House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAN NEWHOUSE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

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

Loving God, You are compassionate and merciful. We give You thanks for giving us another day.

This morning, the House welcomes the Prime Minister of Israel. May He find a welcome here, and may the partnership of our two countries continue into a future of mutual respect and security among the community of nations.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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


The Speaker, House of Representatives, pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, February 26, 2015, the House stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly, (at 10 o’clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed. The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. MCSALLY led the Pledge of Allegiance.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The Speaker announces that when the two Houses meet in joint meeting to hear an address by His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to his left and right will be open.

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,

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

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 March 3, 2015 at 9:32 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 431.

Appointments:
Election Assistance Board of Advisors.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,
KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces that when the two Houses meet in joint meeting to hear an address by His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint meeting by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, February 26, 2015, the House stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly, (at 10 o’clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.
JOINT MEETING TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY BINYAMIN NETANYAHU, PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL

During the recess, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 10 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.

The first of the Who's Who of the House, Acting Sergeant at Arms, Ms. Kathleen Joyce, announced the President pro tempore and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the President pro tempore taking the chair at the left of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The joint meeting will come to order.

The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, into the Chamber:

The gentleman from California (Mr. McCARTHY);

The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE);

The gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMorris ROGERS);

The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN);

The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MORRISON);

The gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS);

The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX);

The gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE);

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN);

The gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN);

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD);

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ISAACSON);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL);

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER);

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS);

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH);

The gentleman from California (Mr. SHEPARD);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARRI)

and

The gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE);

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO);

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER);

The Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER);

The Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ);

The Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN);

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Hersey Kyota, the Ambassador of the Republic of Palau.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

At 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Paul D. Irving, announced His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel.

The Prime Minister of Israel, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Speaker's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

Prime Minister NETANYAHU. Thank you, Speaker of the House John Boehner, Speaker of the House John Boehner, President Pro Temp Senator ORRIN HATCH, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, House Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI, and House Majority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY.

I also want to acknowledge Senator Harry Reid, President Pro Tem Senator ORRIN HATCH, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, House Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI, and House Majority Leader KEVIN MCCARTHY.

I also want to acknowledge Senator and Democratic Leader, HARRY REID.

HARRY, it is good to see you back on your feet. I guess it is true what they say, you can't keep a good man down.

My fellow Americans, I am humbled by the opportunity to speak for a third time before the most important legislative body in the world, the U.S. Congress. I want to thank you all for being here today.

I know that my speech has been the subject of much controversy. I deeply regret that some perceive my being here as political. That was never my intention.

I want to thank you, Democrats and Republicans, for your common support for Israel year after year, decade after decade. I know that no matter on which side of the aisle you sit, you stand with Israel.

The remarkable alliance between Israel and the United States has always been above politics. It must always remain above politics because America and Israel, we share a common destiny, the destiny of promised lands that cherish freedom and offer hope.

Israel is grateful for the support of America's people and of America's Presidents, from Harry Truman to Barack Obama.

We appreciate all that President Obama has done for Israel. Now, some of that is widely known, like strengthening security cooperation and intelligence sharing, opposing anti-Israel resolutions at the U.N. Security Council, but I know it, and I will always be grateful to President Obama for that support.

And Israel is grateful to you, the American Congress, for your support, for supporting us in so many ways, especially in generous military assistance and missile defense, including Iron Dome.

Last summer, millions of Israelis were protected from thousands of Hamas rockets because this Capitol Dome helped build our Iron Dome. Thank you, America. Thank you for everything you have done for Israel.

My friends, I have come here today because, as Prime Minister of Israel, I feel a profound obligation to speak to you about an issue that could well threaten the survival of my country and the future of my people, Iran's quest for nuclear weapons.

We are an ancient people. In our nearly 4,000 years of history, many have tried repeatedly to destroy the Jewish people.

Tomorrow night, on the Jewish holiday of Purim, we will read the book of Esther. We will read of a powerful Persian viceroy named Haman, who plotted to destroy the Jewish people some 2,500 years ago.

But a courageous Jewish woman, Queen Esther, exposed the plot and gained for the Jewish people the right to defend themselves against their enem-
Iran's chief terrorist proxy. He said: If all the Jews gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of chasing them down around the world.

But Iran's regime is not merely a Jewish problem, any more than the Nazi regime was merely a Jewish problem.

The 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis were but a fraction of the 60 million people killed in World War II. So, too, Iran's regime poses a grave threat, not only to Israel but also to the peace of the entire world.

To understand just how dangerous Iran would be with nuclear weapons, we must fully understand the nature of the regime.

The people of Iran are very talented people. They are heirs to one of the world's great civilizations. But in 1979, they were hijacked by religious zealots, religious zealots who imposed on them immediately a dark and brutal dictatorship. The zealots drafted a constitution, a new one for Iran. It directed the Revolutionary Guards not only to protect Iran's borders but also to fulfill the ideological mission of jihad. The regime's founder, Ayatollah Khomeini, exhorted his followers to export the revolution throughout the world.

I am standing here in Washington, D.C., and the difference is so stark. America's founding document promises "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Iran's founding document pledges death, tyranny, and the pursuit of jihad. And as states are collapsing across the Middle East, Iran is charging into the void to do just that. Iran's goons in Gaza, its lackeys in Lebanon, its Revolutionary Guards on the Golan Heights are clutching Israel with three tentacles of terror. Backed by Iran, Assad is slaughtering Syrians. Backed by Iran, Shiite militias are rampaging through Iraq. Backed by Iran, Houthi are seizing control of Yemen, threatening the strategic straits at the mouth of the Red Sea. Along with the Strait of Hormuz, that would give Iran a second choke point on the world's oil supply.

Just last week, near Hormuz, Iran carried out a military exercise, blowing up a mock U.S. aircraft carrier—that is just last week—while they are having nuclear talks with the United States. But unfortunately, for the last 36 years, Iran's attacks against the United States have been anything but mock, and the targets have been all too real.

Iran took dozens of Americans hostage in Tehran; murdered hundreds of American soldiers, marines in Beirut, and was responsible for killing and maiming thousands of American servicemen and -women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beyond the Middle East, Iran attacks America and its allies through its global terror network. It blew up the Jewish community center and the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires; it helped al Qaeda bomb U.S. Embassies in Africa; it even attempted to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador right here in Washington, D.C.

In the Middle East, Iran now dominates four Arab capitals—Baghdad, Damascus, Beirut, and Sana'a. And if Iran's aggression is left unchecked, more will follow.

So at a time when many hope that Iran will join the community of nations, Iran is busy gobbling up the nations.

We must all stand together to stop Iran's march of conquest, subjugation, and terror.

Now, 2 years ago, we were told to give President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif a chance to bring change and moderation to Iran—some change, some moderation. Rouhani's government hangs gays, persecutes Christians, jails journalists, and executes even more prisoners than before.

Last year, the same Zarif who charmed Western diplomatis, laid a wreath at the grave of Imad Mughniyah. Imad Mughniyah is the terrorist mastermind who spilled more American blood than any other terrorist besides Osama bin Laden. I would like to see someone ask him a question: why this regime will always be an enemy of America.

And don't be fooled. The battle between Iran and ISIS doesn't turn Iran into a friend of America. Iran and ISIS are competing for the crown of militant Islam. One calls itself the Islamic Republic; the other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a totalitarian Islamic state. One calls itself the Islamic Republic; the other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a totalitarian Islamic state. One calls itself the Islamic Republic; the other calls itself the Islamic State. Both want to impose a totalitarian Islamic state.

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In this deadly game of thrones, there is no place for America or for Israel; no peace for Christians, Jews, or Muslims who don't share the Islamist medieval creed; no rights for women; no freedom for anyone.

So when it comes to Iran and ISIS, the enemy of your enemy is your enemy. The difference is that ISIS is armed with butcher knives, captured weapons, and YouTube; whereas, Iran could soon be armed with intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombs.

We must always remember—I will say it one more time—the greatest danger facing our world is the marriage of militant Islam with nuclear weapons. To defeat ISIS and let Iran get nuclear weapons would be to win the battle but lose the war. We can't let that happen. But that, my friends, is exactly what Iran is doing. If the deal now being negotiated is accepted by Iran. That deal will not prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. It would all but guarantee that Iran gets those weapons, lots of them.

Let me explain why.

While the final deal has not yet been signed, certain elements of any potential deal are now a matter of public record. You don't need intelligence agencies and secret information to know this. You can Google it.

Absent a dramatic change, we know for sure that any deal with Iran will include two major concessions to Iran. The first major concession would leave Iran with a vast nuclear infrastructure, providing it with a short breakout time to the bomb. “Breakout time” is the time it takes to amass enough weapons-grade uranium or plutonium for a nuclear bomb.

According to the deal, not a single nuclear facility would be demolished. Thousands of centrifuges used to enrich uranium would be left spinning. Thousands more would be temporarily disconnected but not destroyed. Because Iran's nuclear program would be left largely in tact, Iran's breakout time would be very short—about a year by U.S. assessment, even shorter by Israel's. And if Iran's work on advanced centrifuges—faster and faster centrifuges—is not stopped, that breakout time could still be shorter—a lot shorter.

True, certain restrictions would be imposed on Iran's nuclear program, and Iran's adherence to those restrictions would be supervised by international inspectors. But here is the problem, you see: inspectors document violations; they don't stop them.

Inspectors knew when North Korea broke to the bomb, but that didn't stop anything. North Korea turned off the cameras, kicked out the inspectors; and, within a few years, it got the bomb.

Now, we are warned that within 5 years, North Korea could have an arsenal of 100 nuclear bombs. Like North Korea, Iran, too, has defied international inspectors. It has done that on at least three separate occasions, 2005, 2009, and 2010.

Like North Korea, Iran broke the locks and shut off the cameras. Now, I know this is not going to come as a shock to any of you, but Iran not only defies inspectors, it also plays a pretty good game of hide-and-cheat with them.

The U.N.'s nuclear watchdog agency, the IAEA, said again yesterday that Iran still refuses to come clean about its military nuclear program. Iran was also caught—caught twice, not once—twice operating secret nuclear facilities in Natanz and Qom, facilities that inspectors didn't even know existed. Right now, Iran could be hiding nuclear facilities that we—the U.S. and Israel—don't know about.

As the former head of inspections for the IAEA said in 2013: "If there is no undeclared installation today in Iran, it will be the first time in 20 years that it doesn't have one." Iran has proven
time and again that it cannot be trust-
ed, and that is why the first major con-
cession is a source of grave concern.

It leaves Iran with a vast nuclear in-
frastructure and relies on inspectors to
prevent a breakout. That concession
creates a real danger that Iran could
get to the bomb by violating the deal.

But the second major concession cre-
ates an even greater danger that Iran
could get to the bomb by keeping the
deal and deliberately violating all the restri-
tions on Iran’s nuclear program will
automatically expire in about a decade.

Now, a decade may seem like a long
time in political life, but it is the blink of
an eye in the life of a nation. It is the
blink of an eye in the life of our children.
We all have a responsibility to consider
what will happen when Iran’s nuclear capabilities are virtually
unrestricted and all the sanctions will
have been lifted. Iran would then be
free to build a huge nuclear capacity
that could produce many, many nu-
clear bombs.

Iran’s Supreme Leader says that
openly. He says that Iran plans to have
190,000 centrifuges—not 6,000 or even
the 19,000 that Iran has today, but ten
times that amount—190,000 centrifuges
enriching uranium. With this massive
capacity, Iran could make the fuel for an
entire nuclear arsenal and this in a
matter of weeks once it makes that de-
cision.

My longtime friend John Kerry, Sec-
retary of State, confirmed last week
that Iran could legitimately possess
three things: first, stop its aggression
in the region and in the world.

Israel, the one and only Jewish state.

We can insist that restrictions on
Iran’s nuclear program not be lifted for
a decade. We have been told that no deal is better than a
bad deal.

This deal won’t be a farewell to arms.
It would be a farewell to arms control,
and the world could soon be crisscrossed by nuclear triwires. A
region where small skirmishes can trig-
ger big wars would turn into a nuclear
tinderbox.

If anyone thinks this deal kicks the
can down the road, think again. When
we get down that road, we will face a
much more dangerous Iran, a Middle
East littered with nuclear bombs, and a
countdown to a potential nuclear
nightmare.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have come
to tell you today to tell you we don’t have to
bet the security of the world on the
hope that Iran will change for the bet-

ber. We don’t have to gamble with our
future and with our children’s future.

We can insist that restrictions on
Iran’s nuclear program not be lifted for
as long as Iran continues its aggression
in the region and in the world.

Before lifting those restrictions, the
world should demand that Iran do
their good things: first, stop its aggression
against its neighbors in the Middle
East; second, stop supporting terrorism
around the world; and, third, stop
challenging my country, Israel, the one and only Jewish state.

My friends, standing up to Iran is not
easy; standing up to dark and mur-
terous regimes never is. With us today
is Holocaust survivor and Nobel Prize
winner Elie Wiesel. Elie, your life and
work inspires to give meaning to the

words “never again.” And I wish I could promise you, Elie, that the lessons of history have been learned. I can only urge the leaders of the world not to repeat the mistakes of the past, not to sacrifice the future for the present, not to be so in a hurry to gain an illusory peace. But I can guarantee you this: the days when the Jewish people remain passive in the face of genocidal enemies, those days are over. We are no longer scattered among the nations powerless to defend ourselves. We have restored our sovereignty in our ancient home, and the soldiers who defend our home have boundless courage.

For the first time in 100 generations, we, the Jewish people, can defend ourselves. This is why, as Prime Minister of Israel, I can promise you one more thing. Even if Israel has to stand alone, Israel will stand. But I know that Israel does not stand alone. I know that America stands with Israel, I know that you stand with Israel. You stand with Israel because you know that the story of Israel is not only the story of the Jewish people but of the human spirit that refuses again and again to succumb to history’s horrors.

Facing me right up there in the gallery, overlooking all of us in this august Chamber, is the image of Moses. Moses led our people from slavery to the gates of the Promised Land. And before the people of Israel entered the land of Israel, Moses gave us a message that has steeled our resolve for thousands of years.

I leave you with this message today: Be strong and resolute. Neither fear nor dread them.

My friends, may Israel and America always stand together, strong and resolute. May we neither fear nor dread the challenges ahead. May we face the future with confidence, strength, and hope.

May God bless the State of Israel, and may God bless the United States of America.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you all. You are wonderful. Thank you, America. Thank you. (Applause, the members rising.)

At 11 o’clock and 54 minutes a.m., His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps from the Chamber.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses dissolved. Accordingly (at 11 o’clock and 54 minutes p.m.), the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their rooms.

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1232

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PALAZZO) at 12 o’clock and 32 minutes p.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia? There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 749, PASSENGER RAIL REFORM AND INVESTMENT ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 6, 2015, THROUGH MARCH 13, 2015

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 134 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 134
Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause (2)(b) of rule VIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 749) to reauthorize Federal support for passenger rail programs, 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 Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Every amendment, substitute, or amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto at 10 o’clock and 32 minutes p.m. without intervening motion except one motion to reconvene with or without instructions.

S. Res. 4. On any legislative day during the period from March 6, 2015, through March 13, 2015—
(a) The Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and
(b) The Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 3, section 2, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

The Speaker pro tempore directed Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

S. 238. At any time during the legislative day of March 13, 2015, the Chair may postpone further consideration of a measure in the House to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

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

Mr. WOODALL. 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.

Mr. Speaker, I always enjoy hearing the Reading Clerk read the work of the Rules Committee. I always look around the Chamber to see how many members have spent some time on those words because words matter, and we spend a lot of time trying to craft the rules to be just right.

But as proud as I am of the work we do in the Rules Committee, I confess that coming down here to this floor just moments after the Prime Minister of Israel delivered the speech that he just delivered—wow, you talk about words that matter.

I knew I was going to learn something in that speech, Mr. Speaker. I knew I was going to feel something in that speech. And just here moments after, what I came away with was, number one, we can learn a lot from the Prime Minister about leadership, about saying what you mean and meaning what you say. When the stakes are high, when the results impact all the families that we serve, it matters.

We care a lot about people in this Chamber. Sometimes we have a crisis of leadership. Sometimes we have a crisis of followership. It is tremendously meaningful to me to see the leadership that was on display here, not just for America but for the world.

Number two, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister had a lesson for us all about class. He spent the first 5 minutes of that speech talking about his affection for President Obama, talking about his respect for President Obama, talking about the relationship between the United States of America and how President Obama had played a meaningful role in keeping Israel safe.
We are not always in that place down here. And oftentimes, we find politics gets under our skin. Oftentimes, when there is a big debate surrounding a serious issue, we take it as a personal affront. And sometimes when we come back to the House Floor, we don't talk to one another with the mutual respect that, I would argue, every single Member of this Chamber has earned. We don't talk to each other across the aisle, I think, in ways that would always make our constituents back home proud.

It meant a lot to me, given the emotion that surrounded the invitation of the Prime Minister to be here, that he spent his first moments of that speech not talking about frustrations, not about what did to whom, but talking about his deep respect for the leader of the United States of America and what President Obama had meant to the safety and the security of our great nation.

It kind of makes what we are going to balance if he ever gets on a plane to fly going on in the Northeast corridor. That is where the rails are.

Washington. It makes no sense whatsoever if we are going to leave tonight, out of Atlanta down to New Orleans, so I bring that up, Mr. Speaker, because it meant a lot to me, given the emotion that surrounded the Prime Minister to be here, that he spent his first moments of that speech not talking about frustrations, not about what did to whom, but talking about his deep respect for the leader of the United States of America and what President Obama had meant to the safety and the security of our great nation.

But on the outside chance that we didn't get it exactly right, the Rules Committee came together yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and made amendments in order. One of those amendments of this process is that you don't have to be on the committee of jurisdiction in order to have an impact on legislation. Any Member of the House can come to the Rules Committee and ask for an amendment to be made in order. This rule today makes in order seven such amendments to improve this bill. Four of those amendments come from Democratic Members. Three of those amendments come from Republican Members.

But I was back in my office with constituents from AIPAC. Sixteen thousand people put their money where their mouth is to tell our friends here, that they are going to leave those dollars there so that that route can expand and improve. The population continues to grow there. Transportation needs continue to expand there. And we create a partnership with States in those areas to say, Mr. Speaker, if you have a priority, as a Governor, as a State legislature, if you want to partner with the Federal Government to make your train service more effective, more efficient, we want to partner with you. But if your idea of a transportation plan is to do nothing locally but rely on the Federal Government to do it all for you, we have no money for you.

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But on the outside chance that we didn't get it exactly right, the Rules Committee came together yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and made amendments in order. One of those amendments of this process is that you don't have to be on the committee of jurisdiction in order to have an impact on legislation. Any Member of the House can come to the Rules Committee and ask for an amendment to be made in order. This rule today makes in order seven such amendments to improve this bill. Four of those amendments come from Democratic Members. Three of those amendments come from Republican Members.

But I was back in my office with constituents from AIPAC. Sixteen thousand people put their money where their mouth is to tell our friends here, that they are going to leave those dollars there so that that route can expand and improve. The population continues to grow there. Transportation needs continue to expand there. And we create a partnership with States in those areas to say, Mr. Speaker, if you have a priority, as a Governor, as a State legislature, if you want to partner with the Federal Government to make your train service more effective, more efficient, we want to partner with you. But if your idea of a transportation plan is to do nothing locally but rely on the Federal Government to do it all for you, we have no money for you.
some serious disagreements. In the now almost 1 hour since the Prime Minister finished speaking, I have seen more smiles; I have seen more collegiality; and I have seen more Members enjoying each other and working together in just that 1 hour than I have seen in the entire meeting that I have been working on. I bring that up, Mr. Speaker, because the gentleman from Massachusetts and I have been working on rules for a long time together—a long time together—and I don’t think it would offend the gentleman if I were to say that he and I often disagree about the way a rule ought to be crafted. We often disagree about the underlying legislation. Here we are on the Rules Committee, Mr. Speaker, but we may spend an hour or 2 or 3, sometimes longer, debating the merits of the underlying legislation. So to come here 1 hour after that spectacular come-together-for-things-that-matter speech the Prime Minister just gave and to find agreement with my friend, on the Rules Committee—not just on the rule but, I daresay, on the underlying bill—I hope it is a sign of things to come—not just a thing to come in the regular relationship between my friend from Massachusetts and me, because that relationship is strong, but a relationship across the board.

We have passed and sent to the President lots of bills this Congress, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I think we have passed things like the DOT Act out of the U.S. House of Representatives. I don’t know if I went home and asked my constituency that they can name two. I think they would know the XL pipeline bill, because that is something everyone has been focused on. But I don’t think, as a population, they could name two.

I hope this is the start of a success that the Rules Committee is going to have together over the next 18 months. I hope this is going to be the start of the kind of agreements that we can create together, Mr. Speaker.

I thank my friend from Massachusetts for being part of, again, making the work here a little bit better than yesterday was.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the gentleman for his comments. We support the rule and the underlying bill, and with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise the seven amendments to H. Res. 134.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, while we talk about agreements here on the floor, I think sometimes folks back home are concerned that we are agreeing on the little things, things that don’t matter, that we are talking about renaming a post office. While that is important to that community and while that is important to the man or woman being honored, I would argue it doesn’t nec-

essarily mean that we are making progress on freedom and democracy. I can’t tell you with a straight face that what we are doing on passenger rail today is going to advance the cause of freedom and democracy. If you want to advance the cause of freedom and democracy, you need to be here 2 hours ago when the Prime

Minister came to deliver his message to the United States Congress. Freedom and democracy lived there.

What we are advancing on this passenger bill, Mr. Speaker, is just common sense. It is just common sense. I don’t want to get in the weeds of all the exciting things that go on in there, Mr. Speaker. I serve on the Transportation Committee. Of course it is exciting to me. Of course I am going to be involved in the minutia. I don’t know that my other colleagues are quite as enthusiastic about that.

I would encourage folks to go to transportation.house.gov, Mr. Speaker. The Transportation Committee, like all committees on Capitol Hill, has a Web page, and on that Web page you can get deep into the weeds. If you are a policy wonk like I am and you want to dig down into the minutia and find out what is really about clause 2, you can absolutely do it. But there are some top line numbers there, too.

And again, I want folks to have something to celebrate here. I want folks to be able to be enthusiastic about their representative body. I would argue, as the Prime Minister argued, that the greatest deliberative body, the greatest bastion of freedom on the planet, if you want to know about going on a great Transpor-

tation Committee Web site. You are going to find—well, you are going to find all sorts of information. You will find something like this one-pager right here, whether you are a high school student who cares about passenger rail or whether you are a transportation engineer leading your local Department of Transportation, all of those details can be found there.

I will give you one example. Could you believe—you come from a constituency much like I do, Mr. Speaker, but can you believe that in the United States of America today, in the era of sequester—in the era of sequester—that not one Member of this body would say isn’t having an impact on our social safety net, where not one Member of this body wouldn’t say isn’t having an impact on our national security, in this era of sequester, Amtrak subsidizes food and beverage service. It is a lose-lose part of the transpor-

tation funding on Amtrak.

