-deserved victories.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF CONGRESSMAN BOB McEWEN

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a lawmaker who understood the deep values held by the great people living in the North County, represented them with integrity, and had the heart of a true public servant. Congressman Bob McEwen passed away in 1995, but it is appropriate to reflect back on a life of service as it has been two decades since his passing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a brief profile of him written by a friend of mine, Cary Brick. Cary was Congressman McEwen's Chief of Staff and remained close to him after his retirement in 1981. Cary's tribute appears in the January 2015 issue of Thousand Islands Life Magazine.

''When Rep. Elise Stefanik raised her right hand in Washington this month, to be sworn in as the North Country's Representative in Washington, she garnered a lot of national media attention as the youngest woman ever elected to Congress.

Exactly a half century earlier, twenty years before she was born, a 45-year-old veteran New York State Republican legislator from Ogdensburg, took the same oath. One of his Congressional friends from the Great Lakes once referred to him as ''The St. Lawrence Congressman.''

Robert Cameron McEwen, with strong family roots in New York's St. Lawrence County, went on to represent the Congressional district, bordered by the Thousand Islands and Lake Ontario on the West and Lake Champlain on the East, from 1965 until his retirement, in 1981.

Living on the U.S. shore of the St. Lawrence River, he said ''almost near enough to see the color of the eyes of the passing captains and pilots,'' he was the first North Country Congressman with such a strong personal tie to the St. Lawrence and the Thousand Islands.

The United States Customs House in Ogdensburg, the oldest continually occupied Federal building in America, bears his name as a tribute to his public service.

I had the privilege of serving on his Congressional staff from 1969 until his retirement in January of 1981—first as his Press Secretary, later as his Special Assistant and finally as his Executive Assistant.

He never missed an opportunity to promote the island region. In fact, one of his Congressional colleagues once told me ''When I saw Bob McEwen I knew I was going to hear a pep talk about either the (Thousand Islands) or the Seaway.''

Best Friends Forever:

''Bob'' McEwen's Congress was unlike today's; its members debated the issues of the day with gusto, but at sundown they were friends sharing collegiality, respect and friendship. Two immediate lighthearted instances come to mind.

The first was his hosting of his fellow House member, Rep. Geraldine Ferraro, a downstate Democrat (who later was the Vice Presidential candidate on the 1984 Mondale/Ferraro ticket) through what seemed like ocean seas on a small Coast Guard vessel, from Wellesley Island to Morristown. It was a cold, Fall day. All of us onboard were green at the gills and holding our stomachs when we finally docked. The object was to demonstrate to the influential Democrat, the dangers of winter navigation on the river, a red-hot issue at the time. It worked: she joined him in opposition to the idea. On the flight back to Washington she said ''OK, Bob, you've made your point!''

The two were political opposites in both party and political philosophy, but they were friends forever.

The second was his hosting of a senior Southern State Democrat, whose support he needed for legislation, to benefit the eventual expansion of Fort Drum. After the tour of the installation near Watertown, the influential colleague and his wife settled in for a McEwen-arranged weekend at a cottage in the shadow of the Thousand Islands Bridge.

Over the course of their stay, the guests were treated to a private boat tour of the islands, a traditional shore dinner, a visit to Fort Henry at Kingston and several informal ''stop-by'' visits from local movers and shakers, from both political parties. If that wasn't enough, knowing of his interest in antique firearms, a visit to Ozzie Steele's gun shop in Clayton resulted in the visitor's strong interest in an antique handgun on display. They couldn't agree on a price, however, much to the dismay of Bob McEwen.

That sale eventually took place when unbeknownst to the ''good 'ol boy' '' from the South, Bob (quietly) paid Ozzie the difference. Everybody was a winner in that transaction, especially the North Country, when the Southerner became a strong backer of Fort Drum expansion.

That weekend resulted in another ''forever'' friendship.

A McEwen Fish Story:

He proudly wore a belt buckle depicting a St. Lawrence Muskie.

He caught his first Muskie on an Election Day in the 70s; he displayed it in his Washington office. I jokingly named it after his unsuccessful Congressional challenger of the day. He proudly invited his friends to see it and welcomed the opportunity to describe its fight to stay in the river. It now hangs in my home as a remembrance of his sense of humor and his competitive nature—two requisites for success in Congress.

At a White House reception some time later, President Richard Nixon commented on the buckle and told stories of his own fishing trips to the St. Lawrence, in the months following his 1960 defeat by JFK.

That led to six frozen McEwen Muskie steaks being shipped by air, from St. Lawrence County to the Congressional office, for promised delivery to the President.