I will just tell you, I have ridden Amtrak to New York a time or two. I didn’t have any beverage service. It is not like my friends on Delta who will bring me a Coca-Cola product on my flight to Washington, D.C., here. You have to go down to the beverage car. Now, if you would like to bring your own lunch on Amtrak, you absolutely can. But you can’t take the Twinkies because they are going to make you a sack at home, you can bring it on in and eat it right there on the train. Yet the American taxpayer, as we sit here right now—this isn’t prospective. This is as we sit here right now—in the time of trying to balance our national security needs with our social safety net needs, don’t you think that one of the things we could agree on is we don’t need to subsidize snack food for train riders? I say that truth is, Mr. Speaker, I say that like it is a rhetorical question, that I am going to start to get out my sharp stick and poke the other side. I am not. It happens to be one of the things that we agree on.

Could you believe—you come from a constituency much like I do, Mr. Speaker, trying to get rid of silly stuff that the Federal Government does? Well, for you and me, the answer is 4. For 4 years we have been working on trying to get rid of silly stuff that the Federal Government does; subsidizing Twinkies, part of that silly stuff. I am not picking on Twinkies. I have great respect for Twinkie eaters. But I don’t want my tax dollars subsidizing that habit, Mr. Speaker. Conclusively, on the Transportation Committee, Mr. Speaker, we have come together to say: I don’t know why we didn’t do this a long time ago, I don’t know why the other previous Congress hadn’t gotten it done, but the buck stops here. We are going to work together and do that.

Where are those dollars going to go instead, Mr. Speaker? They are going to go to improving quality of service. Find me that constituent back home; find me in Atlanta; find him in Mississippi; find those constituents back home who wouldn’t make that trade with their tax dollars every day of the week. We are doing it. We are doing it together, and we are doing it in a way I hope the Senate will act on it. If they can’t take wisdom as we have defined it, I welcome a conference, and I hope we will be able to get this bill on the President’s desk.

All of these great ideas that we have come together, that we have done in a collaborative way, Republicans and Democrats on the committee, Republicans and Democrats here on the floor of the House, the seven amendments
that we are going to be considering today, all of these things we have done collaboratively, Mr. Speaker, mean nothing—mean nothing—if they don’t go to the President’s desk for his signature. This is but a first step, but it is a profound step.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, again, we agree with the gentleman with this underlining bill. If the gentleman would like more time, I am happy to yield to him because I always enjoy hearing him speak in the Rules Committee, and I think our colleagues could benefit from his speaking on the House floor. But I don’t know what else to add except we are all in agreement, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Woodall. Mr. Speaker, while I appreciate the accolades of my friend from Massachusetts, the truth is I am not the author of this bill. The Transportation Committee is staffed with those experts at a staff level and at an elected Member level.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. Denham), who has been a leader on the Transportation Committee, not looking for Republican solutions and not looking for Democratic solutions, but looking for commonsense solutions and then selling those to his colleagues on both sides.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to touch on a few of the great things on this reform bill. Make no mistake, this will reform passenger rail as we know it today in many different areas.

First of all, we expect that Amtrak will be utilized more often in a more efficient way and in a more transparent way and for more like a business, a business that will give results back to its customers.

This is going to be a bill that sets up different lines of business. So if you are on the Northeast corridor and you are paying a ticket that is high priced, you don’t want to subsidize Amtrak across the Nation, your money is now going to stay on the Northeast corridor so you have not only improved infrastructure, but a smoother ride, a more efficient ride, and in free enterprise, we need to give those families that have a pet at home, to those families that have to make a decision “Do I leave my dog or cat at home, or I am actually able to travel with them on a train?” right now they have to make a decision to either take a car or take an airplane.

It is amazing to me to find out, as somebody from California, when I travel back and forth with my dog, I can put them on a plane, but yet I can’t put them on a train to go up the Northeast corridor or across the country. This is something that will allow new riders that didn’t previously want to ride the train before because they couldn’t take their pet on there to do so, but also a new revenue generation with paying for those pets the same way that our airplanes across the country are paid for taking their pets as well.

Now, this is a great, bipartisan bill, one that I am very proud that we reached secret. We whipped every Member of the Transportation Committee to make sure that we had true results across the entire country to get not only bipartisan support, but unanimous support. You talk about the right way to get a bill done, this is it, by encouraging Members of both parties to actually work together for real reforms that move America forward.

This rail bill does just that. It will create jobs; it will create a more efficient passenger rail; and this is going to give new opportunities to those that never were able to ride rail before the opportunity to be greater involved.

Let me just touch on one last point. Across the entire country, our passenger rail oftentimes rides on our freight rail system. They have to share the same tracks.

□ 1300

Well, one of the challenges is we have bottlenecks across the entire country. As we expand that new infrastructure, as we create these new jobs, as we create greater efficiencies, we need to be able to do it in a timely and cost-effective manner.

What we have done is cut a lot of red tape and streamlined the process. There are both environmental and historic review that we actually put time on. We want to do it quickly.

We want to make sure that it still remains historic and that we are being environmentally sensitive.

We are just saying: Let’s streamline the process so we can get projects done quickly, getting people to work, and getting a rail system that is like no other across the entire globe.

We have great improvements here. I am very proud of the work that we have done here, and I am looking for full passage this afternoon.

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

Mr. Woodall. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my great pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Duncan), a member of the committee and a leader on transportation issues.

Mr. Duncan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time.

I rise in very strong support of this legislation for all of the reasons that were just stated by Chairman Denham, who has been a great chairman of the Railroad Subcommittee.

This is a major reform bill that I think every Member should be very proud to support. It is a very fiscally conservative bill. It will save $2 billion over the next 4 years, and it is moving this Congress and this legislation in a new direction, a better direction, from a fiscal standpoint.

It also is going to save a very substantial amount of money on food service. According to The New York Times, train food service lost $800 million over the last 10 years. This bill will, in a realistic way, retroactively change the subsidy for train food service until it gets on a self-supporting basis, so it is fiscally conservative and commonsense legislation in that respect also.

It speeds up the environmental review process. This is an area that we try to do in all of our transportation bills because we have been doing all of our major transportation projects in such a convoluted, complicated bureaucratic way that we have always taken about three times as long as any other developed nation to do the things to improve our infrastructure that needs to be done.

This bill also introduces opportunities for competition. This is another good thing about this bill because, if we really believe in the free market and in free enterprise, we need to give more companies and more people a chance to set into these businesses and make all of our industries have greater ease of entry.

Another thing that I think is good about this legislation—this major reform—is that it empowers States to get involved in, by creating a new State-supported route advisory committee. This has the potential of creating new train service in States, such
as mine in Tennessee, that don’t have passenger train service at this time.

For all these reasons and for all the reasons that Congressman DENHAM—Chairman DENHAM—just mentioned, I think this is a bill that deserves the support of all the Members on both sides of the aisle. I rise in strong support of this legislation.

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

Agree with the rule and the underlying bill. I want to thank everybody involved. This is a bipartisan effort.

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

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

I want to reiterate the partnership that went on here, not just with the underlying bill, but with the amendment process that is happening here, seven amendments available for our colleagues this afternoon.

If you don’t want to see Amtrak subsidized by the Federal Government—a lot of folks would have kept your voice silent—this amendment process allows your voice to be heard.

If you want to make sure that all the folks doing contracting with Amtrak are focused on veterans and veteran-owned small businesses—you want that included in the underlying bill—we have an amendment process today that allows you to add that language.

If you are concerned about the inspector general’s reports and what they are looking at and how they are calculating it, we give you a chance to make those changes.

Issue after issue after issue, Mr. Speaker—again, three Republican ideas, four Democratic ideas—we allow those to come to the floor in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, passenger rail is an example of one of those things that divides this country. If you live in California, as the chairman does, you have a spectacular rail system. If you live in the Northeast corridor, you have a spectacular rail system.

If you live in the State of Georgia, you can ride your horse to your next destination faster than you can take the train. That is not an inequity that we are going to solve in this bill; and, arguably, we don’t even need to solve that inequity.

I say, hey, for my friends in the Northeast corridor to have spectacular service. It is profitable. Folks want it, folks need it, folks use it, and folks are willing to dig into their pockets to pay for it.

In fact, there is an amendment that is going to be offered here today. Mr. Speaker, that would allow competitive private train service in that corridor. Now, that is going to be up to the body to decide whether or not they think that is a good idea.

Imagine that, imagine that, Mr. Speaker, that before us today you have your choice of: Do you want the bill as the committee has crafted it, saving money, as my friend from Tennessee described? Do you want to eliminate Amtrak subsidies altogether and say, We do not have a national interest in rail, and our budget will reflect that? Or do we want to allow even more rail service by allowing private competition on some of these Amtrak-owned routes?

Mr. Speaker, that is why I came to this body. I am not going to try to twist any arms on this floor about which amendments they ought to vote for and which they don’t. Folks have their own set of a million constituents back home, and they ought to represent those interests.

What I will twist arms on this floor to do, Mr. Speaker, is to support the rule that allows for this kind of open debate. As I think my friend from Massachusetts would agree, we have not always had the open debates on important issues that I think we would all agree should be had. It is a process, and today, we got it right.

This rule is worthy of the support of all of my colleagues: Republicans, Democrats, north, south, east, and west.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, House Report 114–36, the report to accompany H. Res. 134, the special rule governing consideration of H.R. 749, contains an inaccurate summary of Amendment #6 offered by Mr. MCCLINTOCK of California. The summary should read as follows:

The amendment eliminates all Federal assistance for Amtrak.

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

The previous question was ordered.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate disagree to the request for conference by the House of Representatives on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses to the bill (H.R. 240)

"An Act making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes."

H1535

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to take from the Speaker’s table the bill (H.R. 240) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk reads as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary of Homeland Security, as authorized by section 102 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 112), and executive management of the Department of Homeland Security, as authorized by law, $132,573,000: Provided, That not to exceed $45,000 shall be for official reception and representation expenses: Provided further, That all official costs associated with the use of government aircraft by Department of Homeland Security personnel, including the President’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2016, shall include the estimated costs for implementation and representation expenses: Provided further, That the Under Secretary for Management shall be paid from amounts made available for the Immediate Office of the Under Secretary for Management: Provided further, That not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Commit-tees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, a comprehensive plan for implementation of the bio- metric entry and exit system, and the estimated costs to consolidate Department headquarters operations at the Nebraska Avenue Complex; and, $6,000,000 shall remain available until Sep-tember 30, 2016, for the Human Resources Information Technology program: Provided further, That the Under Secretary for Management shall include in the President’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2016, submitted pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, a Comprehensive Acquisition Status Report, which shall include the information required under the heading “Office of the Under Secretary for Management” under title I of division D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112–74), and shall submit quarterly updates to such report not later than 45 days after the completion of each quarter.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, as authorized by section 103 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 113), $32,020,000: Provided, That the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives the President’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2016 is submitted pursuant to section 1105(a) of title...
For necessary expenses for the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, as authorized by section 103 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 113), and Department-wide technology improvement of automated systems, including salaries and expenses, $808,169,000; of which $446,075,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017, and not to exceed $3,425 shall be for official reception and representation expenses; and of which not to exceed $2,000,000 shall be for awards of compensation to informants, to be accounted for solely under the certificate of the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, that amount as necessary for national security purposes, to prevent excessive costs, or in cases of immigration emergencies: Provided further, That the Border Patrol shall maintain an active duty presence of not less than 34,000 agents protecting the borders of the United States in the fiscal year.

AUTOMATION MODERNIZATION
For necessary expenses for United States Customs and Border Protection activities related to border security, immigration, customs, and operations coordination activities, as authorized by title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121 et seq.), $255,804,000; of which not to exceed $3,825 shall be for official reception and representation expenses; and of which not to exceed $3,425 shall be for official reception and representation expenses; and of which not to exceed $2,000,000 shall be for awards of compensation to informants, to be accounted for solely under the certificate of the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, that amount as necessary for national security purposes, to prevent excessive costs, or in cases of immigration emergencies: Provided further, That the total amount provided, $15,770,000 shall be for activities to enforce laws against forced child labor, of which not to exceed $6,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, is for maintenance, construction, and leasehold improvements at O'Hare and Dulles and federal facilities and for $12,000 shall be available to fund or reimburse other Federal agencies for the costs associated with the care, maintenance, and repatriation of smuggled aliens unlawfully present in the United States: Provided, That none of the funds made available under this heading shall be available to compensate any employee for overtime work required annually under section 5(c)(1) of the Act of February 13, 1911 (19 U.S.C. 287(g)) if the Department of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, may waive that amount as necessary for national security purposes, to prevent excessive costs, or in cases of immigration emergencies: Provided further, That of the total amount provided, $3,274,000 shall be for expenses for border security fencing, infrastructure, and technology, $382,466,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

AIR AND MARINE OPERATIONS
For necessary expenses for the operations, maintenance, and procurement of marine vessels, aircraft, unmanned aircraft systems, the Air and Marine Operations Center, and other related equipment of the air and marine programs, operational training, and mission-related travel, the operations of which include the following: the interdiction of narcotics and other goods; the custody of aircraft that are one of a kind and have been identified as excess to United States Customs and Border Protection requirements and aircraft that have been damaged beyond repair, shall be transferred to any other Federal agency, department, or office outside of the Department of Homeland Security during fiscal year 2015 without prior notice to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives: Provided, That no aircraft or other related equipment, with the exception of aircraft that have been identified as excess to United States Customs and Border Protection requirements and aircraft that have been damaged beyond repair, shall be transferred to any other Federal agency, department, or office outside of the Department of Homeland Security during fiscal year 2015 without prior notice to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives: Provided, That the Secretary of Homeland Security shall report to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives: Provided, That of the funds provided under this heading may be used to continue any contract for the provision of support to Federal, State, and local agencies in the enforcement or administration of laws enforced by the Department of Homeland Security and, at the discretion of the Secretary of Homeland Security, the provision of assistance to Federal, State, and local agencies in other law enforcement and emergency humanitarian efforts; $750,469,000; of which $299,800,000 shall be available for salaries and expenses; and of which $459,669,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017: Provided, That the Secretary shall report to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, on any changes to the 5-year strategic plan for the air and marine program required under the heading “Air and Marine Interdiction, Operations, and Maintenance” in Public Law 112-74.

CONSTRUCTION AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
For necessary expenses to plan, acquire, construct, receive, receive, operate, manage, and maintain buildings, facilities, and related infrastructure necessary for the administration and enforcement of the laws relating to customs, border protection, and the care, maintenance, and repatriation of smuggled aliens unlawfully present in the United States: Provided, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used to continue a delegation of law enforcement authority authorized under section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1235a(g)) if the Department of Homeland Security Secretary General Inspector determines that the terms of the agreement governing the delegation of authority have been materially violated: Provided further, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used to continue any contract for the provision of detention services if the two most recent performance evaluations received by the contracted facility are less than “adequate” or the equivalent median score in any subsequent performance evaluation system: Provided further, That nothing under this heading shall prevent United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement from exercising those authorities provided under immigration laws (as defined in section 287(j) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1235a(j))) during priority operations pertaining to aliens convicted

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of a crime. Provided further, That without regard to the limitation as to time and condition of section 503(d) of this Act, the Secretary may propose to reprogram and transfer funds within and between Appropriations accounts necessary to secure the detention of aliens prioritized for removal.

AUTOMATION MODERNIZATION

For expenses for immigration and customs enforcement automated systems, $26,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

AVIATION SECURITY

For necessary expenses of the Transportation Security Administration related to providing civil aviation security services pursuant to the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, Public Law 107-71; 115 Stat. 597; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note), $5,639,095,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016; of which not to exceed $7,650 shall be for official representation and reception expenses; Provided, That any award to deploy explosives detection systems shall be based on risk, the airport’s current reliance on other screening solutions, lobby congestion resulting in increased security concerns, high injury rates, airport readiness, and increased cost effectiveness; Provided further, That security service fees authorized under section 49400 of title 49, United States Code, shall be reduced on a dollar-for-dollar basis as such off-setting collections are received during fiscal year 2015 so as to result in a final fiscal year appropriation from the general fund estimated at not more than $3,574,095,000: Provided further, That the fees deposited under this heading in fiscal year 2015 shall be credited to the Transpor-

tation Security Administration related to surface transportation security activities, $123,749,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided further, That not later than April 15, 2015, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a detailed report on—

(A) a report providing evidence demonstrating the steps the Transportation Security Administration shall take to submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a detailed report on—

1. specific benchmarks and performance measures to increase participation in Pre-Check by air carriers, airports, and passengers;
2. options for expedited application for enrollment in Pre-Check through the Transportation Security Administration’s Web site, airports, and other enrollment locations;
3. use of third parties to pre-screen passengers for expedited screening;
4. inclusion of populations already vetted by the Transportation Security Administration and other trusted populations as eligible for expedited screening;
5. resource implications of expedited passenger screening resulting from the use of risk-based security systems;
6. the total number and percentage of passengers using Pre-Check lanes who:
   (A) have enrolled in Pre-Check since Transportation Security Administration enrollment centers were established;
   (B) enrolled using the Transportation Security Administration’s Pre-Check application Web site;
   (C) were enrolled as frequent flyers of a participating airline;
   (D) utilized Pre-Check as a result of their enrollment in a Trusted Traveler program of United States Customs and Border Protection;
   (E) were selectively identified to participate in expedited screening after the use of Managed Inclusion in fiscal year 2014; and
   (F) are enrolled in all other Pre-Check categories;

Provided further, That Members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate, including the leadership; the heads of Federal agencies and commissions, including the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary for Security, and the Director of the Department of Homeland Security; the United States Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General, Assistant Attorneys General, and Assistant United States Attorneys; and senior members of the Executive Office of the President, including the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall be authorized to provide briefings from Federal passenger and baggage screening.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

For necessary expenses of the Transportation Security Administration related to surface transportation security activities, $123,749,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016.

INTELLIGENCE AND VETING

For necessary expenses for the development and implementation of intelligence and vetting activities, $219,166,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY SUPPORT

For necessary expenses of the Transportation Security Administration related to transportation security support pursuant to the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107-71; 115 Stat. 597; 49 U.S.C. 40101 note), $917,226,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016: Provided, That not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a detailed report on—

1. a report providing evidence demonstrating that behavioral indicators can be used to identify passengers who may pose a threat to aviation security and the plans that will be put into place to collect additional performance data;
2. a report addressing each of the recommendations outlined in the report entitled “TSA Needs Additional Information Before Procuring Next-Generation Systems”, published by the Government Accountability Office on March 21, 2013, and describing the Transportation Security Administration is deploying its existing passenger and baggage screening and how those savings are being used to offset security costs or reinvested to address security deficiencies.

Provided further, That the amounts provided for in this heading for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism may be allocated by program, project, and activity, notwithstanding section 503(d) of this Act, and that, without regard to the limitation as to time and condition of section 503(d) of this Act, after June 30, up to $10,000,000 may be reprogrammed to fund any Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism project or activity, in accordance with subsections (a), (b), and (c) of section 503;
ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE AND RESTORATION
For necessary expenses to carry out the en-
vironmental compliance and restoration functions
of the Coast Guard under chapter 19 of title 14,
United States Code, $13,197,000, to remain avail-
able until September 30, 2017.
RESERVE TRAINING
For necessary expenses of the Coast Guard
Reserve, as authorized by law; operations and
maintenance of the Coast Guard reserve pro-
gram; personnel and training costs; and equip-
ment and services; $114,572,000.
ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, AND IMPROVEMENTS
For necessary expenses of acquisition, con-
struction, renovation, and improvement of aids
to navigation, shore facilities, vessels, and air-
craft, equipment related thereto; maintenance,
rehabilitation, lease, and operation of facilities
and equipment; as authorized by law; $1,225,223,000; of which $20,000,000 shall
be derived from the Oil Spill Liability Trust
Fund to carry out the purposes of section
1012(a)(3) of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33
U.S.C. 2712(a)(3)); and of which the following
amounts shall be available until September 30,
2019 (except as subsequently specified):
$6,000,000 for military family housing;
$824,347,000 to acquire, effect major repairs to,
renovate, or improve aircraft or associated major
acquisition systems; $80,500,000 for other
acquisition programs; $40,580,000 for shore
facilities and aids to navigation, including fac-
ilities at Department of Defense installations
used by the Coast Guard; and $114,996,000, to
remain available until September 30, 2015, for
personnel compensation and benefits and related
costs; Provided, That the funds provided by this Act shall be immediately available and allotted to
contract for the production of the eighth Na-
tional Security Cutter notwithstanding the
availability of funds for post-production costs:
Provided further, That the Commandant of the
Coast Guard shall submit to the Committees
on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of
Representatives, the Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and
the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
structure of the House of Representatives, at the
time the President’s budget proposal for fiscal
year 2017 is submitted pursuant to section
1105(a) of title 31, United States Code: Pro-
vided further, That the Office of Management and
Budget shall have no more than a 30-day
timeframe from the date of receipt of the capital
investment plan and proposed appropriations
shall be identified and justified: Provided
further, That the Director of the Office of
Management and Budget shall not delay the
submission of the capital investment plan re-
ferred to by the preceding proviso: Provided
further, That the Director of the Office of Man-
gagement and Budget shall have no more than
a single period of 10 consecutive business days to
review the capital investment plan prior to sub-
mission: Provided further, That the Secretary of
Homeland Security shall notify the Committees
on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of
Representatives, the Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and
the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
structure of the House of Representatives one
day after the capital investment plan is sub-
mitted to the Office of Management and Budget for review and the Office of Management and Budget shall notify the
Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of
Representatives, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and the Committee on Transportation and Infra-
structure of the House of Representatives when such review is completed: Provided
further, That none of the funds authorized by
section 6402 of Public Law 110–28 shall hereafter apply with respect to the amounts made available under this heading.
RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST, AND EVALUATION
For necessary expenses for applied scientific
research, development, test, and evaluation; and
for maintenance, rehabilitation, lease, and oper-
ation of facilities, equipment, and facilities
approved by the Department of Homeland Secu-
rity for acquisition: Provided, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be available to compensate any employee for over-
time worked in an annual amount in excess of
$35,000, except that the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, may waive that
amount as necessary for national security pur-
poses: Provided further, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be
available to the United States Secret Service
by this Act or by previous appropriations
for necessary expenses of the United States
Secret Service, including purchase of not to ex-
cede $625 vehicles for police-type use for replace-
ment only; hire of passenger motor vehicles;
purchase of motorcycles made in the United
States; hire of aircraft; services of expert
witnesses at such rates as may be determined by the
Director of the United States Secret Service;
rental of buildings in the District of Columbia, and fencing, guard, light, booths, and other
facilities on private or other property not in
Government use or of which the use or holding
may be necessary to perform protective functions; pay-
ment of per diem or subsistence allowances to
members of the United States Secret Service and
agents on the actual day or days of the visit of a
protectee requires an employee to work 16 hours
day or to remain overnight at a post of duty;
deductions on such expenditures in this or any other
Act if approval is obtained in advance from the
Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the
House of Representatives; and the Com-
development; grants to conduct behavioral re-
search in support of protective research and
operations; and payments in advance for commer-
cial accommodations as may be necessary to per-
form protective functions; $1,615,860,000, of
which not to exceed $19,125 shall be for official
representation expenses; and of which not to exceed $100,000 shall be to provide tech-
nical assistance to Federal, State, and local
enforcement organizations in counterfeit inves-
tigations; of which not to exceed $100,000 shall be for forens-
ic and related support of investigations of mass-
acre, kidnapping, and other serious drug offenses
shall be for a grant for activities related to in-
vestigations of missing and exploited children
and shall remain available until September 30,
2016; of which not to exceed $500,000 shall be
for activities related to training in electronic
crime investigations and forensics: Provided,
That $18,000,000 for protective travel shall remain available until September 30, 2016; Pro-
vided further, That $4,500,000 for National
Special Security Events shall remain available until September 30, 2016; Provided further, That the United States Secret Service is authorized to ob-
ligate funds in anticipation of reimbursements from
Federal agencies and entities, as defined in section
105 of title 5, United States Code, for ex-
penses that are for the benefit of the James J. Rovey Training Center, except that
total obligations at the end of the fiscal year
shall not exceed total budgetary resources avail-
able to this account at the end of the fiscal
year: Provided further, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be
available to compensate any employee for over-
time worked in an annual amount in excess of
$35,000, except that the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, may waive that
amount as necessary for national security pur-
poses: Provided further, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be
available to the United States Secret Service
by this Act or by previous appropriations
for necessary expenses of the United States
Secret Service, including purchase of not to ex-
cede $625 vehicles for police-type use for replace-
ment only; hire of passenger motor vehicles;
purchase of motorcycles made in the United
States; hire of aircraft; services of expert
witnesses at such rates as may be determined by the
Director of the United States Secret Service;
rental of buildings in the District of Columbia, and fencing, guard, light, booths, and other
facilities on private or other property not in
Government use or of which the use or holding
may be necessary to perform protective functions; pay-
ment of per diem or subsistence allowances to
members of the United States Secret Service and
agents on the actual day or days of the visit of a
protectee requires an employee to work 16 hours
day or to remain overnight at a post of duty;
deductions on such expenditures in this or any other
Act if approval is obtained in advance from the
Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the
House of Representatives; and the Com-
development; grants to conduct behavioral re-
search in support of protective research and
operations; and payments in advance for commer-
cial accommodations as may be necessary to per-
form protective functions; $1,615,860,000, of
which not to exceed $19,125 shall be for official
representation expenses; and of which not to exceed $100,000 shall be to provide tech-
nical assistance to Federal, State, and local
enforcement organizations in counterfeit inves-
tigations; of which not to exceed $100,000 shall be for forens-
ic and related support of investigations of mass-
acre, kidnapping, and other serious drug offenses
shall be for a grant for activities related to in-
vestigations of missing and exploited children
and shall remain available until September 30,
2016; of which not to exceed $500,000 shall be
for activities related to training in electronic
crime investigations and forensics: Provided,
That $18,000,000 for protective travel shall remain available until September 30, 2016; Pro-
vided further, That $4,500,000 for National
Special Security Events shall remain available until September 30, 2016; Provided further, That the United States Secret Service is authorized to ob-
ligate funds in anticipation of reimbursements from
Federal agencies and entities, as defined in section
105 of title 5, United States Code, for ex-
penses that are for the benefit of the James J. Rovey Training Center, except that
total obligations at the end of the fiscal year
shall not exceed total budgetary resources avail-
able to this account at the end of the fiscal
year: Provided further, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be
available to compensate any employee for over-
time worked in an annual amount in excess of
$35,000, except that the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the designee of the Secretary, may waive that
amount as necessary for national security pur-
poses: Provided further, That none of the funds
made available under this heading shall be
available to the United States Secret Service
by this Act or by previous appropriations

Acts may be made available for the protection of the head of a Federal agency other than the Secretary of Homeland Security: Provided further, That the Director of the United States Secret Service shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, a report providing evidence that the United States Secret Service has sufficiently reviewed its professional standards of conduct; and has issued new guidelines and procedures for the conduct of employees engaged in overseas operations and protective missions, consistent with the critical missions of, and the unique position of public trust occupied by the United States Secret Service: Provided further, That of the funds provided under the heading, $10,000,000 shall be withheld from obligations for Headquarters, Management and Administration until such report is submitted: Provided further, That for purposes of section 33 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 2229) and the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)(11)) or any other provision of law, a grantee may not use more than 5 percent of the amount of a grant made available under this heading directly related to administration of the grant; Provided further, That grants for paragraphs (1) and (2), the installation of communications towers is not considered construction of a building or other physical facility; Provided further, That grants shall provide reports on their use of funds, as determined necessary by the Secretary of Homeland Security: Provided further, That notwithstanding section 509 of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may use the funds provided in paragraph (2) to acquire or construct property for the purpose of establishing or appropriately extending the security buffer zones around Federal Emergency Management Agency training facilities.

FEDERAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE

The revenues and collections of security fees credited to this account shall be available until expended for necessary expenses related to the protection of federally owned and leased buildings and for the operations of the Federal Protective Service. The Director of the Federal Protective Service shall submit at the time the President’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2016 is sent to Congress a statement of the total amount made available under this heading, $35,180,000 shall be for the United States Secret Service, a strategic human capital plan that aligns fee collections to personnel requirements based on a current threat assessment.

OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION MANAGEMENT

For necessary expenses for the Office of Biometric Identity Management, as authorized by section 7209 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (8 U.S.C. 1365a), $252,056,000: Provided, That of the total amount made available under this heading, $122,130,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017.

OFFICE OF HEALTH AFFAIRS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Health Affairs, $123,300,000 is for salaries and expenses and $86,891,000 is for BioWatch operations: Provided, That of the amount made available under this heading, $41,316,000 shall be provided for, until September 30, 2016, for biosurveillance, chemical defense, medical and health planning and coordination, and workforce health protection: Provided further, That not to exceed $2,250 shall be made available for official reception and representation expenses.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, $934,396,000, including activities authorized by the National Flood Insurance Program, $262,849,000 is for the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), the Cervo Grande Fire Assistance Act of 2000 (division C, title I, section 146 et al.), the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.), the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. app. 2601 et seq.), the National Domestic Preparedness Program, $3,400,000 shall be available to carry out section 33(b) of that Act (15 U.S.C. 2229) and the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609(a)(11)) or any other provision of law, a grantee may not use more than 5 percent of the amount of a grant made available under this heading directly related to administration of the grant: Provided further, That for grants under paragraphs (1) and (2), the installation of communications towers is not considered construction of a building or other physical facility: Provided further, That grants shall provide reports on their use of funds, as determined necessary by the Secretary of Homeland Security: Provided further, That notwithstanding section 509 of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may use the funds provided in paragraph (2) to acquire or construct property for the purpose of establishing or appropriately extending the security buffer zones around Federal Emergency Management Agency training facilities.

STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAMS

For grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, and other activities, $1,500,000,000, which shall be allocated as follows:

(1) $467,000,000 shall be for the State Homeland Security Grant Program: Provided further, That section 33 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 467 et seq.), of which not less than $55,000,000 shall be for Operation Stonegarden: Provided, That notwithstanding subsection (c)(4) of such section 33 of that Act, for fiscal year 2015, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico shall make available to local and State governments and to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico under this paragraph in accordance with subsection (c)(1) of such section 204, for grants or contracts, for the purpose of establishing or appropriately extending the security buffer zones around Federal Emergency Management Agency training facilities.

FEDERAL FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT

The revenues and collections of security fees credited to this account shall be available until expended for necessary expenses related to the protection of federally owned and leased buildings and for the operations of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act, 6 U.S.C. 604, of which not less than $13,500,000 shall be for organizational activities (as described under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such code) determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security to be of high risk of a terrorist attack.

(2) $100,000,000 shall be for Public Transportation Security Assistance, Railroad Security Assistance, and Over-the-Road Bus Security Assistance under sections 1406, 1513, and 1532 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 6 U.S.C. 89): Provided, That not to exceed $2,250 shall be provided for over-the-road bus security: Provided, That such public transportation security assistance shall be provided directly to public transportation agencies.

(3) $100,000,000 shall be for Port Security Grants in accordance with 46 U.S.C. 701ff.

(5) $233,000,000 shall be to sustain current operations for training, exercises, technical assistance, and other programs, of which $162,991,000 shall be for training, exercises, technical assistance, and other programs for local, and tribal emergency response providers: Provided, That for grants under paragraphs (1) through (4), applications for grants shall be made available to eligible applicants not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, that eligible applicants shall submit applications not later than 80 days after the grant announcement, and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall act within 65 days after the receipt of an application: Provided further, That notwithstanding section 33 of that Act (15 U.S.C. 467 et seq.), of which not less than $55,000,000 shall be for Operation Stonegarden: Provided further, That grants shall provide reports on their use of funds, as determined necessary by the Secretary of Homeland Security: Provided further, That notwithstanding section 33 of that Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may use the funds provided in paragraph (2) to acquire or construct property for the purpose of establishing or appropriately extending the security buffer zones around Federal Emergency Management Agency training facilities.

FIREIGHTER ASSISTANCE GRANTS

For grants for programs authorized by the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.), $680,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2016, of which $330,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2017, of which not less than $4,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2016, for expenses related to modernization of automated systems.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANTS

For grants, contracts, and other activities, as authorized by the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), the

The aggregate charges assessed during fiscal year 2015, as authorized in title III of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (42 U.S.C. 5196e), shall not be less than 100 percent of the amounts anticipated for the corresponding fiscal year.

The amounts provided shall reflect costs of providing such services, including administrative costs of collecting such fees: Provided further, That fees received under this heading shall be deposited in this account as offsetting collections and will become available for authorized purposes on October 1, 2015, and remain available until expended.

UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION


For necessary expenses, including administration, for the Inauguration of the President and the Inaugural Committee, for the Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)(ii); Public Law 99–177).

The aggregate charges assessed during fiscal year 2015, as authorized in title III of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (42 U.S.C. 5196e), shall not be less than 100 percent of the amounts anticipated for the corresponding fiscal year.

The amounts provided shall reflect costs of providing such services, including administrative costs of collecting such fees: Provided further, That fees received under this heading shall be deposited in this account as offsetting collections and will become available for authorized purposes on October 1, 2015, and remain available until expended.

COMMONWEALTH: OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

For necessary expenses, including administration, for the Inauguration of the President and the Inaugural Committee, for the Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)(ii); Public Law 99–177).

The aggregate charges assessed during fiscal year 2015, as authorized in title III of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (42 U.S.C. 5196e), shall not be less than 100 percent of the amounts anticipated for the corresponding fiscal year.

The amounts provided shall reflect costs of providing such services, including administrative costs of collecting such fees: Provided further, That fees received under this heading shall be deposited in this account as offsetting collections and will become available for authorized purposes on October 1, 2015, and remain available until expended.

For necessary expenses, including administration, for the Inauguration of the President and the Inaugural Committee, for the Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)(ii); Public Law 99–177).

The aggregate charges assessed during fiscal year 2015, as authorized in title III of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (42 U.S.C. 5196e), shall not be less than 100 percent of the amounts anticipated for the corresponding fiscal year.

The amounts provided shall reflect costs of providing such services, including administrative costs of collecting such fees: Provided further, That fees received under this heading shall be deposited in this account as offsetting collections and will become available for authorized purposes on October 1, 2015, and remain available until expended.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE FUND

For necessary expenses of the National Flood Insurance Program (42 U.S.C. 4011 et seq.), the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (subtitle A of title II of division F of Public Law 112–141; 126 Stat. 916), the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–89; 128 Stat. 1020), $179,294,000, which shall remain available until September 30, 2016, and shall be derived from offsetting amounts collected under section 1308(d) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(d)); which is available for salaries and expenses associated with flood mitigation and flood insurance operations, and floodplain management and additional amounts for flood mapping: Provided, That of such amount, $23,759,000 shall be available for salaries and expenses associated with flood mitigation and flood insurance operations; and $155,535,000 shall be available for flood plain management and flood mapping: Provided further, That any additional fees collected pursuant to section 1308(d) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(d)) shall be credited as an offsetting collection to this account, to be available for flood plain management and flood mapping: Provided further, That in fiscal year 2015, no funds shall be available from the National Flood Insurance Fund under section 1308(d) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017) in excess of:

(1) $135,000,000 for operating expenses;
(2) $1,139,000,000 for commissions and taxes of agents; and
(3) such sums as are necessary for interest on Treasury borrowings; and

$150,000,000, which shall remain available until expended, for flood mitigation actions and for flood mitigation assistance under section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104c), notwithstanding sections 1366(e) and 1310(a)(7) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4107).

Provided further, That the amounts collected under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 4021a) and section 1366(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 shall be deposited in the National Flood Insurance Fund to supplement other amounts specified as available for section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, notwithstanding section 102(f)(8), section 1366(f), and paragraphs (1) through (3) of section 1367(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4021a(8), 4104c(e), 4104f). Provided, That the total administrative costs shall not exceed 4 percent of the total appropriation: Provided further, That $5,000,000 is available to carry out section 24 of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (42 U.S.C. 4033).

NATIONAL PREDISASTER MITIGATION FUND

For the predisaster mitigation grant program under section 203 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.), $25,000,000, to remain available until expended.

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER

To carry out the emergency food and shelter programs pursuant to title III of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11315 et seq.), $23,000,000, of which $20,000,000, to remain available until expended: Provided, That total administrative costs shall not exceed 3.5 percent of the total amount made available under this heading.

TITLE IV

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND SERVICES

UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

For necessary expenses for citizenship and immigration services, $124,435,000 for the E-Verify Program, as described in section 403(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1225d note), to assist United States employers with maintaining
a legal workforce: Provided, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds otherwise made available to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services may be used to acquire, operate, equip, and dispose of vehicles, for replacement only, for areas where the Administrator of General Services does not provide vehicles for lease: Provided further, That the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services may authorize employees who are assigned to those areas to use such vehicles to travel between the employees' residences and places of employment.

**FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER SALARIES AND EXPENSES**

For necessary expenses of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, including materials of Federal law enforcement training basic training; the purchase of not to exceed 117 vehicles for police-type use and hire of passenger motor vehicles; expenses for student athletic and related activities; the conduct of and participation in firearms matches and presentation of awards; public awareness and enhancement of community support of law enforcement training; room and board for student interns; a flat monthly reimbursement to employees authorized to use personal mobile phones for official duties; and services as authorized of title 5, United States Code: $230,497,000; of which up to $54,154,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2016, for materials and support costs of Federal law enforcement training; of which $538,926,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017; and of which $434,989,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2019, solely for operational and support facilities: Provided, That of the funds provided for the operation and construction of laboratory facilities under this heading, $300,000,000 shall be for construction of the National Bio- and Agro-defense Facility.

**DOMESTIC NUCLEAR DETECTION OFFICE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**


**RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, ACQUISITION, AND OPERATIONS**

For necessary expenses for science and technology research, including advanced research projects, development, test and evaluation, acquisition, and operations as authorized by title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 181 et seq.), and the purchase or lease of not to exceed 3 vehicles in the amount of $97,950,000 of which $338,926,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2017; and of which $434,989,000 shall remain available until September 30, 2019, solely for operational and support facilities: Provided, That of the funds provided for the operation and construction of laboratory facilities under this heading, $300,000,000 shall be for construction of the National Bio- and Agro-defense Facility.

**SYSTEMS ACQUISITION**

For necessary expenses for the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office acquisition and deployment of radiological detection systems in accordance with the global nuclear detection architecture, $72,603,000, to remain available until September 30, 2017.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

For the expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Science and Technology and for management and administration of programs and activities, as authorized by title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 181 et seq.), $129,993,000: Provided, That not to exceed $7,650 shall be for official reception and representation expenses.

**SEC. 501.** No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation or expenditure beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

**SEC. 502.** Subject to the requirements of section 503 of this Act, the unexpended balances of prior appropriations for activities in this Act may be transferred to appropriation accounts for such activities established pursuant to this Act, may be merged with funds in the applicable established accounts, and thereafter may be accounted for as one fund for the same time period as originally enacted.

**SEC. 503.** (a) None of the funds provided by this Act, provided by previous appropriations Acts to the agencies in or transferred to the Department of Homeland Security that remain available for obligation or expenditure in fiscal year 2015: Provided, That none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Homeland Security may be used to make payments to the Working Capital Fund, except for the amounts and activities allowed in the President's fiscal year 2015 budget: Provided further, That all departmental components shall be charged only for direct usage of each Working Capital Fund service: Provided further, That funds provided to the Working Capital Fund shall be available for obligation until expended to carry out the purposes of the Working Capital Fund: Provided further, That all departmental components shall be charged for the full cost of each service: Provided further, That the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be notified of any use of funds in excess of the amounts added to or included in the Budget transmitted to the President:

**SEC. 504.** The Department of Homeland Security Working Capital Fund, established pursuant to section 403 of Public Law 103–356 (31 U.S.C. 501 note), shall continue operations as a permanent working capital fund for fiscal year 2015: Provided, That none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of Homeland Security may be used to make payments to the Working Capital Fund, except for the amounts and activities allowed in the President's fiscal year 2015 budget: Provided further, That all departmental components shall be charged only for direct usage of each Working Capital Fund service: Provided further, That funds provided to the Working Capital Fund shall be available for obligation until expended to carry out the purposes of the Working Capital Fund: Provided further, That all departmental components shall be charged for the full cost of each service: Provided further, That the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be notified of any use of funds in excess of the amounts added to or included in the Budget transmitted to the President:
shall submit a quarterly execution report with activity level detail, not later than 30 days after the end of each quarter.

Sec. 505. Except as otherwise specifically provided, any unobligated balances remaining at the end of fiscal year 2015, as recorded in the financial records at the time of a reprogramming request, but not to exceed 50 percent of unobligated balances remaining at the end of fiscal year 2015 in this Act shall remain available through September 30, 2016, in the account for the purpose for which the appropriations were provided. Provided, That prior to the obligation of such funds, a request shall be submitted to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives for approval in accordance with section 503 of this Act.

Sec. 506. Funds made available by this Act for intelligence activities are deemed to be specifically authorized by the Congress for purposes of section 504 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 414) during fiscal year 2015 until the enactment of an Act authorizing intelligence activities for fiscal year 2015.

Sec. 507. (a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section, any funds made available by this Act may be used to—

(1) make or award a grant allocation, grant, contract, other transaction agreement, or task or delivery order; (2) award a multiple award contract or multiple award competitive contract; (3) award a multiple award contract, or multiple award competitive contract; (4) make a sole-source grant award; or (5) pursue publicly the intention to make or award items under paragraph (1), (2), (3), (4), or (5) including a contract covered by the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(b) The Secretary of Homeland Security may waive the prohibition under subsection (a) if the Secretary notifies the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives not later than 5 full business days after such an award is made or letters issued.

(c) If the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that compliance with this section would pose a substantial risk to human life, health, or safety, an award may be made without notice to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives not later than 5 full business days after such an award is made or letters issued.

(d) A notification under this section—

(1) may not involve funds that are not available for obligation; and

(2) shall include the amount of the award; the fiscal year for which the funds for the award were appropriated; the type of contract; and the account from which the funds are being drawn.

(e) No funds made available by any appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015 may be obligated for the purpose of conducting Federal law enforcement training without the advance approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, except that the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center is authorized to obtain the temporary use of additional facilities by lease, contract, or other agreement for training that cannot be accommodated on its existing facilities.

Sec. 509. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used for expenses for any construction, repair, alteration, or acquisition project for which a prospectus otherwise required under chapter 33 of title 40, United States Code, has not been approved by the date of enactment of this Act, or which may be expended for each project for required expenses for the development of a proposed prospectus.

Sec. 510. (a) Sections 520, 522, and 530 of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Acts, 2008 (division E of Public Law 110–161; 121 Stat. 2073 and 2074) shall apply with respect to funds made available in this Act in the same manner as such sections applied to funds made available in that Act.


Sec. 511. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to amend the oath of allegiance required by section 337 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1444).

Sec. 513. Not later than 30 days after the last day of each month, the Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Homeland Security shall provide to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a monthly budget and staffing report for that month that includes total obligations of the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year at the appropriation and program, project, and activity levels, by the source year of the appropriation. Total obligations for staffing shall also be presented on a full cost and funded full-time equivalent staffing levels, respectively, and the report shall specify the number of, and average cost per, contract employees for each office of the Department.

Sec. 514. Except as provided in section 44045 of title 49, United States Code, funds appropriated or transferred to Transportation Security Administration “Aviation Security”, “Administration”, and “Transportation Security Support” for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 that are recovered or deobligated shall be available only for the procurement or installation of explosives detection systems, air cargo, baggage, and checkpoint screening systems, subject to notification and approval by the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the status of such obligations.

Sec. 515. None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be used to process or approve a competition under Office of Management and Budget Circular A–76 for services provided by employees (including employees serving on a temporary or term basis) of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security unless the Contracting Officer of the Department of Homeland Security determines that those employees are not subject to Immigration Information Officers, Contract Representatives, Investigative Assistants, or Immigration Services Officers.

Sec. 516. None of the funds appropriated to “Coast Guard, Acquisition, Construction, and Improve- ments” for fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 for the 40–120 foot patrol boat conversion that are recovered, collected, or otherwise received as the result of negotiation, mediation, or litigation, shall be available until expended for the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.


Sec. 518. (a) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report not later than October 1, 2015, to the Committees on Appropriations of the Department of Homeland Security listing all grants and contracts awarded by any means other than full and open competition during fiscal year 2015.

(b) The Inspector General shall review the report required by subsection (a) to assess Depart- ment of Homeland Security policies and regulations and report the results of that review to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives not later than February 15, 2016.

Sec. 519. None of the funds provided by this or previous appropriations Acts shall be used to fund a position designated as a Principal Federal Official (or the successor thereto) for any Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) or related disaster assistance programs.

(1) the responsibilities of the Principal Federal Official do not include operational functions related to incident management, including coordination with the requirements of section 509(c) and sections 506(c)(3) and 506(c)(4)(A) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended, and section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5111).

(2) the responsibilities of the Principal Federal Official shall be consistent with paragraph (1) to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate, and

(3) not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide a report specifying timelines and milestones regarding the update of operations, planning, and policy documents, and training and exercise protocols, to ensure consistency with paragraph (1) of this section.

(2) Not later than 10 business days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide a report specifying timelines and milestones regarding the update of operations, planning, and policy documents, and training and exercise protocols, to ensure consistency with paragraph (1) of this section.

Sec. 520. None of the funds provided or otherwise made available in this Act shall be available to carry out section 872 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 452).

Sec. 521. Funds made available in this Act may be used to operate within the Civil Engineering Program of the Coast Guard nationwide, including civil engineering units, facilities design and construction centers, maintenance and logistics commands, and the Coast Guard Academy, except that none of the funds provided in this Act may be used to reduce operations within any Civil Engineering Unit unless specifically authorized by a statute enacted after the date of enactment of this Act.

Sec. 522. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to grant an immigration benefit unless the results of background checks required by law prior to the granting of the benefit have been received by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the results do not preclude the granting of the benefit.


(1) in subsection (a), by striking “Until Sep- tember 30, 2014,” and inserting “Until Sep- tember 30, 2015,”; and

(2) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “September 30, 2014,” and inserting “September 30, 2015.”