My delivery of the wrapped-in-dry-ice steaks to the White House, at the Congressman's behest, certainly caught the attention of the Secret Service, but that's a story for another time.

A Working Retirement:

Bob McEwen returned to his native North Country upon his retirement, in January, 1981. That retirement didn't last too long. President Reagan called him back to work by naming him as Chair of the U.S. section of the International Joint Commission, a State Department entity dealing with American-Canadian border issues. No stranger to those matters, he had been an active member of the U.S./Canada Inter-Parliamentary Group, a low-key association of American Congressmen and Canadian Parliamentarians, who met regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern. He had also been a founder of the Great Lakes Conference of Congressmen, which met in the Capitol to share input on maritime, trade, environmental and other matters affecting the Lakes regions.

Back Home:

Bob McEwen died in 1995. In delivering his eulogy in Ogdensburg, I said: ''Bob knew that when the time came for his final roll call vote, as a veteran and member of the House of Representatives, he could be interred beside some of our nation's greatest heroes, statesmen (and) Supreme Court Justices . . . in Arlington National Cemetery. . . . He knew he was entitled to an interment with pomp and circumstance. But Bob was a man of the North Country. He wanted it simple. He wanted it here.''

The ''St. Lawrence Congressman'' is buried in Ogdensburg—not too far from the shore of the river he called home.''

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few minutes to share the memory of Congressman Bob McEwen. I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING TALAN LANG

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Talan Lang. Talan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 692, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Talan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Talan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Talan has become a member of the Order of the Arrow and the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, while also serving his troop as Patrol Leader. Talan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Talan picked up more than 100 bags of trash from the intersection of Interstate 70 and Adams Dairy Parkway in Blue Springs, Missouri. Talan also planted native grasses to beautify the intersection.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Talan Lang for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of Ashton B. Carter, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Defense.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S947–S1012

Measures Introduced: Sixty bills and ten resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 470–529, and S. Res. 73–82. **Pages S981–84**

Measures Reported:

H.R. 22, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. (S. Rept. No. 114–3)

S. Res. 73, authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017. **Page S981**

Measures Passed:

Authorizing Expenditures by Committees: Senate agreed to S. Res. 73, authorizing expenditures by committees of the Senate for the periods March 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015, October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016, and October 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017. **Page S1010**

Calling for the Release of Ukrainian Fighter Pilot Nadiya Savchenko: Committee on Foreign Relations was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 52, calling for the release of Ukrainian fighter pilot Nadiya Savchenko, who was captured by Russian forces in Eastern Ukraine and has been held illegally in a Russian prison since July 2014, and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S1010–11**

McConnell (for Cardin) Amendment No. 251, in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S1010–11**

Relative to the Death of Jerry Tarkanian: Senate agreed to S. Res. 78, relative to the death of Jerry Tarkanian, former head basketball coach of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. **Page S1011**

Honoring Dean Edwards Smith: Senate agreed to S. Res. 79, honoring Dean Edwards Smith, former head coach for the men's basketball team for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. **Page S1011**

Lunar New Year: Senate agreed to S. Res. 80, recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Lunar New Year. **Page S1011**

Human Trafficking: Senate agreed to S. Res. 81, expressing the sense of the Senate that children trafficked for sex in the United States should not be treated or regarded as child prostitutes because there is no such thing as a "child prostitute", only children who are victims or survivors of rape and sex trafficking. **Page S1011**

Commending Kathleen Alvarez Tritak: Senate agreed to S. Res. 82, commending Kathleen Alvarez Tritak on her service to the United States Senate. **Page S1011**

Measures Considered:

Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 240, making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015. **Pages S947–49, S967**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, and pursuant to the unanimous-consent agreement of Thursday, February 12, 2015, a vote on cloture will occur at 5:30 p.m., on Monday, February 23, 2015. **Page S968**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 4:30 p.m., on Monday, February 23,

2015, Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Page S967**

Appointments:

Senate National Security Working Group: The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 64, adopted March 5, 2013, appointed the following Senators as members of the Senate National Security Working Group for the 114th Congress:

Senator Feinstein (Democratic Administrative Co-Chairman), Senator Mikulski (Democratic Co-Chairman), Senator Reed (Democratic Co-Chairman), Senator Menendez (Democratic Co-Chairman), Senator Durbin, Senator Nelson, Senator Cardin, Senator Casey, and Senator Heitkamp. **Page S1011**

Commission on Care: The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 113–146, appointed the following individuals to serve as members of the Commission on Care:

Dr. Ikram Khan of Nevada, Phillip Longman of the District of Columbia, and Dr. Marshall Webster of Pennsylvania. **Page S1011**

Signing Authority—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that during this adjournment of the Senate, running until February 23, 2015, the Majority Leader, and the junior Senator from Missouri, be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions. **Page S1011**

Authorizing Leadership To Make Appointments—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that, notwithstanding the upcoming adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President Pro Tempore, and the Majority and Minority Leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate. **Page S1011**

Pro Forma Sessions—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that when the Senate adjourn, it convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Monday, February 16, 2015 at 4:45 p.m., and Thursday, February 19, 2015, at 10 a.m.; and that the Senate adjourn on Thursday, February 19, 2015, until 3 p.m., on Monday, February 23, 2015. **Pages S1011–12**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 93 yeas to 5 nays (Vote No. EX. 56), Ashton B. Carter, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Defense. **Pages S955–67, S1012**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Brodi L. Fontenot, of Louisiana, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of the Treasury.

Deborah Willis, of New York, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2020.

Ann Elizabeth Dunkin, of California, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Jane Toshiko Nishida, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Seth B. Carpenter, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Charles C. Adams, Jr., of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Finland.

Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, of the District of Columbia, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, of the District of Columbia, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Mary Catherine Phee, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan.

David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2018.

6 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

1 Army nomination in the rank of general.

11 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Page S1012

Messages from the House: **Page S981**

Measures Referred: **Page S981**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S981**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S984–85**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Page S985–S1009**

Additional Statements: **Pages S980–81**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1009–10**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1010**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1010**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—56) **Page S967**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:34 p.m., until 4:45 p.m. on Monday, February 16, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on pages S1011–12.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

AFGHANISTAN

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the situation in Afghanistan, after receiving testimony from General John F. Campbell, USA, Commander, Resolute Support Mission, and Commander, United States Forces Afghanistan.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 165, to extend and enhance prohibitions and limitations with respect to the transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, with amendments.

REGULATORY RELIEF FOR COMMUNITY BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine regulatory relief for community banks and credit unions, including S. 423, to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement, after receiving testimony from R. Daniel Blanton, Southeastern Bank Financial Corporation and Georgia Bank and Trust, Augusta, on behalf of the American Bankers Association; Wally Murray, Greater Nevada Credit Union, Carson City, on behalf of the Credit Union National Association; John Buhrmaster, First National Bank of Scotia, Scotia, New York, on behalf of the Independent Community Bankers of America; Ed Templeton, SRP Federal Credit Union, North Augusta, South Carolina, on behalf of the National Association of Federal Credit Unions; and Michael D. Calhoun, Center for Responsible Lending, Durham, North Carolina.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security: Senators Ayotte (Chair), Wicker, Blunt, Rubio, Cruz, Fischer, Moran, Sullivan, Johnson, Heller, Gardner, Cantwell, Klobuchar, Blumenthal, Schatz, Markey, Booker, Udall, Manchin, and Peters.

Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet: Senators Wicker (Chair), Blunt, Rubio, Ayotte, Cruz, Fischer, Moran, Sullivan, Johnson, Heller, Gardner, Daines, Schatz, Cantwell, McCaskill, Klobuchar, Blumenthal, Markey, Booker, Udall, Manchin, and Peters.

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security: Senators Moran (Chair), Blunt, Cruz, Fischer, Heller, Gardner, Daines, Blumenthal, McCaskill, Klobuchar, Markey, Booker, and Udall.

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard: Senators Rubio (Chair), Wicker, Ayotte, Cruz, Sullivan, Johnson, Peters, Cantwell, Blumenthal, Markey, and Schatz.

Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness: Senators Cruz (Chair), Rubio, Moran, Sullivan, Gardner, Daines, Udall, Markey, Booker, Peters, and Schatz.

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security: Senators Fischer (Chair), Wicker, Blunt, Ayotte, Moran, Sullivan, Johnson, Heller, Daines, Booker, Cantwell, McCaskill, Klobuchar, Blumenthal, Schatz, Markey, and Udall.

Senators Thune and Nelson are ex officio members of all subcommittees.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee adopted its rules of procedure for the 114th Congress.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Energy: Senators Risch (Chair), Flake, Daines, Cassidy, Gardner, Hoeven, Alexander, Portman, Capito, Manchin, Sanders, Stabenow, Franken, Heinrich, Hirono, King, and Warren.

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining: Senators Barrasso (Chair), Capito, Risch, Lee, Daines, Cassidy, Gardner, Hoeven, Flake, Alexander, Wyden, Stabenow, Franken, Manchin, Heinrich, Hirono, and Warren.

Subcommittee on National Parks: Senators Cassidy (Chair), Portman, Barrasso, Alexander, Lee, Hoeven, Capito, Heinrich, Wyden, Sanders, Stabenow, King, and Warren.

Subcommittee on Water and Power: Senators Lee (Chair), Flake, Barrasso, Risch, Daines, Gardner, Portman, Hirono, Wyden, Sanders, Franken, Manchin, and King.

Senators Murkowski and Cantwell are ex officio members of all subcommittees.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY BUDGET

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Energy, after receiving testimony from Ernest Moniz, Secretary of Energy.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Daniel Henry Marti, of Virginia, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Rules and Administration: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution (S. Res. 73) authorizing the expenditures by committees of the Senate for March 1, 2015 through February 28, 2017.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 55 public bills, H.R. 907–961; and 4 resolutions, H.J. Res. 32; and H. Res. 108–110, were introduced. **Pages H1032–35**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1037–38**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Jenkins (WV) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H985**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:33 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H989**

Recess: The House recessed at 1:32 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H1000**

Fighting Hunger Incentive Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 644, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory, by a yea-and-nay vote of 279 yeas to 137 nays, Roll No. 80. **Pages H1001–17**

Rejected the Neal motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 168 yeas to 245 nays, Roll No. 79. **Pages H1014–16**

Pursuant to the rule, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–5 shall be considered as adopted. **Page H1002**

H. Res. 101, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 644) and (H.R. 636), was agreed to by a recorded vote of 233 ayes to 163 noes, Roll No. 78, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 232 yeas to 164 nays, Roll No. 77. **Pages H993–1001**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on pages H993 and H1001.

Senate Referrals: S. 295 was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. **Page H1031**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1000, H1001, H1016, and H1016–17. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Committee Meetings

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a business meeting to consider the Budget Views and Estimates Letter of the Committee on Agriculture for the agencies and programs under jurisdiction of the Committee for FY 2016 and other organizational matters. The committee's views and estimates were adopted. The committee also amended its rules package.

REVIEW OF THE 2015 AGENDA FOR THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing to review the 2015 Agenda for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Testimony was heard from Timothy Massad, Chairman, Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

APPROPRIATIONS—BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on the Bureau of Reclamation budget. Testimony was heard from Estevan R. Lopez, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation.

UPDATE ON DETAINEE TRANSFERS FROM GTMO

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Update on Detainee Transfers from GTMO''. Testimony was heard from Paul Lewis, Special Envoy for the Closure of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility, Department of Defense; and Charles Trumbull, Acting Special Envoy for Guantanamo Closure, Department of State. A portion of the hearing was closed.

HOW EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AFFECTS STUDENT PRIVACY

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education held a hearing entitled ''How Emerging Technology Affects Student Privacy''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 734, the ''Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act of 2015''; H.R. 639, the ''Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act''; H.R. 471, the ''Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2015''; H.R. 647, the ''Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act''; H.R. 648, the ''Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act''; and H.R. 212, the ''Drinking Water Protection Act''. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 734, H.R. 471, H.R. 647, and H.R. 648. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 212 and H.R. 639.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Ethics: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 114th Congress. The committee adopted its rules of procedure and oversight plan for the 114th Congress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee began a business meeting to adopt the committee's views and estimates on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

THE GROWING STRATEGIC THREAT OF ISIS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Growing Strategic Threat of ISIS''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AZERBAIJAN: U.S. ENERGY, SECURITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS INTERESTS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats held a hearing entitled ''Azerbaijan: U.S. Energy, Security, and Human Rights Interests''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE SYRIAN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS: FOUR YEARS LATER AND NO END IN SIGHT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa; Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, held a joint hearing entitled ''The Syrian Humanitarian Crisis: Four Years Later and No End in Sight''. Testimony was heard from Kelly Tallman Clements, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Department of State; and Thomas Staal, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, U.S. Agency for International Development.

EMERGING THREATS AND TECHNOLOGIES TO PROTECT THE HOMELAND

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies held a hearing entitled ''Emerging Threats and Technologies to Protect the Homeland''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Homeland Security officials: Andy Ozment, Assistant Secretary, Office of Cybersecurity and Communications, National Protection and Programs Directorate; Huban Gowadia, Director, Domestic Nuclear Detection Office; Joseph Martin, Acting Director, Homeland Security Enterprise and First Responders Group, Science and Technology Directorate; and William Noonan, Deputy Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Investigative Division, Secret Service; and William Painter, Government and Finance Division, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a business meeting to adopt the committee's oversight plan for the 114th Congress. The committee adopted its oversight plan.