Sec. 524. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall require all contracts of the Department of Homeland Security that provide for any award to a foreign entity, foreign contractor, or foreign principal of the Department of Homeland Security listing all grants and contracts awarded by any means other than full and open competition during fiscal year 2015.
Sect. 525. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds provided in this Act or any other Act shall be used to approve a waiver of the navigation and vessel-inspection laws pursuant to subsection (b) for the Coast Guard, or to pay for the purchase, modification, or operation of vessels, equipment, facilities, or structures under this Act, unless such contract is entered into in accordance with the requirements of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, or chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, unless such contract is otherwise authorized by statute to be entered into without regard to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 526. None of the funds made available in this Act for the Department of Homeland Security: Provided, That the proceeds, net of the costs of sales, of any sales of real property or personal property which support United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the Secretary is authorized to dispose of individual who participates in the Registered Traveler Program, notwithstanding section 503 of this Act.

Sect. 531. The Administrator shall provide, not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, written certification that the procedures used by the agency to safeguard and dispose of such information in compliance with the requirements under subsection (a). Such certification shall include a description of the procedures used by the company to comply with such requirements. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that specific United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities no longer meet the mission need, the Administrator of General Services to sell all real and related personal property which support Service Processing Centers or other United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales in accordance withSubtitle I of title 41, United States Code, or chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, unless such contract is otherwise authorized by statute to be entered into without regard to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 532. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to approve a waiver of the navigation and vessel-inspection laws pursuant to subsection (b) for the Coast Guard, or to pay for the purchase, modification, or operation of vessels, equipment, facilities, or structures under this Act, unless such contract is entered into in accordance with the requirements of subtitle I of title 41, United States Code, or chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, unless such contract is otherwise authorized by statute to be entered into without regard to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 533. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used to transfer, release, or assist in the transfer or release to or within the United States, its territories, or possessions Khalid Sheikh Mohammad Detainee (1) is not a United States citizen or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States; and (2) is or was held on or after June 24, 2009, at the National Institute for Standards and Technology Special Publication 800–30, entitled “Risk Management Guide for Information Technology Systems”, and (3) any supplemental standards established by the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (referred to in this section as the “Administrator”).

Sect. 534. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for first-class travel by the employees of agencies funded by this Act in contravention of sections 301–10.122 through 301–10.124 of title 41, Code of Federal Regulations.

Sect. 535. None of the funds made available in this Act for the Department of Homeland Security: Provided, That the proceeds, net of the costs of sales, of any sales of real property or personal property which support United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service Procurement and Customs Enforcement Service Procurement Centers or other United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales incurred by the General Services Administration and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, shall be deposited as offsets against appropriations for facilities and equipment which are disposed of subject to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 536. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to conduct, or to implement any activities performed with respect to the Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center. In consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, shall notify the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall hereafter safeguard and dispose of such information in accordance with the requirements in—(1) the National Institute for Standards and Technology Special Publication 800–30, entitled “Risk Management Guide for Information Technology Systems”, (2) the National Institute for Standards and Technology Special Publication 800–53, Revision 3, entitled “Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations”, and (3) any supplemental standards established by the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (referred to in this section as the “Administrator”).

Sect. 537. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that specified United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales incurred by the General Services Administration and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, shall be deposited as offsets against appropriations for facilities and equipment which are disposed of subject to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 538. In developing any process to screen aviation passengers and crew for transportation or national security purposes, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that all such processes take into consideration such passengers’ and crew’s privacy and civil liberties consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Notwithstanding section 1569 of title 5, United States Code, any person who is a United States citizen or a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the Secretary shall hereafter safeguard and dispose of such information in compliance with the requirements under subsection (a). Such certification shall include a description of the procedures used by the company to comply with such requirements. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that specific United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities no longer meet the mission need, the Administrator of General Services to sell all real and related personal property which support Service Processing Centers or other United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales incurred by the General Services Administration and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, shall be deposited as offsets against appropriations for facilities and equipment which are disposed of subject to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 539. (a) Notwithstanding section 1569(n) of title 5, United States Code, the funds described in sections 301–10.122 through 301–10.124 shall be available, subject to appropriation, for the purpose of providing an immigrant transportation account, to the Department of Homeland Security: Provided further, That the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall reduce the United States Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center.

Sect. 540. For an additional amount for the “Office of the Under Secretary for Management”, $49,600,000, to remain available until expended, for necessary expenses to plan, acquire, design, construct, renovate, remediate, equip, furnish, maintain, and occupy buildings and facilities for the department headquarters consolidation project and associated mission support consolidation: Provided, That the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives shall receive an expenditure plan not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Act detailing the allocation of these funds.

Sect. 541. None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used by the Department of Homeland Security to enter into any Federal contract unless such contract is entered into in accordance with the requirements of title 41, United States Code, or chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, unless such contract is otherwise authorized by statute to be entered into without regard to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 542. None of the funds made available in this Act for the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and

Sect. 543. None of the funds made available in this Act for the Department of Homeland Security: Provided, That the proceeds, net of the costs of sales, of any sales of real property or personal property which support United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service Procurement and Customs Enforcement Service Procurement Centers or other United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales incurred by the General Services Administration and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, shall be deposited as offsets against appropriations for facilities and equipment which are disposed of subject to the above referenced statutes.

Sect. 544. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if the Secretary of Homeland Security determines that specified United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement owned detention facilities, subject to such terms and conditions as necessary to protect Government interests and meet program requirements: Provided further, That the proceeds of sales incurred by the General Services Administration and United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, shall be deposited as offsets against appropriations for facilities and equipment which are disposed of subject to the above referenced statutes.
Section 545. The Commissioner of United States Customs and Border Protection and the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement shall, not later than October 1, 2015, and October 1, 2016, 2017, and 2018, submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives, at the time that the President’s budget submission to Congress is submitted pursuant to the requirements of section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the information required in the multiyear investment and management plan, respectively, under the headings “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Salaries and Expenses” under title II of division D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Public Law 112–74); “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Border Security Fencing, Infrastructure, and Technology” under such title; and section 560 of such Act.

Section 546. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure enforcement of all immigration laws (as defined in section 103(a)(17) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(17))).

Section 547. (a) Of the amounts made available by this Act for “National Protection and Programs Directorate, Infrastructure Protection and Development”, $140,525,000 for the Federal Network Security program, project, and activity shall be used to deploy on Federal systems technology to improve the information security and conduct systems security improvement projects covered by section 354(a) of title 44, United States Code: Provided, That funds made available under this section shall be used to assist and support Government agencies in their efforts to provide adequate, risk-based, and cost-effective cybersecurity to address escalating and rapidly evolving threats to information security, including the protection of operations of a continuous monitoring and diagnostics program, in collaboration with departments and agencies, that includes equipment, software, and Department of Homeland Security supplied cybersecurity software: Provided further, That continuous monitoring and diagnostics software procured by the funds made available by this section shall not transmit to the Department of Homeland Security any personally identifiable information or content of network communications of other agencies’ users: Provided further, That such software shall be installed, maintained, and operated in accordance with all applicable privacy laws and agency-specific policies regarding network content.

(b) Funds made available under this section may not be used to supplant funds provided for any such system within an agency budget.

(c) Not later than July 1, 2015, the heads of all Federal agencies shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives expenditure plans for necessary cybersecurity improvements to address known vulnerabilities to information systems described in subsection (a).

(d) Not later than October 1, 2015, and semiannually thereafter, the heads of each Federal agency shall submit to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a report on the execution of the expenditure plan for that agency required by subsection (c).

(e) The report submitted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section the term “international conference” shall not include costs specified herein as being bursable fees.

Section 548. (a) The section shall not apply to the legislative and judicial branches of the Federal Government and shall apply to all Federal agencies within the executive branch except the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

(b) None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to maintain or establish a computer network unless such network blocks the viewing, downloading, and exchanging of pornography.

(c) Nothing in subsection (a) shall limit the use of funds necessary for any Federal, State, or local government entity or any other entity carrying out criminal investigations, prosecution, or adjudication activities.

Section 549. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by a Federal law enforcement officer to facilitate the transfer of an operable firearm to an individual if the Federal law enforcement officer is aware that the individual is an agent of a drug cartel unless law enforcement personnel of the United States continuously monitor or control the firearm at all times.

Section 550. None of the funds provided in this or any other Act may be obligated to implement the National Preparedness Grant Program or any other successor programs unless explicitly authorized by Congress.

Section 551. None of the funds made available in this Act or any successor programs may be used for the purpose of Public Advocate, or a successor position, within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Section 552. (a) Section 559 of division F of Public Law 113–76 is amended as follows:

(1) Subsection (b)(2)(B) is amended by adding at the end the following: “shall be reserved for personal property, including furniture, fixtures, and equipment.”;

and

(2) Subsection (c)(1)(B) is amended by inserting after “payment of overtime” the following: “and the salaries, training and benefits of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers”.

(b) The two categories of Public Law 113–6 are amended by inserting after “payment of overtime” the following: “and the salaries, training and benefits of individuals employed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in performing law enforcement functions at ports of entry, including primary and secondary processing of passengers”.

(c) The Commissioner of United States Customs and Border Protection may modify a reimbursable fee agreement in effect as of the date of enactment of this Act to include costs specified in this section.

Section 553. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to provide a travel or subsistence allowance to or for attendance of more than 50 employees of a single component of the Department of Homeland Security, who are stationed in the United States, who is a member of the Armed Forces, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security, or a designee, determines that such attendance is in the national interest and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives within at least 10 days of that determination and the basis for that determination: Provided, That for purposes of this section the term “international conference” shall mean a conference occurring outside of the United States attended by representatives of the United States Government and of foreign governments, international organizations, or non-governmental organizations.

Section 554. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to reimburse any Federal department or agency for its participation in a National Special Security Event.

Section 555. With the exception of countries with preclearance facilities in service prior to 2013, no border crossing fee on individuals crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry; or (c) any study relating to the imposition of a border crossing fee.

(b) BORDER CROSSING FEE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “border crossing fee means a fee that may be paid on entry or exit to an airport passenger or a private motor vehicle is required to pay for the privilege of crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry.

Section 556. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for the purpose of Public Advocate, or a successor position, within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Section 557. In making grants under the heading “Firefighter Assistance Grants”, the Secretary shall ensure that waivers from other successor programs to provide assistance under the heading “Firefighter Assistance Grants”, the Secretary shall ensure that waivers from non-federal entities are authorized by Congress.

Section 558. (a) In general.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall not—

(1) establish, collect, or otherwise impose any new border crossing fee on individuals crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry; or

(2) require any study relating to the imposition of a border crossing fee.

(b) Border Crossing Fee Defined.—In this section—

(1)(A) the term “border crossing fee means a fee that may be paid on entry or exit to an airport passenger or a private motor vehicle is required to pay for the privilege of crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry.

(2)(B) Border Crossing Fee Defined.—In this section, the term “border crossing fee means a fee that may be paid on entry or exit to an airport passenger or a private motor vehicle is required to pay for the privilege of crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry.

(c) Border Crossing Fee Defined.—In this section, the term “border crossing fee means a fee that may be paid on entry or exit to an airport passenger or a private motor vehicle is required to pay for the privilege of crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry.

(d) Border Crossing Fee Defined.—In this section, the term “border crossing fee means a fee that may be paid on entry or exit to an airport passenger or a private motor vehicle is required to pay for the privilege of crossing the Southern border or the Northern border at a land port of entry.

Section 559. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used by a Federal law enforcement officer to facilitate the transfer of an operable firearm to or for attendance of more than 50 employees of a single component of the Department of Homeland Security, who are stationed in the United States, who is a member of the Armed Forces, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security, or a designee, determines that such attendance is in the national interest and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives within at least 10 days of that determination and the basis for that determination: Provided, That for purposes of this section the term “international conference” shall mean a conference occurring outside of the United States attended by representatives of the United States Government and of foreign governments, international organizations, or non-governmental organizations.

Section 560. As authorized by section 601(b) of the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement Implementation Act (Public Law 112– 42) fees collected from passengers arriving from Canada, Mexico, or an adjacent island pursuant to section 1303(a)(5) of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (19 U.S.C. 180(a)(5)) shall be available until expended.

Section 561. None of the funds appropriated by this or any other Act shall be used to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel who prepare or submit appropriations language as part of the President’s budget submission to the Congress of the United States for programs under the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committees on the Department of Homeland Security that assumes revenues or reflects a reduction from the previous year due to user fees proposals that have not been enacted into law prior to the submission of such budget submitted by the Department of Homeland Security, any part of which uses the data of the convening of a committee of conference for the fiscal year 2016 appropriations Act.

Section 562. (a) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Congress by not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, beginning at the time the President’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2018 is submitted pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, a comprehensive report on the purchase and usage of weapons, subdivided by weapon type. The report shall include—

(1) the quantity of weapons in inventory at the end of the preceding calendar year, and the
poses of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Security Officer employed by the Transportation Security Officer employed by the Trans- Angeles International Airport, shall be deemed to line of duty on November 1, 2013, at the Los An- tsis employed in the buy Act for unobligated balances made available for the appropriations account for up to $95,000,000 in unobligated balances made available to the requesting Committee or tion. Law 110–161 (6 U.S.C. 1404) is hereby repealed. tion or through the Future Years Homeland Security Program; (2) justification for such change; and (4) an analysis of compensation alternatives to such change that were considered by the Dep-artment. Sec. 565. (a) Any agency receiving funds made available in this Act, shall, subject to sub- sections (b) and (c), post on the public Web site of the agency, the report required to be sub- mitted by the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives in this Act, upon the determination by the head of the agency that it shall serve the national inter- est. (b) Subsection (a) shall not apply to a report if—(1) the public posting of the report com- promises homeland or national security; or (2) the report contains proprietary informa- tion. (c) The head of the agency posting such report shall do so only after such report has been made available to the requesting Committee or Committees of Congress for no less than 45 days except in the case of emergency. Sec. 566. Section 605 of division E of Public Law 110–161 (6 U.S.C. 1404) is hereby repealed. Sec. 567. The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may transfer up to $95,000,000 in unobligated balances made available for the appropriations account for “Federal Emergency Management Agency, Dis- aster Assistance Direct Loan Program” under section 2(a) of the Community Disaster Loan Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–48; 119 Stat. 2061) or under section 1 of division G of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 (Public Law 110–329; 122 Stat. 3592) to the appropriations account for “Federal Emergency Manage- ment Agency, Disaster Relief Fund”. Amounts transferred to such account under this section shall be available for any authorized purpose of such account. Sec. 568. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, Gerardo Ismael Hernandez, a Transportation Security Officer employed by the Trans- portation Security Administration who died as the direct result of an injury sustained in the line of duty on November 1, 2013, at the Los An- geles International Airport, shall be deemed to have died in the line of duty for purposes of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Street Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3711 et seq.). Sec. 569. The Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Homeland Security shall ensure the congressional budget justifications accompanying the President’s budget proposal for the Homeland Security Appropriations Act, fiscal year 2015, submitted pursuant to section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, include estimates of the number of unaccompanied alien children present in the United States in fiscal year 2015 and the number of agent or officer hours required to process, manage, and care for such children. Provided, That such materials shall also include all other associated costs for each relevant Departmental compo- nent, including but not limited to personnel; equipment; supplies; facilities; managerial, tech- nical, and administrative treatment; and all costs associated with transporting such children from one Departmental component to another or from a Departmental component to another Federal agency. Sec. 570. Notwithstanding section 404 or 420 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer- gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c and 5177), until September 30, 2015, the President may pro- vide hazard mitigation assistance in accordance with such section 404 in any area in which as- sistance was provided under such section 420. Sec. 571. That without regard to the limitation as to time and condition of section 503(d) of this Act, the Secretary may propose to repro- gram within and transfer funds into “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Mitigation, and Expenses” and “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Salaries and Expenses” as nec- essary to ensure the care and transportation of unaccompanied alien children. Sec. 572. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, grants awarded to States along the Southwest Border States under sections 2003 or 2004 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 604 and 605) using funds provided under the heading “Federal Emergency Management Agency, State and Local Programs” in division F of Public Law 113–176, or division D of Public Law 113–6 may be used by recipients or sub-recipients for costs, or rem- bursement of costs, related to providing humani- tarian relief to unaccompanied alien children and alien adults accompanied by an alien minor where they are encountered after entering the United States, provided that such costs were incurred during the award period of performance. (RESCISSIONS) Sec. 573. Of the funds appropriated to the De- partment of Homeland Security, the following funds are hereby rescinded from the following accounts and programs in the specified amounts: (1) $1,377,018 from “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Salaries and Expenses”; (2) $57,998 from “Coast Guard, Acquisition, Construction, and Improvements”; and (3) $16,627,000 from “Science and Tech- nology, Research, Development, Acquisition, and Operations” account 702800. Sec. 574. From the unobligated balances made available in the Department of the Treasury Forfeiture Fund established by section 9703 of title 31, United States Code, (added by section 638 of Public Law 102–203), $175,000 shall be rescinded. (RESCISSIONS) Sec. 575. Of the funds transferred to the De- partment of Homeland Security when it was cre- ated in 2003, the following funds are hereby re- rescinded from the following accounts and pro- grams in the specified amounts: (1) $1,317,018 from “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Salaries and Expenses”; (2) $57,998 from “Coast Guard, Acquisition, Construction, and Improvements”; and (3) $16,627,000 from “Science and Tech- nology, Research, Development, Acquisition, and Operations” account 702800. Sec. 576. The following unobligated balances made available to the Department of Homeland Security pursuant to section 505 of the Depart- ment of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76) are rescinded: (1) $463,404 from “Office of the Secretary and Executive Management”; (2) $47,023 from “Office of the Under Secretary for Management”; (3) $29,852 from “Office of the Chief Financial Officer”; (4) $16,346 from “Office of the Chief Informa- tion Officer”; (5) $816,304 from “Analysis and Operations”; (6) $158,311 from “Office of Inspector General”; (7) $635,133 from “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Salaries and Expenses”; (8) $65,185 from “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Automation Modernization”; (9) $96,177 from “U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations”; (10) $39,002 from “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Salaries and Expenses”; (11) $600,000 from “Transportation Security Administration, Federal Air Marshals”; (12) $3,066,321 from “Coast Guard, Operating Expenses”; and (13) $208,654 from “Coast Guard, Reserve Training”; (14) $1,722,319 from “Coast Guard, Acquisi- tion, Construction, and Improvements”; (15) $1,256,900 from “United States Secret Service, Salaries and Expenses”; (16) $107,432 from “National Protection and Programs Directorate, Management and Adminis- tration”; (17) $679,212 from “National Protection and Programs Directorate, Infrastructure Protection and Information Security”; (18) $36,169 from “Office of Biometric Identity Management”; (19) $37,201 from “Office of Health Affairs”; (20) $818,184 from “Federal Emergency Management Agency, Salaries and Expenses”; (21) $447,280 from “Federal Emergency Management Agency, State and Local Programs”; and (22) $98,826 from “Federal Emergency Man- agement Agency, United States Fire Administra- tion”. (RESCISSIONS) Sec. 577. For the purpose of section 1109 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2015 (division G of Public Law 113–76), with respect to the “Emergency Management Fund” account 702416; and (RESCISSIONS) Sec. 578. Sec. 605 of division E of Public Law 2014 (6 U.S.C. 1404) is hereby repealed.
the same effect with respect to the allocation of funds and implementation of this Act as designated by the Congress as being for disaster relief pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. 

Mr. SIMPSON (during the reading). The Speaker pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky? Mr. SIMPSON (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I have a privileged motion under clause 4 of the rules of the House. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk read as follows:

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Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the Senate amendment. Mr. SIMPSON (during the reading). The Clerk will continue to read. The Clerk continued to read. The Clerk will continue to read. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky? Mr. SIMPSON (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I have a privileged motion under clause 4 of the rules of the House. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk read as follows:

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MRS. LOWEY. No, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Kentucky opposed?

MR. MASSIE. I am, yes. I am opposed to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MASSIE) each will control 20 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, it is high time to act to protect the people who elected this unconstitutional overreach.

Congress must continue to fight the fiscal year, and it is imperative that we move forward to ensure the security of our Nation by keeping the Department of Homeland Security funded until the end of the fiscal year.

Funding for the Department of Homeland Security will expire this week. To allow a shutdown of these critical functions would be an abdication of one of our primary duties as Members of Congress.

The Senate has now done all it can do, and we are nearly halfway into the fiscal year, and it is imperative that we pass bills, and let the courts support our actions.

We would not be here if it weren’t for the Senate for their bad behavior. We should reject this motion and force a new discussion on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that all we are doing is rewarding the Senate for having bad behavior.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. DE SANTIS).

Mr. DE SANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I hear you Republicans, you just need to learn how to govern. If it was just about governing, then you get together in conference.

If you are concerned about illegal immigration, vote for this bill. It provides $39.7 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, vote for this bill. It fully funds E-Verify. If you are concerned about illegal immigration and interior enforcement, vote for this bill. It provides $7.2 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 34,000 detention beds, and an increase in family detention beds by 3,732

Despots all over the world, they govern. They keep the trains running on time.

But we stand for something different. We stand for a constitutional republic, where we have three branches that all have an equal say. The Founding Fathers gave us a tool to deal with a time just like this. It is called the power of the purse. If we relegate that responsibility and dropkick it to the courts, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DE SANTIS) just said, then they have nothing else than to assume that we just basically folded to the pressure.

I believe this is a sad day for America. I believe America deserves better. If we are not going to fight now, when are we going to fight?

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

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT).

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the privileged resolution and encourage my colleagues to concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 240 in order to pass the fiscal year 2015 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill.

It is time for us to move forward and demonstrate our trust capacity to govern to the American people and to those tasked with the arduous work of defending our borders, protecting our communities, and manning the front lines when confronted by natural disasters or acts of terrorism.

I had the distinct privilege and pleasure of working on the underlying appropriates bill as a member of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. I am proud of what we accomplished. I can assure my colleagues that this is a good bill. It is a darn good bill. It is a bipartisan bill. Among the bill’s many highlights, it would support the largest operational force of Border Patrol agents and CBP officers in history.

If you are concerned about illegal immigration, vote for this bill. If you are concerned about illegal immigration and interior enforcement, vote for this bill. It provides $7.2 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 34,000 detention beds, and an increase in family detention beds by 3,732
Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House to move past the corrosive pattern of self-imposed cliffs and shutdowns and get to the work that the American people expect us to address—issues like tax reform, trade, transportation and infrastructure, things that are going to help create American jobs and improve our economy. It is time to move forward and stop playing these silly games.

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

Mr. SIMPSON. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DENT. At these times of global uncertainty and brutal acts of terrorism, it is imperative that we maintain our vigilant vigilance against the numerous threats facing our homeland.

Again, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. It is the right bill. It is a bill that we supported last summer with strong overwhelming support on both sides of the aisle. It deserves that same kind of support here today.

Let’s prove to the American people that we are serious about protecting this homeland and that we have the capacity to govern. These cliffs are disastrous for all of us. It is time to move on.

Mrs. LOWEY. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. CLAWSON).

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this is America. Everybody matters in America. I grew up with somebody who seemed to have bad luck from day one. Where I seemed to catch breaks, he could get none. And recently, mid-last year, because of a move, he needed to find a job. He went months without finding full-time employment, never got benefits, never got the stability that he looked for and his wife. And his friends, Mr. Speaker, have been through much.

When the President made his edict, he called me on the phone. He said: ‘I don’t understand what you all are doing in Washington. I want to know if what is going on right now is going to help me get a job.’

And I said: ‘Unfortunately, you have got a lot of new competitors in the labor force.

I say, this is America, and everybody matters. I say, the unemployed folks, the 18 million underemployed and unemployed, haven’t been a part of this conversation like they needed to be. I say that unilateral actions by a leader who doesn’t take all stake-

holders into account makes those that aren’t taken into account not matter. I say we need to have this conversation again.

This is America. Everybody matters, not just those that came over the border legally. We have been here looking for jobs for long periods of time. I say we can do better. I say we can have a broader conversation. I say everybody matters.

You all know these people that are unemployed. They are in your family. They are your close friends. They are the people you see every day doing the jobs that some of us wouldn’t want to do. I say, those people matter.

I say, Mr. President, before you do a cram-down of the law for the benefit of one group of our society, I say all the other groups in this society, particularly the unemployed, also matter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. Brown) said, Why are we here? We are here for American jobs.

Let me tell you why we are here: because the President of the United States violated the constitutional separation of powers. Regardless of how you feel about immigration or immigration reform or even amnesty, surely you believe in the United States Constitution that you swore an oath to. Surely you believe in this institution that we are debating in today.

He said 22 times that he did not have the power to unilaterally make law or change the law, yet that is, in fact, what he did. That is why this debate is so important today. It really has nothing to do with DHS funding, amnesty, or immigration. That is the vehicle, that the vehicle is used for something unconstitutional; more importantly, it is unconstitutional; more importantly, it is unfair to voters, as our Secretary of State testified, that now they will have the documents that will potentially make it much easier for 4 to 5 million people to participate in our election process.

And most importantly, Mr. Speaker, it is unfair to legal immigrants who did it the right way, who followed the law, who came here and want to be a part of this great country, this great nation of the world, as we just heard Prime Minister Netanyahu talking about how great this country is—it is unfair to legal immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, this is unconstitutional and wrong. Most importantly, it is unfair.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MASSIE. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE).

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

Mr. Speaker, I share the outrage of my friends over the President’s actions because I don’t think there is any question that is why we are here. The President did something that most of us, I think, on our side of the aisle believe was unconstitutional, illegal, and ill-advised.

Secondly, I share my friend’s anger at the United States Senate. I think it is irresponsible not to pass a bill and act on it, not to go to conference. That is exactly the way we are designed to work. We know that, frankly, the Democratic now minority, thankfully, in the Senate has operated that way for 4 years. I am not surprised, having operated that way in the majority, that they continue to operate that way in the minority.

But every now and then, you need to take a step back and recognize we are not the only place where these issues get threshed out, and we are not the only players in this drama.

Indeed, we have been very fortunate on our side of this debate. We have
been joined by 26 State attorneys general who hold exactly the same view that we do and have taken the President of the United States and the administration to court and have prevailed in the first court case, as my friend pointed out. In this case, they have won an injunction so that the President cannot do the very things my friends are concerned about that he wants to do.

So we not only have the court, at least this time on our side, but we have it in a venue where you actually can win in the end.

We are not likely to be able to do that in the Congress, given the Democratic filibuster in the other body and the Presidential veto at the end of the process. In the courts, you can actually win. It is a constitutional issue. It ought to be settled constitutionally through a judicial process.

Since we have stopped the President, since we are prevailing in court, it seems to me the logical thing to do is what the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) suggested and look at a bipartisan compromise bill that protects the American people from real and physical harm and danger at the moment that we are sorting out our constitutional political differences in the appropriate format. That is all this bill is about. It was agreed to in a bipartisan fashion. It was agreed to in a bicameral fashion. The reasons why we were concerned about it or used it have now been addressed by the courts.

So I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let’s set aside our differences. They are going to be resolved in the appropriate way, in the appropriate fashion, and in the right forum. And let’s do the right thing for the American people, pass this legislation, and make sure that our fellow citizens stay secure.

Mrs. LOWEY. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Pennsylvania who spoke earlier was absolutely right. The people back home want us to do things. So I think the important things to do now is to find out, why aren’t we able to do anything? And I lay the blame firmly at the feet of the seven Senate Democrats who have said to their voters, they thought what the President did was wrong, yet they have voted time and again to continue the filibuster. That is wrong. And those are the people who are preventing the country from moving forward.

Beyond that, to the extent those seven Senate Democrats continue to want to abuse the rules, it is incumbent upon our conservative Republican colleagues in the Senate to change the rules.

Conservative Republicans, Mr. Speaker, who have been very quick to try to tell the House what to do should now be over there right now making the case that if the Senate Democrats are going to use a rule to undermine the Constitution, then the rule needs to change.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOMMETT).

Mr. GOMMETT. Mr. Speaker, last December, we were told that the best way to approach the matter—despite some of us thinking to the contrary—was to fund everything but DHS. We were told, This is the play.

Well, some of us were afraid that if we did that, that we would come to this point and totally cave and would allow at least a congressional statement that we are not going to take action to defund illegal, unconstitutional amnesty.

So I stand with those veterans who believe that they should get health care before people who came illegally, that they should get a hotline to call before those who came illegally. I stand with the seniors who believe they deserve the Social Security they paid into, rather than people who have come illegally and are even going to get tax refunds, when they didn’t put any taxes in.

I stand with the Speaker of the House of Representatives—at least where he was last week.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT).

Mr. GARRETT. I thank the gentleman. Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today is, in fact, security. As a Member of Congress from the Fifth Congressional District of New Jersey, my constituents in New Jersey, like most Americans, are concerned about the devastating impact of a lack of security in certain areas. We live in the shadow of the Twin Towers and understand when security is not a paramount interest of this government. But with that said, an equal responsibility of this Congress and this government is to the security as being a nation of laws and abiding by the fundamental law of this country, which is the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, we can achieve both of those: be a secure nation by funding Homeland Security, which this House has done twice now, and we can also become a nation by following the rule of law and following the Constitution which this body has done twice now by sending full funding of Homeland Security to the Senate and simply asking them to do what all Americans want Washington to do today—conference on these issues, discuss these issues, and come to a resolution where the Constitution is upheld, the rule of law is upheld, and homeland security is upheld as well.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR).

Mr. GOSAR. I thank my friend. Mr. Speaker, constitutional attorney Jonathan Turley once said that, since Roosevelt, we have made the executive branch stronger and stronger and stronger. But they have actually had a dance partner, and that is us—that is us the legislative branch, both the House and the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, when are we going to stand up for the rule of law? How do I go back to Arizona where they defy the rule of law, where we allow anybody to bilk everybody of $200, and go past the front of the line? How do we accomplish that without standing up for something? This is that time. This is the time to stand up and not leave everything to the courts.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Kentucky ready to close?

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I have more speakers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. MASSIE. At this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, there was a comment about this is about governing. It really is. It is about governing constitutionally. We are no longer three separate but equal branches of government. The abuse of the executive order has diminished Congress, and the abuse of the Senate rules has diminished this House. We are now reduced to passing what the Senate will allow us to pass, and the Senate is reduced to passing what the President will not veto.

This is about the Constitution. We have 3 more days in which we can consider legislation that upholds the rule of law and that restores the balance of powers. We should take those 3 days.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a day that we will remember for the rest of our lives. The country is looking to us right now to make a decision whether or not we will uphold our oath of office. I call upon every Member of this House to be an oath keeper.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR).

Mr. LABRADOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky.

This fight today is not about immigration. This fight today is about the separation of powers. Any person who votes for this deal today is voting to cede some of our power to the Executive. Any person who votes for this deal today is voting to allow the President to make decisions like this on taxation, on EPA, and on any other agency that this President decides that he has the executive authority to take over the powers of.

Mr. Speaker, today we all sat here, and I think every Republican stood up when Bibi Netanyahu talked about
leadership. When he talked about what it was important for a leader to do, he said that we are being told that the only alternative to this bad deal—speaking about the deal on Iran—is war. That is just not true. The alternative to this bad deal today is a better deal. Every one of our Republican stood up when he said that.

But today we are being told by our leadership that the only alternative to this bad deal is a government shutdown. That is not true. The alternative to this bad deal is a better deal. It is to force the Senate to actually go to conference so both the House and the Senate can speak the will of the American people.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT).

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in this body knows what it means to run for office. We each represent 700,000 people, and we each take that very seriously. So it is a sad day today. Everybody in this body has fought very hard to try to come to agreement. Unfortunately, Members in the other body have not allowed us to do that. The fault lies in the U.S. Senate.

We have asked and we have trusted our leadership to come up with a strong fight, strong messaging, whatever we can do to solve this constitutional problem for the last 2 months, and at the last minute of the day, the Senate has delayed, delayed, and delayed. So what is really going on is they are not standing up and representing their people at home. We in this body owe it to the American people to represent their views, and the Senate will not even allow a vote to bring up a debate.

Mr. Speaker, I implore everyone back at home and in my district and across the country to ask your kids; ask your ninth graders in high school civics class and ask them how these bodies are supposed to operate. Ask them to investigate and we investigate what it is that the Senate will not even allow a vote to defend the U.S. Constitution that we represent 700,000 people, and we each take that very seriously. So it is a sad day today. Everybody in this body has fought very hard to try to come to agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the first thing to do is that we are being told that the Senate will not do its job in representing their people at home. We in this body owe it to the American people.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I want to look around this body. What are we asking to do? We are asking to fund DHS 100 percent. We are asking to put safeguards in that the President does not move forward with an executive order that has been deemed illegal by a Federal judge. That is all we are asking. And we need to have that language in this bill.

I don’t know anybody in here who doesn’t want to fund DHS, and I don’t want to fund DHS without that funding or without that language in there blocking what this President wants to do, and if we vote for that, we are voting against our Constitution. Article I, section 8 is very clear that we have the authority for naturalization, and I say we vote against funding without that safeguard.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

Mr. HICE. Mr. Speaker, we all know, we are in this predicament and in this mess because of the unconstitutional and unilateral decisions from the President to ignore our Constitution, and the only thing standing in the way of that progressing is a stay from the courts. As thankful as I am for the courts, the reality is we must stand up and defend our Constitution. It is a constitutional issue, Mr. Speaker, and we have the responsibility to stand for that cause.

This is not a time to watch this body be obstructed from multiple attempts to make it dysfunctional. It is a constitutional issue. This is a time to stand upon the Constitution, and I urge this body to do so.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky will be first to close.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 1/4 minutes remaining.

Mr. MASSIE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, the Congress and, in particular, the House of Representatives has the power of the purse. Our Constitution gives this power to the legislative branch, the executive branch, this means that the President cannot fund his illegal actions, why should the American people ever trust us again? They will realize that all our bluster about border security is just that, bluster. They will realize that we don’t actually care about the best interests of the American people and that, instead, we just care about going along to get along, even if that means going along with the unconstitutional and illegal actions of the executive branch.

Today we heard Mr. Netanyahu say this is the most powerful legislative organization in the world. I would say it is—except for when the Senate decides that it is not. We need to stand up, use the power of the purse, and exercise our constitutional duty to fund only legal and constitutional activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote today in the best interests of the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I support the motion to recede and concur, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the spirited debate we have had, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with many of the comments made by my colleague from Kentucky and the people that have spoken during his time. The problem is I don’t see a path to victory with what they are looking at. What they want to do will not result in defunding the President’s actions, because there is no funding in this bill for the President’s actions. There is no funding in this bill for the President’s actions. Everybody knows that, don’t they? We will not defund the Department of Homeland Security. And that is not a victory. That is dangerous.
Mr. Speaker, there is a difference of opinion between the Republicans and Democrats and between the administration and Congress as to whether the actions that the President made were constitutional or not. I have actually voted for something in this body several years ago that I thought was perfectly legal and perfectly constitutional. The court later found out it was unconstitutional and told us it was unconstitutional. That is why we have a court. When there are differences of opinion as to what is constitutional and what is not constitutional, a court makes that determination. It has happened since the Founders who wrote our Constitution disagreed about what they had written—Marbury v. Madison. It was up to the court to make the determination of what the Constitution said.

As for voting for this hurting our case—it is not our case; it is the Attorney General’s case of the States—that is before the courts currently, if this voting to defund Homeland Security that doesn’t have any funding for the President’s actions hurts our case, then I would say the law that passed Congress can’t be declared unconstitutional because we all voted for it. That is not reality. Again, let the courts do their job.

Now, it is true that in a majority in this Congress and in the Senate to defund the President’s actions, but because of the Senate’s rules, it didn’t pass.

We didn’t even get to go to conference because of the Senate rules. Some people suggest maybe we ought to change the Senate rules. We ought to insist that the Senate change their rules.

For the last 4, 8 years, I was kind of glad the Senate rules were the way they were. They prevented what I believed to be a lot of bad stuff from coming out of the Senate. I don’t know that I would go that way because, remember, at some point in time in history—I hope it is not soon—but at some point in time in history, my party is going to be in the minority over there, and it is going to be nice to be able to control some of the agenda.

Let’s remember, the underlying bill is a darn good bill, and we need to pass it, and we need to pass it for the security of the American people, and for the employees that work at the Department of Homeland Security, so that those that are considered essential don’t have to go to work without pay. That is irresponsible. That is us not doing our job. I will fight with anyone, and I will stand on their side—as long as they can show me a path to potential victory. Let’s get this bill passed. It is a good bill. I encourage all my colleagues to vote for this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the motion.
Mr. GRAYSON changed his vote from "nay" to "yea.

The motion to recede and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 240 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. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 109 I am a "yes" vote. I could not return from a White House meeting in time to meet the rollcall.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote because of a serious illness in my family. Had I been present, I would have voted: rollcall No. 108—"aye," rollcall No. 109—"nay.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

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

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

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Costello of Pennsylvania). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor on behalf of a lot of colleagues who can't be here right now and on behalf of our colleagues who are going to speak this afternoon, to talk about the budget of the United States Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon after our legislative business for the day because it is the concern of many of us—and perhaps it is the concern of all of us who ran for office, who got elected, who honorably serve in this body—to say—to make sure, perhaps—that our priorities are in order.

And, Mr. Speaker, if you simply look at any number of "debt clocks" that run on all kinds of different Web sites, including one that continues live in my office, you see perhaps—I hope it is clear to you, Mr. Speaker—that our priorities are not in order. We are over $18 trillion in debt as I take the microphone right now.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the half of it. Over the next several decades we are scheduled to have over $100 trillion in debt. And that is not acceptable. In fact, I can't think of too many things that are more immoral than the present-day majority, than our present-day citizens leaving this burden to future citizens, people who do not yet exist. Talk about taxation without representation. But that is what we are faced with. That is what we do every day around here when our budget is not in balance and our priorities remain out of order.

To be clear, Mr. Speaker, we are able to get to this point, as very few other countries in the entirety of the history of the world are, because of the fact that we are able to print money, and because of the fact that, despite all our problems, when compared in a relative fashion to all the other non-Chinese economies in the world, we simply aren't as bad yet. But over time, that can very easily change, Mr. Speaker.

The solution to this isn't all that complicated. We have to stop spending more than we take in. We have to keep growing our economy. We have to simplify our Tax Code so that it can actually generate more revenue than it is doing right now. Of course, we have to reform what is driving the debt, and that is our entitlements. That is what the Republicans—in this Chamber, at least—are trying to achieve. We are trying to put our priorities back in balance.

Washington doesn't have a revenue problem. Mr. Speaker: Washington has a spending problem. In terms of revenue, we take in over $2 trillion a year—and these are rough figures—but we spend generally over $3 trillion. That is simply not sustainable. That simply can't go on if we are to have any credibility on this issue and if we are going to remain a strong country, best of nations in the 21st century, and continue to win.

So the House Budget Committee, and specifically the Republicans on the House Budget Committee, are about getting our priorities in order. And frankly, to our credit, for the last 4 years, Mr. Speaker, we have done just that.

Every year since 2010, we have proposed balanced budgets that, if followed, would have led us on a path to prosperity, would have made it clear that we are in the world again and the best investment going. All we had to do is take the steps outlined in that budget and it would have become so.

This year, we are going to try again.

We are going to balance this budget. We are going to have a markup in a week or so. We are going to propose and present ideas to the American public. Most of these ideas they have seen before over the last 4 years. There may be some new ones. We are still writing our budget. We are still taking input from Members and non-Members alike.

But one thing the American people can count on: it will be an honest budget. It will be credible. It will balance, and it will fulfill the promise we explicitly and implicitly made over and again to future generations that their generation will be better off than the generation before it. Isn't that what we are all about? Isn't that what we are supposed to be about?

But as I speak with you here today, the facts tell a different story. In fact, the current generation is the first one in American history that is destined and will, by any objective measure, leave the next one worse off. It has never happened before in American history. It is happening now.

Now, several of the Budget Committee refuse to let that happen on our watch, and so we come to you tonight with several ideas.

I want to first recognize a very good friend of mine, a professional who came from the private sector and practiced accounting as a certified public accountant for over 25 years. He has added tremendous value to all the work we are doing on the Budget Committee. Aside from budget issues, he is a tremendous asset to nearly every issue that is debated on the floor of the House. I yield the floor, Mr. Speaker, to my good friend, Congressman RICE of South Carolina.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding. South Carolina thanks you.

What an honor it is to stand here before this group to talk about the Federal budget. These were a couple of slides that were actually handed out to the Budget Committee that illustrate very wonderfully the challenge that we face.

The total revenue for the Federal Government for fiscal year 2014 is $3.02 trillion, most of it from individual income taxes. And then social insurance is the payroll taxes we pay for Social Security and Medicare, and then we have the spending. You can compare the two.

Revenues are $3.02 trillion. Spending is $3.5 trillion. Our deficit is half a trillion dollars, roughly, projected this year. That sounds terrible. Of course, 3 years ago, just before I was elected to Congress, it was a $1.4 trillion deficit. So it has, in fact, been cut well down. It is about 40 percent of what it was. And I will take all the credit for that.

Actually, it has come down dramatically. But we are still on an unsustainable path, and it is projected to rise, largely because of demographics. The baby boomers are retiring, and the need for social insurance is going to rise in the coming decades. It will overwhelm us if we do not prepare for it.

Republicans, Democrats, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of Management and Budget—all known economist will tell you that if we don't deal with this issue, it will overwhelm us. We are on an unsustainable path. We are piling billions and billions of dollars in debt on our children and our grandchildren every day.

Right now, we stand at $18 trillion in debt. On our current path, I believe the number $25 trillion is what they are projecting at the end of 10 years if we don't do something to deal with it.

If you look at the spending, you can see the red areas are what they call entitlement spending or mandatory spending. Social Security being the...
biggest part of that, and Medicare, Medicaid. Then interest on the debt is here at $229 billion a year. And then other mandatory, which would be unemploy- ment, welfare; the ObamaCare insurance subsidies will be in that. You can see that red area is about two-thirds of our total spending of $3.5 trillion.

The blue area is what they call discretionary spending. Discretionary spending is the only part that Congress has a play or a say in every year. If you break that down further, the discretionary spending, defense is this part here in dark blue that is about half of it, and nondefense discretionary is the remainder.

Nondefense discretionary is the thing most people think of as government; the Red is([

The Department of the Interior, Park Serv-
-ice, EPA, Army Corps of Engineers, all these things are in nondefense discre-
tionary. People think: Well, gosh, we should cut the Department of Edu-
cation because we should cut the EPA.

Well, that is great. If you cut every dime of nondefense discretionary spending out of the budget, every cent of it, we would still have a deficit. If you eliminated every part other than defense, we would still have a deficit, so you see how severe the problem is.

Another thing people don’t under-

It is as low as it has been since Presi-
dent Barack Obama has been in office because of the sequester. Okay? Defense and nondefense discretionary have been whittled down over the last several years; and, in fact, nondefense discretionary spending is below 2008 levels right now.

It is as low as it has been since Presi-
dent Barack Obama has been in office because of the sequester. Okay?

You can cut a household without a budget, you can’t run a bakery without a budget, and here we are, trying to run the most complex institution on Earth without a budget. It is not just a lack of long-term planning; it is a lack of even planning for the current year. You have to have a budget.

Anyway, we are on track to have a budget. The House Committee on the Budget has put one out for the last 3 years, and the Senate issued its budget now. The House Committee on the Budget’s budget over the last 3 years would have balanced in 10 years.

I anticipate we will do the same thing this year. We will put forth a budget that has reasonable adjustments and balances in 10 years and stops piling mounds of debt on our chil-
dren and our grandchildren.

The President’s budget, on the other hand, increases from $3.5 tri-

The President’s budget, on the other hand, increases from $3.5 trillion a year to a little over $4 trillion a year. It adds $2 trillion in taxes over the next 10 years, and it never balances, ever. It continues to pile debt on our children and grandchildren. The House Committee on the Budget’s budget doesn’t raise taxes, and it does balance in 10 years.

This is the projection by the Congres-
sional Budget Office—nonpartisan, not Democrat, not Republican—of what the path that we are currently on. The cutoff of the blue area there is where we are today.

You can see with the demographics and with the burden that we are going to be placing on our social safety net and in our Medicare—Social Security and Medicare—right now, where we are, if you look back in his-
tory—this goes back to 1941—never in the history of the United States has the debt as a percentage of our gross domestic product been as high as it is right now.

The debt is about 70 percent of our gross domestic product, the debt held by the public. The only other time that it was this high was in World War II.

We can adopt changes. We have time. We can adopt some modifications to bring this back under control; but, if we do not, you can see the mushrooming effect of the additional debt, interest rates climbing. Eliminating the interest that we pay on our debt rising, the ef-
flect of the entitlement programs, run-
ning our debt to over 100 percent of our gross domestic product, which will make it difficult for us to recover from.

Mr. ROKITA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman, and I thank the gentleman for showing not only Members of Congress, but the American people, this chart that you have right there. I think you are hitting the nail on the head. This is ex-

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I wish you would.

Mr. ROKITA. Well, if you go back to World War II, the gentleman rightly points out, Mr. Speaker, you see that our debt level crescendoed, obviously an result of that war.

What is different about that period in our history from our current situation is the fact that, as the gentleman knows, World War II, one way or the other, was going to be a one-time event.

Thankfully, because of this country’s courage and the men and women who served for our country, it ended the right way. As a result, the event ended, and we immediately began paying down our debt.

Some might say: Well, we have been there before. What is different this time? Why can’t we solve the problem this time?

Well, we can solve the problem because, number one, we are Americans, but what makes the situation different, Mr. Speaker, and what the gentleman alludes to is what is driving our debt.

What drove the debt in World War II, again, was a one-time event. What is driving the debt now is not scheduled to end, has no end really in sight, un-

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Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I wish you would.
so—other countries, who by the very definition of being other nations don’t have our best interests top of mind.

That makes this a very different situation as well. We are increasingly, over time, becoming beholden to other countries to finance our spending problem.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue yielding to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

Mr. ROKITA, were you aware that by the year 2030, according to CBO’s projections, that our spending just on Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and our interest, just those four things will take up the entire revenue of the United States Government, leaving nothing for other mandatory programs, like welfare, like unemployment, like food stamps, like all those things?

It will also leave nothing for other discretionary spending like the FBI, like the Park Service, like border security, and like the CIA; but even more importantly, it will leave nothing for defense, nothing for the Army, the Navy, the Coast Guard, nothing to buy the first bullet.

By 2030, just those four programs—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and the interest on our debt—will take up every dime that the United States Government brings in if we don’t change something.

Now, the President’s budget adds $2 trillion in taxes, but it adds even more than that in spending. What does he spend the money on? It is a lot of additional programs. He adds a little bit to defense, he adds a little bit across the board to other discretionary, but he throws in a lot of other programs—for example, his proposal to pay for community college, which is a nice idea, a wonderful idea—but the problem is that we can’t pay for the promises we have made already.