CONSUMERS SHORTCHANGED? OVERSIGHT OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S MORTGAGE LENDING SETTLEMENTS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law held a hearing entitled ''Consumers Shortchanged? Oversight of the Justice Department's Mortgage Lending Settlements''. Testimony was heard from Geoffrey Graber, Deputy Associate Attorney General and Director, Residential Mortgage-Backed Securities Working Group of the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force, Department of Justice; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING RECENT SUPREME COURT CASES IN THE PATENT ARENA

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet held a hearing entitled ''Examining Recent Supreme Court Cases in the Patent Arena''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. SECRET SERVICE: IDENTIFYING STEPS TO RESTORE THE PROTECTIVE AGENCY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Secret Service: Identifying Steps to Restore the Protective Agency''. Testimony was heard from Thomas J. Perrelli, Secret Service Protective Mission Panel; Mark Filip, Secret Service Protective Mission Panel; Danielle C. Gray, Secret Service Protective Mission Panel; and Joseph W. Hagin, Secret Service Protective Mission Panel.

THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ACTIONS ON IMMIGRATION AND THEIR IMPACT ON FEDERAL AND STATE ELECTIONS

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, held a joint hearing entitled, ''The President's Executive Actions on Immigration and Their Impact on Federal and State Elections''. Testimony was heard from Kris W. Kobach, Kansas Secretary of State; Jon A. Husted, Ohio Secretary of State; Matthew Dunlap, Maine Secretary of State; and a public witness.

BRIDGING THE GAP: AMERICA'S WEATHER SATELLITES AND WEATHER FORECASTING

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Environment; and Subcommittee on Oversight, held a joint hearing entitled ''Bridging the Gap: America's Weather Satellites and Weather Forecasting''. Testimony was heard from David Powner, Director, Information Technology Management Issues, Government Accountability Office; Stephen Volz, Assistant Administrator, National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Steven Clarke, Director, Joint Agency Satellite Division, National Aeronautics and Space Administration; Alexander MacDonald, Director, Earth System Research Laboratory, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Chief Science Advisor, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and John Murphy, Director, Office of Science and Technology, National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

CAN AMERICANS TRUST THE PRIVACY AND SECURITY OF THEIR INFORMATION ON HEALTHCARE.GOV?

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Research and Technology; and Subcommittee on Oversight, held a joint hearing entitled ''Can Americans Trust the Privacy and Security of their Information on HealthCare.gov?''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING; CONTRACTING AND THE INDUSTRIAL BASE

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 114th Congress and a hearing entitled ''Contracting and the Industrial Base''. The committee adopted its rules and procedures, oversight plan, and views and estimates. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 749, the ''Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015''; the committee's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Views and Estimates; General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions. The committee's views and estimates and General Services Administration Capital Investment and Leasing Program Resolutions were approved. H.R. 749 was ordered reported, without amendment.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 280, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup bonuses and awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 294, the ''Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act''; H.R. 216, the ''Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Planning Reform Act of 2015''; and H.R. 189, the ''Servicemember Foreclosure Protections Extension Act of 2015''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 280, H.R.

294, and H.R. 216. The following bill was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 189.

A REVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET REQUEST FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S VETERAN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing entitled ''A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request for the Department of Labor's Veteran Employment and Training Service''. Testimony was heard from Teresa W. Gerton, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, Department of Labor; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Ways and Means: Full Committee held a markup on the committee's Views and Estimates on the Fiscal Year 2016 Federal Budget; H.R. 529, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve 529 plans; H.R. 622, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the deduction of State and local general sales taxes; and H.R. 880, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to simplify and make permanent the research credit. The committee's views and estimates were ordered reported. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 529, H.R. 622, and H.R. 880.

BUSINESS MEETING

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a business meeting to consider member access requests and views and estimates. Eight access requests were granted, and the committee adopted its views and estimates. This meeting was closed.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on the Department of Agriculture, Office of the Inspector General budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''What Is the State of Islamic Extremism: Key Trends, Challenges, and Implications for U.S. Policy'', 9 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, meeting to adopt the committee's views and estimates on the budget for fiscal year 2016, 9:20 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act'', 9:30 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Transportation and Public Assets; Subcommittee on Government Operations, joint hearing entitled ''D.C. Metro: Is There a Safety Gap?'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

4:45 p.m., Monday, February 16

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Friday, February 13

House Chamber

Program for Friday: Consideration of H.R. 636—America's Small Business Tax Relief Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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