Mr. Speaker, shouldn’t we, before we make new promises, find a way to pay for the promises that we have already made?

The President’s budget, in addition to more taxes, more spending, and more government programs, it is just another big growth of government, which we have seen over and over again during this administration. From Dodd-Frank to ObamaCare and other things, we have seen a huge explosion in government.

Now, what has the effect of that been? The President loves to say, Mr. Speaker, that he is for the middle class, but I want to show you an interesting graph.

This blue line here going down is the median household income in the United States. This is the middle class that the President is always saying he is for. You can see from 2008—when he took office—until today, that blue line has gone down 8.7 percent.

Median household income in the country has dropped 8.7 percent—more government programs, bigger government, more intrusion on government in your life, more intrusion of government in our national economy—and you can see the stifling effect that it has on our economy.

I think we had 2 percent growth last quarter. Here we are, 7 years after the Great Recession. We have had a huge snapback. All we are doing is muddling along, trying to swallow this giant addition of Big Government that is being created. Middle class income is down 8.7 percent.

Look at this, Mr. Speaker. This purple line here represents the consumer price index for medical care. Over that same time, it is up over 10 percent. This red line represents the consumer price index for gasoline, which is now—right on the head. Middle class economics is a term, and it is just that.

You have to transport it. All those things go into the cost of food.

So, you see, food has gone up 20 percent, gasoline has gone up 10 percent, healthcare has gone up 15 percent—all these additional costs on the middle class.

At the same time, the median household income has dropped by 8.7 percent. When the President gets up and talks about how the stock market is doing and how the economy has recovered, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, you can look at this chart and very easily see why the average middle class family doesn’t feel it. They don’t agree with it.

The President’s proposed budget, by adding more taxes and more government programs, will do nothing but exacerbate this middle class squeeze. We are going to squeeze the middle class until there is nothing left. I cringe when the President says he is for the middle class. Don’t listen to what he says; look at what he is doing.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in the House Budget Committee’s budget that balances in 10 years, that makes responsible adjustments to our social safety net, that makes responsible adjustments to our discretionary programs, and that brings our budget into balance in 10 years.

When I came to Congress, I thought our debt was the biggest problem we faced. I no longer believe that. I know we can handle it. I have been through the budget committee. All we have to do is start now to make responsible adjustments. The longer we wait, the more difficult it becomes.

My tenure in Congress is and will continue to be focused on American competitiveness. I think we have given away a lot of our competitive edge to the world. I think, if we decide we want to compete, that nobody can stop us. The only people stopping us is us.

We have tied a noose of tax and regulation around our own neck, and we are running our businesses and our jobs overseas. That is my focus. We cannot fix this problem with our budget unless we have growth, and the way to increase growth is to increase our competitiveness.

This is a list of things created by a Harvard economist and a good friend named Michael Porter. He has been to Congress more than once. He has talked to over 100 Congressman about how to make this country more competitive.

These are eight items. One of them is—in fact, the most important one is to create a sustainable Federal budget because you see, my friends, without a sustainable budget—now, you remember, the Office of Management and Budget that works for the White House says we are on an unsustainable course. Congressional Budget Office, we are on an unsustainable course.

Second, it says simplify the corporate tax code. Simplify and streamline regulation. The House budget assumes many of these things that make this country more competitive in adopting its budget.

Mr. ROKITA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman again. The gentleman hits the nail right on the head. Middle class economics is a term, and it is just that.

Watch what the President does to see how his policies are failing the middle class and how he affects the middle class.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Not what he says.

Mr. ROKITA. Not what he says, exactly right.

I also want to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to what the gentleman said on his poster board there about the eighth point, create a sustainable Federal budget, and the gentleman talked very articulately about the need for that.

It seems obvious, quite frankly, I would think, to every American family that must do this inside the walls of their own dwellings, but for some reason, it escapes the Federal Government.

I draw the House’s attention, the Speaker’s attention, to the wording that appears after that comma. It says, “including entitlement reform”—“create a sustainable budget, including entitlement reform.” We touched on this a little bit earlier in the hour that we have the citizenship around our own neck, and we are running our businesses and our jobs overseas. That is my focus. We cannot fix this problem with our budget unless we have growth, and the way to increase growth is to increase our competitiveness.

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minute. Wait a minute. I put my hard-
earned money into these programs, be-
ing Medicare and Social Security, pri-
marily, every 2 weeks or whenever my
paycheck comes, and I see the gov-
ernment taking out a lot, and that is
my money. That is my property. What is
Congress? What is this? We are hearing
two gentleman from South Carolina
and Indiana and others who are going
to speak here in a minute saying when
they said entitlement reform? I put in;
therefore, I should get out.

I want to take just a minute to ad-
dress that because, of course, in a very
real sense, that is what every working
American has done. In another equally
real and more important sense, we havn't. We haven't, and that is what
is driving our debt.

Now, the gentleman had a pie graph
up earlier that easily showed—and he
will put it back up—the fact that most
of our spending at the Federal Govern-
ment level is on programs that are on
autopilot. It is.

We, as Congressmen, can't vote on
these priorities through the budget
mechanism itself. We have to affect the
underlying law. That is to say Con-
gressman Rice and Congressman Rok-
ita determined, through the budget pro-
cess, year after year, what someone's Social Security check is going to be, what Medicare services
people are going to get or not get. That
is not done necessarily through the budget
process.

We talked about the need to reform
those programs in the budget docu-
ment, but it is not done through the budget
language only. You have to re-
form that underlying law. Two-thirds of
our budget, again, as the chart
shows, is on autopilot. It goes year
after year after year and gets worse
after worse, and that is what is driving our
debt.

Now, to my point about have we paid
for the costs of the average American
working couple. This is a Medi-
care example, so this is not Social
Security. This is Medicare.

It shows that a couple making a com-
bined $71,500 a year, on average, over a
lifetime, has put in roughly about 30
percent of what they are taking out of
Medicare.

Let me say that again. They are put-
ting in 30 percent. We are putting in,
the average American couple, putting
in 30 percent of what we are going to
take out of Medicare. The rest, Mr.
Speaker, goes on the deck, and that is
the crux of the problem.

If you go to the second set of bars,
you see that the problem only gets
worse, as a percentage of the amount
we are putting in is only going to go
down. That is what makes this a moral
situation, a moral case that we are
making the children of tomorrow pay,
so that we can have more on our plate
now.

It is just not Medicare. Social Secu-
rity is in a much better position than
this, but it is on the same trend. It is
not just our health care and our social
entitlement programs. It is the high-
way trust fund, for example, which I
hope we address, not only in our budget
document, but throughout this Con-
gress. To date, the President hasn't
done that. So that is really the prob-
lem.

I yield briefly back to my good friend
from South Carolina, Congressman
Rice, and then move swiftly to Mr. WOMACK from the great State of Ar-
kanas.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. In clos-
ing, my friend, I just wanted to point
out what the House Budget Committee
does to bring the budget within balance
within 10 years, and it is not all this
but three major things.

One, it repeals ObamaCare, which
costs $2.1 trillion over the next 10
years.

Two, it initiates what is called pre-
mium support for Medicare, what you
are just talking about, and it doesn’t
do it across the board. It doesn’t affect
anybody who is either retired or
retiring within 8 years.

What it does for people that are out-
side that window. Medicare is still of-
erded, and they will allow four other in-
urance companies to bid for Medicare
coverage.

The government won’t pay for the
cheapest; it will pay for the second
cheapest. If you want to buy a cheaper
policy, you can, but it brings private
industry in. If you want to buy a
cheaper policy, you can, and you will
get money.

If you want to buy a more expensive
policy, you can, and you will have to
pay a little bit more for it. That is a huge
savings in Medicare and some-
thing that we have to do.

So premium support for Medicare, re-
peal ObamaCare, and, third, it doesn’t
cut discretionary spending, defense and
nondefense, but it slows the growth a
little. That is going 80 percent of the
way to bringing our budget within
balance within 10 years.

Let me tell you, my friends, we don’t
have a choice. We are piling debt on
our children and grandchildren. CBO,
OMB, they will all tell you, Social Se-
curity trust fund, it will be broke in
2030 or thereabouts. Medicare trust
fund will be broke in 2030 or there-
abouts.

You know the problem with Federal
trust fund in that they are not funded, and
you can't trust them. Other than that, they are
great.

Mr. ROKITA. I appreciate you allow-
ing me to participate in this.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman
for his leadership.

The gentleman is exactly right. If we
act now, no one who is on or near to be
on any of these programs has to be af-
cected. We can easily take care of the
promises that were made and that
these folks, again, who are on these
programs, they haven't. Those pro-
grams have rightly relied on, and that
is because we are still the world’s re-
serve currency. We are not Greece.

If we make these reforms now, we are
talking about the reforms affecting
folks a generation ago, those in my age
bracket or younger, who would have
time to prepare for the new situation.

People who are having kids today,
who will live probably past 100, they
are the people who would see the pro-
gram that reflects the realities of liv-
ing in the 21st century and, frankly,
how long we live in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman
from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK), a good
friend of mine, the former Governor of
Rogers, Arkansas, a decorated military
officer who is also a great friend and a
great leader in this Congress.

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gen-
tleman, first of all, for his great leader-
ship on this subject.

The gentleman from the Hoosier State
and I came in together. Back in
2010, we were elected to this Congress,
and I can't speak necessarily for the
gentleman, I can only speak for myself,
but I would almost bet that my friend
from Indiana would agree that we came
up here to tackle the Nation’s biggest
problems.

Mr. Speaker, the Framers of our coun-
try were visionaries. They got it
right on the formation of the country
and the established government that
guides our every decision. They not
only had the foresight to establish con-
stitutional principles and processes
that addressed the challenges of the
day, but that sustain and guide our Na-
tion now 2¼ centuries later.

What you have just heard in the last
few minutes, and I have been witness
to the presentation made by my friend
from South Carolina, with commentary
from the gentleman from Indiana, I am
going to present many of the same ar-
guments in the time that I have before
you today because they are worth
repeating, and my chart may show it a
little bit differently.

Mr. Speaker, I came to the Congress
and was immediately placed on the App-
propriations Committee. As a member
of that committee, one of my jobs is to
look after the discretionary piece of the
Federal budget. As has already been
mentioned, the discretionary piece of the Federal budget is getting
squeezed.

There was a time in the not too dis-
tant past that discretionary spending
was the largest share of spending and,
as was mentioned by my friend from
South Carolina, things that you recog-
nize your Federal Government for. He
articulated a number of those.

When you look at this particular chart,
this end of the chart would rep-
resent 1962. The other end of the chart
is just about 3 years from now, in 2018,
you can see—in case you have trouble
seeing, let me just go through the color
coding here.

What you see at the top is the amount
of money that we have to pay, year in
and year out, to service our debt.
Those of you at home, Mr. Speaker,
that have a credit card bill that comes
in every month, there will be a category there or a block there that says minimum payment due.

The minimum payment is usually the reflection of interest due on that account and not necessarily a reduction in the principle amount owed. That is exactly what this purple is. That is the minimum payment due, year in and year out, that we have to make in order to satisfy the creditors, the people that have given money to this country. We are bound. It is like money to this country for governmental purposes.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, this chart shows that that area in purple has grown through the years. It tightened up a little bit back a few years ago. But now, if you look at that last piece of it, from right here, you will notice that area is getting smaller and smaller and smaller, so that is exactly what this purple is. That is the minimum payment due, year in and year out, that we have to make in order to satisfy the creditors, the people that have given money to this country. We are bound. It is like money to this country for governmental purposes.

The next color is red, and that is the reflection of mandatory spending, talked about by the gentleman before me. This is how much money we have to spend in and year out to pay for the programs that people all across this country are entitled to. The biggest driver of the long-term consequences of mandatory spending would be Medicare. There are many charts that will show you the glide path Medicare is on.

Mr. Speaker, something happened last night at midnight that affects the ongoing cost of that piece of mandatory spending. That is, 11,000 people celebrated a birthday as we rolled into the new day; 11,000 people aged into that program. Now, Mr. Speaker, tonight at midnight, something else is going to happen. It is going to influence the growth of that area in red; and that is, another 11,000 people, or thereabouts, are going to age into this program that they automatically qualify for when they turn 65. Thankfully, more and more people are living well beyond 65, and I am glad for that.

If you look at that red, coupled with the purple, you can see that since 1962, it has commanded a much larger share of Federal spending, and it is putting a tremendous squeeze on the programs that people like me, as an appropriator, have to work with to fund the other essential forms of government.

In fact, I have a lot of people say to me we need more money. You know, Mr. WOMACK, you are an appropriator. You are in charge of all this spending. You ought to be able, with your vote and with your leadership on that committee, you ought to be able to see that the books of the Federal Government are balanced.

But, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the last two colors—the green, which is nondefense spending, and the blue, which represents defense discretionary spending—these two colors have gotten smaller and smaller and smaller, so small now that they represent about a third of our spending. And you do the math.

Mr. WOMACK. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SANFORD. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for raising what I think is such a fundamental point with regard to government spending. It really raises the crossroads I think that we are at as a society. Because in my mind, I keep going out to about 2025, we have a chart on that. And at that point, we are only going to have enough money for interest and entitlements and nothing else, without either raising taxes substantially, cutting benefits substantially, or running very large deficits going forward. And ultimately, there comes a point of no return, as you correctly point out with your charts, wherein the world financial markets won’t lend you anymore.

So I think you are on to a remarkably important theme, and I think it underscores the degree to which we are going to have an important debate in this Chamber in really the next month because what the President has essentially said is that I am not going to deal with that.

If you look fundamentally at the White House budget, at the core, it abandons this notion of financial discipline. I mean, it adds $2.2 trillion of new taxes. It adds $5.5 trillion of new debt. It goes from running structural $500 billion deficits to $1.1 trillion deficits, with no end in sight to the deficits that continue to grow.

So this theme that you are getting on with regard to the mandatory component and the interest component of government spending I don’t think can be underscored enough. And I don’t want to interrupt you, but it just hit me as you were talking.

Mr. WOMACK. Well, I am glad the gentleman did interrupt.

And to carry our colloquy just a little bit further, the gentleman from South Carolina is a former Governor of South Carolina, so he has had some experience dealing with balanced budgets and having to live within your means, as a former chief executive of a State, one of the 50 States in our country. So you have a great appreciation for how important it is to be able to craft budgets that live within your means and address the major drivers of what could be deficit spending at the State level.

Mr. SANFORD. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOMACK. I would be happy to.

Mr. SANFORD. Just on that point, though, it is so interesting that ultimately it is not just about balancing budgets, because I think that a lot of people from across this country look at the carrying on and the going on of Congress, and they say, You know, it is about green eye shades, and it is about trying to balance some numbers. No. It is about sustaining this Republic.

Admiral Mike Mullen, when asked, What is the biggest threat to the American society? he didn’t answer “China,” he didn’t answer “Russia.” His answer was: The biggest threat to the American way of life is the national debt.

If you were to look at a whole host of different folks across recent history—I mean, Paul Kennedy wrote I think an excellent book entitled “The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers,” and its premise was that economic supremacy was the precursor to military supremacy. And America’s ability to be able to continue to project force. I think it is so interesting that the Prime Minister of Israel was here earlier today. We heard Prime Minister Netanyahu lay out his concerns with regards to some things happening in the Middle East. But America’s variability, whether it is in engaging with an ally like Israel or whether it is engaging in a whole host of other conflicts that are innumerable and guaranteed to recur in the next 25 years or so, our ability to impact those things will be driven, frankly, by these economic numbers.

I think it has been malign, but Reinhart and Rogoff, a professor from the University of Maryland and a professor from Harvard, wrote a book entitled, “This Time Is Different.” They chronicled 800 years of financial history, and there have been some questions about how some of their numbers. But the larger premise was in that title, “This Time Is Different.”

What you are pointing out is that, no, it is never different; math always works, and there is something fundamental about our civilization’s need for not just a balanced budget for balanced budget’s sake but to be able to sustain our ability to project power and maintain a way of life that we love, I think, that is underscored in these very charts that you are showing.

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gentleman.

Reclaiming my time, I just want to say, before I go to my next chart, that this isn’t an option for us, to allow this to continue on this path without the interaction of this Congress and solutions offered by this Congress, many of which are going to be big deals because when you get this far along into a problem, the solutions to the problem get much larger. They are going to require a lot more political courage. But we have to address it because if we don’t, in just a few years beyond the 2025 timeframe, this chart shows, there will be no money left for the items that you see in green and blue.

And let me hasten to remind you that the items in blue are national defense.

Mr. SANFORD. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOMACK. I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. SANFORD. On that point, I love keeping strange jotted notes in my office. Again, the number that you are getting at—because you are now touching
on national defense—you know, Habsburg defaulted on all or part of its debt 14 times between 1557 and 1696. Pre-revolutionary France saw 62 percent of its royal revenue going to interest payments alone. Britain, between 1714 and 1815, had total interest payments climb to 44 percent of its budget. In the Ottoman Empire, interest payments and amortization rose from 15 percent of its budget in 1860 to 50 percent in 1875.

In other words, this music has been played before with disastrous consequences, and that is why I think it is relevant.

Keynes actually quoted Lenin, of all folks, and Lenin’s quote was this: “There is no subtler, no surer means of overturning the existing basis of society than to debauch the currency. The process engages all the hidden forces of economic law on the side of destruction and does it in a manner which not one man in a million is able to diagnose.”

What you are laying out is something like the chart which you so appropriately lay before the Congress is the very formula that Lenin, himself, was talking about in things that will challenge not only defense but the way in which a government holds on to power long enough, you might one day rise to a place where you can be influential.

When we came in that big class of 2010 and a new leadership structure was sworn in here, we were told to drop the debt. They said: We want to find folks who have talents and skills and who have the ability to lead, and we are going to put them in places where they can do that. I am so proud the gentleman from Indiana is able to fill that role for me. I sit on the Budget Committee, too, and I get to take advantage of his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Arkansas was here here, I think you thought I was talking to here—I am sure the vice chairman will correct me if I am—but he raised his hands in one of these closed-door meetings and he said: I want to do the big things. I want to do the big things. I don’t want to nibble around the edges. I don’t want to just rearrange the dollars here and there. And I will do whatever it takes to make that happen.

Mr. SANFORD. Again, I think you are capturing, in essence, the totality of this debate because there is a guy up at the University of Boston called Lawrence Kotlikoff, and he wrote a book called “The Coming Generational Storm.” He really built around your two grandkids because he says that the imputed tax for a child born into America today is about 84 percent, 84 percent.

I mean, our civilization won’t work. A market-based economy doesn’t work with an 84 percent tax rate. Yet that is what he said is coming those two young children’s way in the event that nothing is done to change the course and the trajectory of the way that Washington is spending money. He says that the total debt really amounts to around $200 trillion. So it hit me, as I was looking into your two grandkids’ eyes there in the photograph.

Mr. WOMACK. I want to give you some perspective before I close, Mr. Speaker.

The only budget that we have laying out there right now is the President’s budget, and it really balances—never—and continues to add a lot of taxes and a lot of debt and a lot of interest burdens on the generations of these two kids right here.

But here is what is inescapable: the net interest on the debt that we will pay this year—and I might need some help on this, Mr. ROKITA—I think it is around $250 billion. Mr. ROKITA. Yes.

Mr. WOMACK. Around $250 billion. It is a lot of money. We could build a lot of roads and bridges, educate a lot of people, pay for a lot of things with that $250 billion, give or take.

The President’s budget, if you rolled it out for 10 years, in the 10-year window before this young man can vote and before this young man turns 12, the net interest on the debt will rise to $785 billion a year. That is not a sustainable path, and that is why I was pleased to accept the chair of the Budget Committee as one of the three appropriate assigned to this committee. That is why I enjoy the work that I do. That is why I appreciate so much my friend from Indiana, my friend from Georgia, my friend from South Carolina, and the others that will parade down here and talk about these issues. They are the most serious things that affect domestic America today.

And out of deference to these two young men and to their parents—Will and Amanda, and Kayle and Philip—it is my hope and my prayer that we will find the courage to support the solutions, as large as they may be, to save America’s next greatest generation.

Mr. ROKITA. Well, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, you see why he was elected mayor of Rogers, Arkansas. You see why he has been a leader in our U.S. military, and you see how and why he leads on the floor of this House.

I want to, again, thank Congressman TOM RICE from South Carolina for speaking today, and Congressman MARK SANFORD, former Governor of South Carolina, now Congressman of the First District, for speaking today. Again, I thank Congressman STEVE WOODALL.

With the time we have remaining, I yield to a good friend of mine who came in at the same time as STEVE WOODALL and I in a wave of 87 new Congress persons. As I call it, my good friend, ROB WOODALL, also a member of the Budget Committee, to put some icing over what we have learned over the past hour.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend from Indiana for yielding, and I appreciate his leadership, Mr. Speaker; I don’t know if you have thought about it—you have not been in this institution very long. You came here with a lot of hopes and dreams. The gentleman from Indiana, the vice chairman that I think the Budget Chair has been here 4 years. He has been here 4 years. What I have loved about this institution the 4 years I have served here is that what was once a seniority-based institution, what was once if you could count on to have a piece of power long enough, you might one day rise to a place where you can be influential.
GDP. There is no set of circumstances where revenue will ever match spend-
ing. Mr. Speaker. The President didn’t provide that leadership; my friend from Indiana is. That is why I am so proud to be on the floor with you today.

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

THE BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUBRELO of Florida). Under the Speak-
er’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) is recognized for 60 min-
utes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, my name is Congressman Jim COSTA from Fresno, California. Since I was first elected over 10 years ago, I have been a mem-
ber of the Blue Dog caucus. This after-
noon, members of the Blue Dog caucus that we are working with and to the breadth of this great country of ours are going to speak about what brings us to-
gether, about the passions that they have and the people that they advocate for and why they believe that their ef-
forts during a constructive and a very positive member of the Blue Dog cau-
cus adds value to their ability to rep-
resent their constituencies and to the vision that I think we, as Americans, all share together, which is to make our Congress, to make our representa-
tive democracy, a more functioning system. Because clearly today, the American public, in poll after poll after poll, demonstrate their frustration with the inability of the United States Congress to come together and to work on common solutions for our country, solutions that share our common val-
ues but also involve the art, the art of the political compromise, too often I believe an art that has become lost here in our Nation’s Capital in Wash-
ington, D.C.

So among the first of the members of our caucus that will speak is the gentle-
tlewoman from Arizona’s Ninth Dis-
trict, KYRSTEN SINEMA, a colleague of mine who always is advocating for her constituency in the most positive ways.

Ms. SINEMA. Thank you, Mr. COSTA, and thank you today for organizing this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important op-
portunity for us to come together and show how bipartisanship can fix our broken system.

At home in Arizona, I hear from ev-
everyone that Washington is broken. There is too much time spent playing political gam-
ey, and too little time spent working together to get things done. Most people are sick and tired of Congress’ failing to do its job because of partisan politics. That is why I joined the Blue Dog Coalition, because they prioritize the people they rep-
resent more than their party leader-
ship.

Everybody knows that Congress is not working effectively, and the Blue

Dogs are trying to change that. They are focused on ending political polar-
ization, reforming Congress, stopping reckless government spending, and cre-
ating economic opportunity for Ameri-
cans who have been left behind by this recession.

Mr. Speaker, I come to work every single day to get things done for Ari-
 zona. I have a proven record of reach-
ing out to members of both political parties to find common ground on issues ranging from the econom-
y to reducing spending and govern-
ment waste. As a cofounder of the United Solutions Caucus and a No La-
 bels Problem Solver, I have worked with members of both parties to get things done. At home, Congressmen MATT SALMON and I work together to help Arizona veterans get the care they deserve, and I have worked with Con-
gressman MICHAEL McCaul to intro-
duce legislation that puts an end to automatic pay raises for Members of Congress.

Neither party is always right. In fact, b oth parties are often wrong. It is time for us to listen to each other and work together to help our country’s families, and honor our veterans. Recently, we came together to pass bipartisan legislation to pre-
vent veteran suicide and improve ac-
cess to mental health care and health services for veterans. So this week, we agreed on legislation to expand col-
lege savings plans and make higher ed-
cuation a reality for students and their families. We need more of these kinds of accomplishments in Congress. In Arizona, I established an independent redistricting commission that allows for an open and transparent process and creates competitive dis-
 tricts where neither party has a mo-
nopoly. We Blue Dogs have proposed reforms that provide for an impartial, fairly drawn districts across the coun-
try to cut back on the polarization that cripples our system.

Mr. Speaker, the American people de-
serve less finger pointing and the finger pointing and the fighting. Let’s put aside the finger pointing and the fighting. Let’s roll up our sleeves and get back to work.

Mr. COSTA. I thank the gentle-
tlewoman from Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, our next Blue Dog col-
league who will speak is a gentleman whom I have served with both in the California State Legislature as well as here in Congress. He and I are good friends to be sure, and wonderful in-
 sights of California, and he is one of the longer serving members in the Blue Dog caucus, the gentleman from northern California, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON from California’s Fifth Dis-
 trict.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I thank the gentleman, and my friend, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, Members, I came down to the floor this afternoon to join my Blue Dog colleagues in calling for all of us in Congress to come together and do the work that we have been asked to do, the work that we have been sent to Washington, sent to do on behalf of the people that we represent. I came to Congress to get things done, to get things done for the people that I represent, and to get things done for the great country that we are all so privileged to live in and to participate in.

As Mr. COSTA mentioned, he and I served together in the State legislature in California, and I am very proud of the work that we did there. We were able to get a lot of things done. In the time that I was there, the majority of the time, I chaired the Senate Budget Committee. That was one of the rea-
sons why I was so proud to be a Blue Dog. As Jim pointed out, I am one of the

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the problems that face our great country, and we need to get down and do that work.

Mr. COSTA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. COSTA. I appreciate your explaining your experience in the California Legislature because we not only worked together in a bipartisan fashion, but we also worked together with the lower house and the State senate, because you could never get anything done if you didn't work together with both houses. Of course, that is part of our problem here today.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct. That is how the legislative process works. You don't just pun something over to the other Chamber and then say, "We have done our job"; because you haven't done your job until the President, in the case of Congress, signs his name on the line making that bill or that job come to fruition, making it the law.

You are right. In the State capitol, we did that, that knew we had to work together because the same piece of legislation had to pass both houses and had to meet there for the Governor's signature in order to become law. The same thing happens here.

I know it can be done. One of the things that I did in some of my earlier years here, Mr. Speaker, is I was successful in getting a wilderness bill passed, a wilderness bill that protected into perpetuity 350,000 acres in my district in California. Wilderness bills have passed before, so that, in itself, was not the biggest thing that has ever happened here. But I am particularly proud because I was in the minority then.

The chair of Natural Resources was Richard Pombo from California, someone whom I consider a friend, although not a political ally. He was not someone favorable to approving wilderness legislation. But I worked with him and his committee. He had the bill up in for a markup. We had it on the floor. We passed it. I compromised; he compromised. That bill went through the House. The companion bill went through the Senate, as Mr. COSTA was explaining has to be done, and it went to then-President George W. Bush, who signed it into law.

So it is incongruent with the way we work today. Today you would just start by saying: An unfriendly chairman, an unfriendly President, we can't get anything done. That is just absolutely not true.

If you work together and if we work together, we can find solutions to the problems that we face. There are any number of issues that need to come together and need to be put on this floor for a vote. You can look at immigration reform, tax reform, gun violence prevention, and certainly one that everyone can agree with is an infrastructure bill.

There is not a person that any one of us represents who doesn't know that we need to invest in America's infrastructure—in our roads, in our highways, in our broadband, in our overpasses, in our bridges. And now with the new super-sized ships, get and the bigger ships coming into this country, we have huge investments that need to be made in our ports and our harbors. These are investments that not only put Americans to work generating more revenue, but put better jobs and make our economy stronger than it has ever been before.

I submit, Members, that these are things that we can do. As has been said before, the thing that bring us together, the things that bring us together as Americans, are far greater than the things that divide us. I will plead, let's get together, let's roll up our sleeves, let's work together on addressing the major issues that face America.

I thank you, Mr. COSTA, for bringing us here today.

Mr. COSTA. I thank the Congressman from California.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank you, Mr. COSTA, for bringing this together.

Mr. COSTA. I think, expressly indicated why he is a Blue Dog and, over the years, his efforts to bridge the gap, to reach across the aisle, to get something done; because he recognizes, as do all of us Blue Dogs, that the political dysfunction that is occurring here in our Nation's Capital is real. It has measurable costs, and it is preventing our country, sadly, from solving the problems that our constituents are demanding that we solve, whether it is the economic recovery that could be stronger, whether it is fixing our Nation's deficit, whether it is fixing a broken immigration system, or an array of other issues that are pressing, that are important to the people back home.

The next gentleman who would like to address our Congress is the gentleman from the great State of Illinois, Congressman Dan Lipinski, my colleague and classmate from Illinois' Third District.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. COSTA for putting this together today.

The reason I came to Congress, the reason I ran for Congress, was to get things done. I think that is what all our constituents are expecting us to do.

Unfortunately, when I am at home, I am constantly reminded that my constituents are wondering why we don't get more done, what is happening in Washington. When I am shopping at Menards or at Jewel, people come up to me and say: Why can't everyone work together there in Washington?

They know that I have been doing that. That is why I am part of the Blue Dog coalition, because we want to bring people together here in Washington—indeed, in the Senate—bring everyone together to work out the many, many problems that our Nation has.

We just had Mr. THOMPSON talking about a transportation bill. Everyone talks about the need to fix our transportation infrastructure. We have roads and bridges that are crumbling. Our public transit also has infrastructure that is crumbling. We all need a good transportation system, not only to get wherever we need to go during the day.

Our Nation, for the sake of having an efficient economy, needs a good transportation system. We can put people to work immediately fixing our transportation system. We can put people to work immediately fixing our transportation system. We can put people to work immediately fixing our transportation system. We can put people to work immediately fixing our transportation system.

We have a divided government now. It used to be that after an election, everyone would come together, look around and say: Okay. This is who is the majority in the House, the majority in the Senate, who is in the White House. What can we agree upon? How can we work together to solve problems? Where can we find our agreement? Instead, we seem to focus on how our party can get control of everything in the next election. Mr. Speaker, this is not the way that the American people want us to work. They want us to come together.

Now, some of the previous speakers talked about electoral reform and redistricting reform. Those can certainly help. Those are things that we support and that the Blue Dogs are working to get done. But even before we get those things done, we can work together and accomplish great things here. The American people aren't demanding that of us. They are demanding that we change the way that Washington is working right now. That is what the Blue Dogs are doing.

That is the only way we are going to be able to face so many of the problems that we face, including the issue that is right in front of us today: homeland security. The American people want us to work together to solve these security problems. They want us to come together.

The Blue Dogs have always led on this. We continue to lead on that, but it is going to take bipartisan cooperation to get that done because we have a divided government. But we need to do it, the need to take care of these issues. The Blue Dogs continue to work on these things. We really need the support of everyone to come together.
here in Washington and across the country to solve these great problems that we have, that we face.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure there are people who may be out there watching this on C-SPAN, and probably a lot of people who may be happy to turn off C-SPAN and hear people talking about working together, not talking about what is wrong with the other side, how I am right and the other side is wrong, but the need to work together. That is what the Blue Dogs are about. It continues to be about, and that is the way that we are going to make America the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth—but a Nation that faces, as we all understand, many issues, many problems, just as our families are facing many issues right now. By working together, we can make our Nation even greater, and only by working together will we get there.

I am very happy to join my Blue Dog colleagues here tonight and every day working to help make America a better place to live. So let us all come together, Mr. Speaker, and work on some of these problems. “Compromise,” I know, sometimes is a dirty word. You don’t have to give up your principles to compromise. Stick to your principles, but compromise. Get done what we can get done, and make this Nation a greater place.

I thank my Blue Dog colleagues very much. Thank you, Mr. COSTA, for this. We are going to continue to bring the message to the American people and get things done.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois, my classmate, for his good words. Clearly, I think he speaks on behalf of not only the Blue Dogs, but the majority of Americans who believe that we need to be working together to solve problems, whether it is our budget, our fiscal deficit, our transportation system, as the gentleman from Illinois so succinctly pointed out. It can never be “my way or the highway,” because if that is the case, we will never get anything done, as has been witnessed here for the last couple of months. But when we do work together, as the compromised bipartisan vote that we saw this afternoon on Homeland Security, we can get something done.

My next friend and colleague is the gentleman from Georgia, Congressman Sanford Bishop, from the Second District. He has distinguished himself over the years and has been a member of not only the Blue Dog caucus, but he represents some of the best parts of Georgia—Fort Benning and agriculture, like I represent.

SANFORD, we are glad to have you here this afternoon to tell us the thoughts of the people of Georgia’s Second District on the terrific job you do on their behalf.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for putting together this Special Order, and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Martin Luther King, Jr., once said: “Ultimately a genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus.”

Debate is a natural consequence of representative democracy. Gridlock, on the other hand, is not.

Sitting down with those across the aisle is not just an act of placing faith in political or ideological adversaries, but an act of placing faith in our egalitarian democratic system, a system, as it was, founded upon the idea of creating consensus in order to move forward.

All of us here speaking from the well this hour believe in working together for better government, working for responsible government, working for transparent government. The moderate Blue Dogs are here not only to find common ground between lawmakers, but to forge an understanding of what it is to truly work together.

The Blue Dog Coalition is dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics. We represent the center of the House of Representatives and appeal to the mainstream values of the American public. The coalition develops substantive proposals and positions distinct from those advocated by the extremes in both parties. Needless to say, we Blue Dogs are less swayed by the leadership of either party and more persuaded by the needs and the concerns of mainstream Americans.

But this is nothing new. Twenty years ago, the Blue Dog Coalition was formed following the 1994 election. Over the past 20 years, many of our proposals have been praised as fair, responsible, and positive additions to a Congressional environment too often marked as partisan and antagonistic.

Throughout those years, the Blue Dogs have been dedicated to solving problems based on five principles of political leadership: tell the truth; govern for the future; put the country first; be responsible; work together.

My job is to represent the interests and the values of the people in my district in middle and southwest Georgia. As a Blue Dog Democrat, I push for commonsense measures that will make government work better for my constituents.

The people of Georgia’s Second Congressional District, like all Americans, deserve a government that puts their needs ahead of partisan politics. We work together to make progress to create a higher, better quality of life for all of our citizens. Eliminating government waste and inefficiency are crucial to achieving this goal.

We work with our colleagues on the right and the left, on both sides of the aisle, to pass Blue Dog commonsense reforms that will make government work for the people of our great Nation. As Members of Congress, it is our responsibility to ensure that government works for the American people.

I am committed to working together with my colleagues to pass legislation that eliminates Federal waste and inefficiency. If we can do this, it will give us a better chance at getting things done. That is how we rebuild trust with the American people, by showing them that we are doing the job we were sent here to do.

Today, many folks might suggest that bipartisanship is dead! The Blue Dogs have been here and are still here to say that it is not dead. We are committed to working—not to finger point, not to fight, but to fix. I believe that problem solving together across both sides of the aisle we can make that happen.

So I am delighted that my colleague, Mr. COSTA, and my colleagues from the Blue Dog Coalition have come together with this Special Order so that we can say to each other, say to the American people, that we cry out for a government that will work for the people to get the needs, the common goals, the common hopes, and their common aspirations addressed.

We may have differences, but we have more similarities than we have differences. If we find those common denominators of experience that combine us, we can get the job done for the American people.

I thank you for this time.

Mr. COSTA. Congressman BISHOP, my friend, I could not have said it better: for the people and by the people.

Mr. Speaker, for those who are hosting this particular Special Order. We welcome your input, and we welcome your comments. For those of you who are interested, please sign onto our Web site, which is www.bluedog.schroder.house.gov, as a way by which you can communicate with us. We all have our Web sites. Obviously, not only our constituents from our respective districts but people from throughout the country, we would urge you to weigh in. Let us know how you feel, which is an appropriate segue for our next speaker.

The Blue Dogs every 2 years select three leaders to represent them and to organize our agenda. We have a policy individual who will be speaking in a moment, Congressman Jim Cooper. We have the communications director, which is the position I serve, and then we have our chairperson. Our chairperson is a gentleman whom I have the honor and privilege to serve with. He is my friend, and he is doing an excellent job, the gentleman from Oregon’s Fifth District, Representative Kurt Schrader.

Mr. SCHRADER. Thank you very, very much. I want to thank my friend, the gentleman from California, for hosting this particular Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for America to realize that we all don’t hate one another. We actually get along pretty well on a personal level, and we are those who are on both sides of the aisle who want to work together to solve our country’s problems. You have heard a little bit about that already.
I think, at this time, more than ever, it is important for Congress to come together. The little debate we had last week or a week and a half ago on the Department of Homeland Security, I think, drives that point home. Oftentimes, we forget that the problems we are facing are not the problems of us or the problems of us versus them. It's about families. It's about communities. It's about our American way of life. And sometimes that's where we are not going to agree on all of the issues all of the time. That doesn't make one side wrong and the other side right. What it means is there is an honest difference of opinion. In the way our forefathers set the system up, we are supposed to work through that. There are checks and balances. No one party, no one Chamber, no one individual is supposed to have ultimate veto over the rights of everyday, Main Street Americans.

What we in the Blue Dog Coalition try to do is to bridge those differences, to provide a forum to find ways to agree, not to disagree with the other team. In the Homeland Security bill, whatever you think about some of the attachments to the bill or about some of the actions by the President of the United States, it is important to fund Homeland Security more now than ever before. Stuff that has gone on overseas that could possibly threaten our own shores, it makes it imperative that we work together. I am actually proud, despite the sausage-making look of it in the media and, perhaps, to a lot of Americans, that there were Republicans and Democrats who came together to solve that problem.

We will live to fight another day on immigration reform and on some of the other issues which we have genuine, legitimate differences of opinion on, but it should not be lost on the American people that it was Democrats and Republicans coming together to solve a very basic problem that our Congress and Nation are charged to solve, which is to protect the security of the American people.

The Blue Dogs have been doing this for years. You heard of our inception after the 1994 elections, when the Blue Dogs felt we were getting choked. We were regular Southern Democrats, if you will, at that time. It has branched out, like Mr. COSTA has indicated, to include the whole country now. Yellow Dog Democrats were getting “choked blue” by their rather liberal leadership that didn't respect or, frankly, represent some of their interests, so out of that came the Blue Dogs.

The body has grown and decreased in numbers with every election cycle. There has been a consistent drumbeat, however, for folks like us in moderate districts, not just on the Democratic side, but on the Republican side. We actually have quarterly meetings with a Republican group called the Tuesday Group, where we try and get together and share ideas about things we can work on, not just stuff that we can work together on. Boy, I wish leadership would work in that same vein. We would be a lot better off.

Mr. COSTA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHRADE. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. COSTA. We have talked a lot about this among our fellow Blue Dogs, but we need to raise awareness that there is worth repeating because, frankly, I think there are a lot of Members on both sides of the aisle who, if they had the opportunity, would like to figure out how they could work together. I know, as the chair of the Blue Dog Caucus, it is your desire to reach out and continue to make that effort. I just want to applaud you for that.

I also want to ask: Are there other ways in which constituents can make their Congresspeople feel more comfortable about doing that? With this notion of “it is my way or the highway,” I think the majority of my constituents wonder what is going on there. I mean, “What are you folks thinking in Washington? because that is not my way at home.”

Mr. SCHRADE. In reclaiming my time, I totally agree with the gentleman from California.

I think, sometimes, there is that bubble we operate under here in Washington, that the Democrats and Republicans back home, frankly, are sometimes not watching C-SPAN. They are busy trying to put food on their tables, seeing if their kids can get great educations. Frankly, in recent times, they are just trying to keep their bloody jobs. So I think it is important for us to relate to the people who are paying our salaries. This is their Chamber—this is their building—not a bubble of Washington, D.C., types. It is important for us to sit down and represent what they are talking about.

When I went home in this last election cycle and, frankly, in every election cycle, the big issue for Americans in the Congressional Fifth District in the great State of Oregon—the Willamette Valley-central Oregon coast—is not any one issue. It is: “Will you please work together.” This is complicated stuff—some of these bills are pretty damned complicated—but I think everyday Americans get it.

“Okay. That is why I hired you. Work it out. Figure it out.” To their credit, they don’t give me a lot of room for excuses.

“Well, gee, I am not in the majority. I don’t have a lot of clout here.”

“Kurt, I elected you. I want you to figure out a way of how to work with folks.”

We can do that. The farm bill in the last Congress was a classic example of how we actually worked together. Republicans and Democrats. You could not tell a Democrat or a Republican based on what they were talking about, because they were representing different districts, different geographies around this country, lobbying hard for different stuff. We had additional programs that they felt passionately about. That is the way Congress is supposed to work. That is what the Blue Dog Coalition is all about—building those relationships.

If you have noticed in the 114th Congress, in the first 2 months, while DHS, the Affordable Care Act, and sometimes choice or abortion have gotten a lot of headlines, I would urge you to look at the votes for the big, important bills that have come forward. There are a number of bills that leadership—and I give the Republican leadership credit for this—brought forward that moderate Democrats had voted for in past Congresses or had expressed interest in, and they got overwhelming and sometimes significant Democrat support. That is not talked about by the media, folks. You have got to realize that there are many opportunities like that that go below the radar screen. It may not be the sexiest topic in the world, but it is stuff like making sure the Affordable Care Act works, making sure that small businesses are able to function better, making sure Dodd-Frank financial reform actually is workable and respects the interests of the different members of the community out there, even the Keystone vote.

I mean, we have to be thoughtful about the millions of Americans who need to work together and find areas they can agree on. We have tried to do that time and again. It is the heartbeat of the Blue Dog Coalition.

Basically, what we are standing for, and what we have held, are fiscal reform and fiscal responsibility. It has been a hallmark of the Blue Dogs over the last 20 years. We are generally a government efficiency organization. We believe government is not evil, but it could sure work a heck of a lot better. Every one of the folks out there in America understands that some government rule is making a problem for them, and it shouldn’t have to happen. We as Blue Dogs try and cut through that government regulation.

We are also business friendly. Yes, Democrats can be business friendly, believe it or not. They are called “Blue Dogs.” There is another group called New Democrats. There is another group growing outside this that wants to include all Americans, which is called No Labels. Most Blue Dogs are, frankly, members of No Labels. There is another group that works together, Democrats and Republicans. Yes, folks. You heard me say, I hope you have values that are very American holds dear, and those are the issues we should be working on.

Senator Lieberman said at one point that it is kind of ironic that everyone is interested in bipartisanship, but if you don’t agree with somebody 100 percent of the time, you don’t agree with them any of the time. The real world is: life is complicated, and you are
going to have times when you agree and times when you disagree. One of the basic axioms of politics is: you don’t have enemies or friends; you have allies and adversaries at the end of the day because issues change over time, and you will find that the ebb and flow of issues will line up with party, geography—all of those issues.

The Blue Dog Coalition is dedicated to trying to bring people together across this country—Republicans and Democrats, business interests, individuals—seeking to make your government more responsible and more efficient with electoral reform, congressional reform, getting back in this great, august Chamber to regular order—to where your interests are represented through the committees, through the elected representatives you have. That is what is important here, and that binds Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives and moderates, like us. That is the hallmark of the Blue Dog Coalition.

I won’t belabor the point. I thank the gentleman for bringing us to the floor here. I think it is important for America to be a little inspired that there are people who care about this country, who cut through the partisan politics and even go against our respective leaderships to try and solve the problems you want us to solve. I think, at the end of the day, that is where America is. To get back to a greatness, which was alluded to before, it is going to require more members of the Blue Dog Coalition and of the Tuesday Group on the other side of the aisle to be elected to Congress and hope America gets mad as hell and starts to hold your Representatives accountable for working together and making America great again.

Mr. COSTA. I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon for his leadership as the chair of the Blue Dog Coalition. You brought us Thursday to the Tuesday Group and to the No Labels Caucus and your efforts to take difficult positions and cast hard votes, I think, are all examples of political profiles in courage, and we commend you for your leadership and your efforts.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1029, EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1030, SECRET SCIENCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Science, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–37) on the resolution (H. Res. 138) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1029) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board participation, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1030) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, the next Blue Dog Coalition member who will speak is one of our newest members. He hails from the great State of Nebraska, and we are honored to have him as one of our newest members of the Blue Dog Coalition. He is BRAD ASHFORD from Nebraska’s Second District. A lot of agriculture and a lot of good people Congressman BRAD ASHFORD has the opportunity to represent, and we appreciate the fact that he is here.

Mr. ASHFORD. Thank you, Mr. COSTA. I am privileged to have the opportunity to speak today.

Mr. Speaker, you mentioned, just briefly, the concept of “Profiles of Courage.” John Kennedy, in writing that book, wrote about a great Nebraskan, George Norris. George Norris was a Senator from Nebraska, and prior to that time, he served in this House. In 1936, he brought forward an amendment in the House to change the rules of the House in order to make the House more transparent and more accountable to the American people.

In that regard, in John Kennedy’s book he wrote about Congressman Norris, and then, subsequently, Senator Norris. Senator Norris, who had worked to create the Tennessee Valley Authority, worked across the aisle with FDR—he was a Republican—to pass the Rural Electrification Act that electrified the country. He did so working across the aisle.

And in the 1930s—and 1934, specifically—he reached out to the people of Nebraska and said to them: We can do better. We can have a more transparent government. We can have a bipartisan government. We can have a bipartisan effort that will address the tough issues of Nebraska in the Depression of the 1930s. And he recommended to the voters: Look, let’s do this. Let’s have a unicameral, nonpartisan legislature.

And the lobbyists and the special interests said: George, you should go back to Washington. This isn’t going to work in Nebraska.

Well, the voters of Nebraska, in 1934, voted for a unicameral, nonpartisan legislature, and they said that we have such a legislature today.

I am so proud and honored to be here. There was a discussion earlier by prior speakers about relationships. And what is so interesting to me and amazing to me is that the Blue Dogs, and what is gratifying—are those relationships, are the relationships that I have been able to achieve through my association with the Blue Dogs and relationships with Republicans and Democrats alike. It is very very gratifying that that exists. That is what I am used to in Nebraska.

When I first arrived here, I went to a Democratic Caucus. I served in the Nebraska unicameral legislature for 16 years. I never went to a caucus in my life. I didn’t really know exactly what a Democrat or Republican really was. I suppose I would have to look, but of the 49 members of the Nebraska Legislature, I would have to think long and hard about what party they belonged to.

And in the 16 years that I served there, we had many tough issues. In one of those tough issues we had in the State was the pipeline issue, and that was referenced earlier—the Trans-Canada pipeline. Well, it goes through Nebraska. As originally routed, it would have gone through some of the most sensitive areas of our State, the Sandhills area and the Ogallala Aquifer.

We spent a year together, the 49 of us. Not every day. We would kill each other if we spent every day together. There are the lessons that I have learned. It brings here. And when I had the opportunity, Mr. COSTA, to meet the Blue Dogs, it reminded me of home. It reminded me of the Nebraska Legislature and the idea that Republicans and Democrats make that decision for themselves.

But as my good friend and former Senator from Nebraska Ed Zorinsky used to say, there are no Republican Senators or Democratic Senators. There are only American Senators, U.S. Senators. It is in the water in Nebraska. That is how we think. That is how we are. And what is great about this place is those same relationships, those same committed people are there to make those kinds of relationships work in a bipartisan way. We have heard examples of that today.
When I ran for this office, I said to the voters of the Second Congressional District of Nebraska, Sarcy County, and Douglas County, Nebraska, the two most populace counties: I’m going to go to Washington and, I’m going to make it my cause in Nebraska, if you make 25 friends, you get 25 people to vote for a bill, it passes.

You know what? I found more than 25 friends. I found a lot of friends, a lot of great people who sit in this body, this place every single day, Republicans and Democrats.

I just got back—and then I will conclude, Mr. COSTA—from a trip to Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, the Emirates, and Kuwait, I went with three other Members: ELISE STEFANIK, who is a freshman Republican from New York; JOE WILSON, who is a veteran Member from South Carolina; and SETH MOULTON, who is a freshman from Massachusetts. What great people. What great committed Americans to have gone on that trip.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the Blue Dogs to the country, to those that are watching, in furtherance of the old tradition of transparency and working together and making things happen.

Mr. COSTA. During your visit, on a bipartisan basis, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Jordan, you were visiting some of the most challenging hotspots in the world today, and I suspect you got an opportunity to visit and see American men and women serving abroad and the heroic and difficult jobs that they are doing and the great sacrifices of their families. I think you had an opportunity to tell them that in Washington we are trying to do all we can to support them.

Mr. ASHFORD. Thank you for the comment. Yes, I was fortunate enough to visit with Nebraskans who were serving in Iraq and serving in Afghanistan. I was on a C-130. We were traveling over the Strait of Hormuz area. The navigator in the C-130 said to me: Sir—because he had to call me “sir”; he didn’t have a lot of English—behind us. We’re doing the best we can over here, and we need your support.

And they are going to get our support and have our support. Thank you for the question. I was so deeply appreciative of the opportunity to meet with my fellow Nebraskans who were there as well.

Mr. COSTA. Well, I have made that trip several times, and we can never say that it isn’t enough to the American men and women who serve in our Nation’s military.

I would just ask you, every week, I know you go back to your district and the good people in Nebraska—and that good people drinking there, bring more of it here to Washington because I think, if we can drink some more of that water, it certainly wouldn’t hurt us here in our Nation’s Capital.

I want to thank the gentleman from Nebraska for his good words.

As I prepare to close, I want to thank my fellow Blue Dog colleagues for coming down to the well of the House of Representatives this afternoon to talk about the common interests that we as Blue Dog Coalition members have, the efforts that we are making to reach across the aisle, the efforts that we are making to work with the No Labels group, to call to service the engagement of civic dialogue, understanding that, frankly, if we tone down our rhetoric and we have a better understanding of how the different congressional districts impacts the way we can find the common threads, the common bonds to bring together solutions that we can agree upon for all of America. After all, we all believe that is what we have been sent here for, I believe, in one way or another.

Another effort that the Blue Dog Coalition is engaged in with No Labels and others is congressional reform. Clearly, many Americans, when they look at Washington and they see the news of the day, they think: Jeez, there must be something broke there. It ain’t working right. It’s not working the way we read in our textbooks.

We are trying to reduce efforts in congressional form in terms of regular order. We are trying to bring up a budget process and producing all 11 budget bills every year and go to a conference as we are supposed to do. We haven’t done that in 12 years in Congress, whether it is the Democrats in the majority or the Republicans in the majority, so there is a lot of fixing. Obviously, finger-pointing doesn’t fix the problem.

In addition to that, we have electoral reform. I think we all know that last year, last November, we had the lowest recorded turnout in America since 1942. What does that tell you? What does that tell you when the majority of Americans, regardless of whether they are registered as Republicans or Democrats, identify themselves as Independents?

It tells you that America is looking toward people in Washington to provide the leadership to solve problems. They don’t expect us to solve all of them—they are not unrealistic—but they would like us to prioritize on getting a budget on time, getting our fiscal house in order, on trying to fix a broken immigration system, produce a 5-year transportation bill, improve government accountability, and transparency. That is what they would like us to work toward.

As I said when I began earlier this afternoon, I am Congressman Jim COSTA. I represent the 16th Congressional District in California, including all of Merced County, half of the flat land of Madera County—a lot of agriculture in both Merced and Madera Counties—and Fresno County. Fresno is, of course, my home.

The wonderful people that are part of the San Joaquin Valley, they have had the honor and privilege to represent over the years are what all Americans are like. They are some of the best and brightest. They are tenacious. They are hard working. They represent the story of America.

What is that story? Immigrants past, immigrants present—people come in from all over the world, striving to have a better life, a better opportunity for themselves and for their families.

The challenge we will be trying to solve the water problems in the San Joaquin Valley—because, if we can solve the water problems in California and in the West, with the planet clicking 7 billion people last year and soon to have 9 billion people by the middle of this century, our solutions to water problems in California can be a template to solving water problems around the world because where water flows, food grows.

Clearly, we know that that is a daunting challenge, just like our energy problems are—but guess what. We are making progress on our energy problems. When I first came to Congress 10 years ago, we imported over 60 percent of our energy needs. Today, we import a little over 40 percent.

If we continue on the current path, in the next 10 years, we will be importing around 20 percent or less by using all the energy tools in our energy toolbox, just as we must use all the water tools in our water toolbox.

There is a lot to do. I would like to thank my colleagues in the Blue Dog Coalition for their time today, and their continued efforts over the year. Clearly, we have a lot of work to do together, and we want to reach out to work with everybody in the House of Representatives, the people’s House.

The Blue Dog Coalition is ready and willing to work with everyone. We look forward to creating bridges, not cul de sacs, working with our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance commonsense policies that are physically sound, that benefit our entire Nation.

You could also call the Blue Dog Coalition the commonsense caucus because we reject the notion of gridlock in Washington. It is embarrassing; it is inexcusable.

Every day, when we put politics ahead of policy, we put our Nation at risk, and we stand to lose. Therefore, Congress must come together to address the critical issues as I said before—tax reform, immigration reform, and ways to further our Nation’s economic recovery.

There is no problem in America, if we work together, that we cannot solve.

We are here to represent and advocate for our constituents.

Please, for those of you who enjoyed this segment and would like to support the Blue Dog Coalition members this afternoon, you can go to www.bluedog.schrader.house.gov for more information.

The Blue Dog Coalition will continue to work to make a difference by advocating for sound legislation and working together with our colleagues on a bipartisan basis. That is what I have always done.
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Today, as with my Blue Dog Coalition partners, we have the honor and the privilege to represent our constituents from throughout the land; and I would ask that my colleagues continue to make that effort because I think, at the end of the day, that is what all Americans want us to do. I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–13)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the Federal Register for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13388 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.


CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–14)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the Federal Register for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

BARACK OBAMA.


APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker’s appointment, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Economic Committee:

Mr. Delaney. Maryland
Ms. Adams, North Carolina
Mr. Beyer, Virginia

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. Smith of Missouri (at the request of Mr. McCarthy) for today on account of attending a funeral.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL


Mr. Tom Price of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the aggregate budget levels and committee allocations set forth pursuant to H. Con. Res. 25 as deemed in force by H. Res. 5. The revision is for new budget authority and outlays for provisions designated as disaster relief, pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, contained in H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015. A corresponding table is attached.

This revision represents an adjustment for purposes of enforcing sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. For purposes of such Act, these revised allocations and aggregates are to be considered as included in the levels of the budget resolution, pursuant to section 101 of H. Con. Res. 25, as adjusted.

BUDGET AGGREGATES

[On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2015-2024</th>
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<tr>
<td>Current Aggregates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget Authority</td>
<td>3,033,228</td>
<td>(1)</td>
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<td>Outlays</td>
<td>3,077,646</td>
<td>(1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>2,515,878</td>
<td>31,206,399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjustment for H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget Authority</td>
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<td>(1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outlays</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>(1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised Aggregates</td>
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<td>(1)</td>
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<td>Outlays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>2,515,878</td>
<td>31,206,399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Not applicable because annual appropriations acts for fiscal years 2016–2024 will not be considered until future sessions of Congress.
BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 27, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 33. To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o’clock and 20 minutes p.m.) under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 138. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1029) to prohibit the Energy and Commerce Committee from selling or exchanging small parcels of National Forest System land to enhance the management of the National Forest System, to resolve minor encroachments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. OLSON, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. FLORES, Mr. LANCE, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. HUDDSON, Mr. FITTS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 1212. A bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from reclassifying broadband Internet access service as a telecommunications service and from imposing certain regulations on providers of such service; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan (for herself and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1215. A bill to exempt certain 16- and 17-year-old children employed in logging or mechanized operations from child labor laws; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. HINOJOSA):

H.R. 1218. A bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to carry out a pilot program to examine maker-taker pricing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MEHAN, Ms. ESTY, Mr. DOLD, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 1219. A bill to prohibit the Social Security Administration from reducing payments for Medicare and Medicaid to entities that have been convicted of fraud or abuse; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 1220. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 1219. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain land and appurtenances of the Arbuckle Project, Oklahoma, to the Arbuckle Master Conservancy District, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DENT (for himself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. COURTNEY):

H.R. 1220. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 to establish the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Drug Price Transparency Pilot Program; 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 Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself, Ms. DeGETTE, and Mr. WEXSTREN):

H.R. 1221. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by pediatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the
requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, 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. ESTY (for herself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COOK, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JONES, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SPIERS, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. DeSALVADOR):
H.R. 1208. A bill to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligible for treatment in the civil service; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:
H.R. 1223. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the retroactive claiming of the home tax credit after issuance of a social security number; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself and Mr. SWICKERT):
H.R. 1224. A bill to require the exercise of clean-up call options under securities issued by the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation to pay off any new mortgage-backed securities issued by such Corporation or the Federal National Mortgage Association from containing provisions for a clean-up call, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. PIERLUSI:
H.R. 1225. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow certain hospitals in Puerto Rico to qualify for incentives for adoption and meaningful use of certified EHR technology under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RIBBLE:
H.R. 1226. A bill to amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to clarify the maintenance of effort requirement for local educational agencies; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. COOK, and Mr. MULVANEY):
H.R. 1227. A bill to authorize a pilot program to enhance efforts to provide job placement assistance and related employment services directly to members of the National Guard and Reserves and veterans of the Armed Forces to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, 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. TUCKER:
H.R. 1228. A bill to limit United States assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina until Bosnia and Herzegovina is in compliance with the state borders established by the Conference on Yugoslavia Arbitration Commission; 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 Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. JONES):
H.R. 1229. A bill to amend the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 to provide guidance and limitations regarding the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into United States airspace, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. WESTERMAN:
H.R. 1230. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to adjust the calculation of average pay for certain civilian authorities; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HOYER (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLENS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BETYER, and Mrs. COMSTOCK):
H. Con. Res. 20. Resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. OLSON:
H. Con. Res. 22. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders to the House on Government Administration.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. MILLER of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. POSEY, Ms. MOLONY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MATSUMOTO of Hawaii, Ms. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. ESPY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. FARE, Ms. BUSACHI, Ms. DAVIS of California, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. HAHN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. LOBET-TA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. DINGELL, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. KIND, Ms. TITTUS, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BETSOS, Mr. KEATING, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LARS KING of New York, Ms. MCCULLUM, Mr. DAVIS, Mr. Handy, Mr. FLETCHER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BORDALLO, Mr. COSTA, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. TORRES, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):
H. Res. 157. Motion supporting the goals and ideals of National Women’s History Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mrs. ELMERS of Nebraska, Mr. NEGREK, Mr. NEGREK, Mrs. WAGNER, Mrs. MCCORMICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. MOORE):
H. Res. 141. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS
Under clause 3 of rule XII, Mrs. DAVIS of California introduced a bill (H.R. 1231) for the relief of Flavia Mabiloc Cahoan; which was referred 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 of Congress with foreign nations, and Congress, in the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. GARAMENDI:
H.R. 1236. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article One, Section Eight, Clause Three “To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.”

By Mr. BARR:
H.R. 1219. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: “The Congress shall have power. . . To regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.”

By Mrs. NAPOLITANO:
H.R. 1211. 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.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:
H.R. 1212. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 “necessary and proper” clause.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:
H.R. 1213. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, which grants Congress the authority to make laws governing the commerce among several states, including employment discrimination laws.

By Mr. AMODEI:
H.R. 1214. 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 make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. LABRADOR:
H.R. 1215.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. KING of New York:
H.R. 167.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. BOUSTANY:
H.R. 1277.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. DENT:
H.R. 1220.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.
By Ms. ESTY:
H.R. 1223.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Commerce Clause: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution.
By Mr. FORTENBERRY:
H.R. 1224.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. PIERLUSI:
H.R. 1225.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the regulation of commerce with foreign nations, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.
By Mr. RIBBLE:
H.R. 1226.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.
By Mr. TAKANO:
H.R. 1227.
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. TURNER:
H.R. 1228.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.
By Mr. WELCH:
H.R. 1229.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 General Welfare Clause.
The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.
By Mrs. DAVIS of California:
H.R. 1231.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

**ADDITIONAL SPONSORS**
Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

-H.R. 20: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
-H.R. 93: Mr. ENGEL.
-H.R. 156: Mr. LUCAS.
-H.R. 213: Mr. CRAMER.
-H.R. 223: Mr. QUIGLEY.
-H.R. 228: Mr. NORCROSS.
-H.R. 239: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Mr. SQUIRES, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. SASSOY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BRYER, Mr. WALZ, Ms. SCHUMAKER, Ms. POYER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. ESTY, Mr. SPEIER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. DELAUR, Ms. GUTTIEREZ, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HIMES, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. MATUS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. PRIEST of North Carolina, Ms. SABANES, Ms. LEE, Mr. DOUGHERT, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KIND, Mr. DEGHETTE, Mr. LOBESACK, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. QUIELLE, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. LOFEGREN, Mr. MCCARTHY of Georgia, Mr. PINGER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DI FIOZIO, Ms. GIALAVA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KATZING, Mr. PETERS, Mr. O’ROURKE, and Mr. CAPUANO.
-H.R. 284: Mr. WHITFIELD and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
-H.R. 335: Mr. BEYER and Ms. ESTY.
-H.R. 348: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. SOUTHWICK of Texas, Mr. MIMI WALTERS of California, and Mr. ISSA.
-H.R. 531: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
-H.R. 546: Mr. COTY, Mr. McNERNEY, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. RUSH.
-H.R. 572: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
-H.R. 579: Mr. RINNACI and Mr. AMODEI.
-H.R. 622: Mr. NOLAN.
-H.R. 624: Ms. MOORE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. ELLISON, and Mrs. Brooks of Indiana.
-H.R. 625: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. NOCKROSS.
-H.R. 650: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. WHITFIELD.
-H.R. 662: Mr. BLUM, Mr. BARB, and Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
-H.R. 699: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
-H.R. 700: Mr. KILMER.
-H.R. 716: Mr. ASH福德.
-H.R. 721: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. BOST, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROSS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SIERES, Mr. VALADA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HAFTZER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
-H.R. 756: Mr. DUXBURY, and Mr. BEYER.
-H.R. 767: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
-H.R. 769: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
-H.R. 774: Mr. HUFFMAN.
-H.R. 775: Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. KILMER, Mr. DISSANTIS, and Mr. LEWIS.
-H.R. 776: Mr. SCHOCK.
-H.R. 835: Mr. HASTINGS.
-H.R. 836: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. DESJARDINS, and Mr. FLORES.
-H.R. 842: Mr. CLAWS of Florida, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALLOWY of New York, and Mr. NEWHOUSE.
-H.R. 843: Mr. UPTON.
-H.R. 846: Ms. PELOSI and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
-H.R. 855: Mr. NOLAN.
-H.R. 869: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. PAULSEN.
-H.R. 874: Mr. BEN RAY LJAN of New Mexico and Ms. BONAMICI.
-H.R. 879: Mr. CURBelo of Florida.
-H.R. 882: Mr. DOL.
-H.R. 885: Mrs. BUSTOS.
-H.R. 887: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
-H.R. 893: Mr. LEWIS, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Ms. LOSETA of California, Mrs. COMSTOKE, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. WENstrup, Mr. BAEZ, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. McKINLEY, Ms. BLACK, Ms. GARRARD, Mr. CLAWS of Florida, Mr. TITUS, Mr. KUSTER, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Ms. GARAM, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. ROYBUS of Kentucky, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. GUIN.
-H.R. 921: Mr. ASHFORD and Mr. HILL.
-H.R. 928: Mrs. ROBY, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
-H.R. 932: Mr. DELANEY, Mr. VRASEY, and Mr. ENGEL.
-H.R. 935: Mr. TED LIEU of California and Ms. NOTON.
-H.R. 940: Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. HARDY, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. SENSENIBRNNER, and Mr. TRIST of Georgia, Mr. PINGER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DI FIOZIO, Mr. GIALAVA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KATZING, Mr. PETERS, Mr. O’ROURKE, and Mr. CAPUANO.
-H.R. 953: Mr. DISSANTIS.
-H.R. 955: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
-H.R. 971: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. GRAVES of Mississippi, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
-H.R. 975: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. MULVANY.
-H.R. 976: Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. HILL.
H.R. 1000: Ms. Slaughter.
H.R. 1051: Mr. Royce.
H.R. 1062: Mr. Jones, Mr. Pompeo, and Mr. Huelskamp.
H.R. 1063: Mr. Larson of Connecticut and Mr. Kind.
H.R. 1077: Mr. Gosar.
H.R. 1078: Mr. McNerney and Mr. Bilarakis.
H.R. 1094: Mr. Duncan of South Carolina, Mrs. Walorski, Mr. Duffy, and Mr. Gosar.
H.R. 1095: Mr. Quigley and Mr. Ellison.
H.R. 1105: Mr. McCaul, Mr. Westmoreland, Mr. Mullen, Mr. Jones, Mr. LaMalfa, Mr. Denham, Mr. Young of Alaska, Mrs. Black, Mr. Young of Indiana, Mr. Hultgren, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Harper, Mr. Blum, Mr. Paulsen, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Massie, Mr. Meeks, Mr. Cook, Mr. Schrock, Mr. Buc, Mr. Zinke, Mr. Marchant, Mrs. Comstock, and Mr. Duffy.
H.R. 1142: Mr. Marchant.
H.R. 1143: Mr. Ryan of Ohio and Mrs. Brooks of Indiana.
H.R. 1148: Mr. Issa, Mr. Brooks of Alabama, Mr. Byrne, Mt. Lance, Mr. Sessions, Mr. Stivers, and Mr. Gosar.
H.R. 1149: Mr. Stivers.
H.R. 1162: Ms. Bonamici.
H.R. 1173: Mr. Hinojosa and Mr. Ellison.
H.R. 1179: Mr. Tom Price of Georgia.
H.R. 1185: Mr. Burgess and Mr. Hihle.
H.R. 1188: Ms. Bonamici.
H.R. 1198: Ms. Kuster.
H.R. 12: Miss Rice of New York.
H.R. 28: Mr. DeSantis.
H.R. 106: Mr. Ol Slug.
H.R. 12: Mrs. Napolitano, Ms. Jackson Lee, Mr. Takai, Mr. Ted Lieu of California, Mr. Honda, and Mr. Cardenas.
H. Res. 15: Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois.
H. Res. 12: Mr. Lewis and Mr. Crowley.
H. Res. 112: Mr. Peterzson and Mr. Cohen.
H. Res. 12: Mr. Benishek and Mr. Burgess.
H. Res. 122: Ms. Slaughter.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMTED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMTED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative Grayson, or a designee, to H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative Donna F. Edwards, or a designee, to H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.
The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President pro tempore lead 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.

PRAYER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President pro tempore call on Dr. Barry C. Black, the Chaplain of the Senate, to offer the following prayer:

Eternal God, let the moments and hours of this day reverberate with the sounds of Your unfolding providence. May our Senators hear You working throughout their deliberations, transforming the discordant into the harmonious. May Your unseen presence enable them to discern the direction that they should take, as they seek to heed Your instructions and follow Your commands. As they fellowship with You, give them comfort with easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships. Lord, inspire them to believe that they can make a difference in this world.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President pro tempore recognize the majority leader, Mr. McConnell, to designate the time for his statement.

ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President pro tempore recognize the majority leader, Mr. McConnell, to designate the time for his address to Congress.

This is the first time in over a decade that any Israeli Prime Minister has been invited to address a joint meeting of the Congress of the United States. Since Prime Minister Netanyahu commenced his term in office in 2009, the United States and Israel have worked together to confront threats to our common security. As we meet today, the President of Israel stands before us to update us on the situation facing his country, his region, and the world.

The President's address coincides with an increasingly aggressive Iranian campaign to expand its sphere of influence across the Middle East. It represents a threat to both of our countries, it represents a threat to moderate Sunni allies, and it represents a threat to the international community at large.

That is why Prime Minister Netanyahu is here today. He is ideally suited to explain the multitude of challenges this presents—including the threat of an Iran with nuclear weapons capability—and how our countries can address them jointly.

So we are glad the Prime Minister is here with us today. We will be listening closely to what he has to say.

I hope the Obama administration will be listening, too, because this visit isn't about personalities. It is about doing what is best for both of our countries, and here some context is important.

As it has been since its founding, Israel is in a constant state of existential crisis. It is continuously threatened by terrorists, such as Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, who work every day to see a democratic Israel destroyed. Israel's leaders wake every morning knowing that with just one wrong decision, it could be their last in an open and tolerant democracy. That is the frame through which the Israelis approach their national security policy.

Here is the frame the Obama administration uses: It formulates policy with two objectives in mind—fulfilling political campaign promises made back in 2008 and pursuing politically expedient solutions to whatever stands in the way of the first objective. We can see the basis for tension right there.

For me, there are two bookends that define President Obama's foreign policy.

The Executive orders that attempted to close Guantanamo without a credible plan for what to do with its detainees, and to essentially end our ability to capture, detain, and interrogate terrorists, regardless of the threats that remain for our country, represent one bookend.

The President's push to withdraw all combat forces from Iraq and Afghanistan by the end of his term, regardless of the threats posed by the Taliban or the senior leadership of Al Qaeda, represents the other bookend.

The politics-above-policy approach mystifies allies such as Israel. You can see it in many other decisions too—for instance, the President's failure to negotiate an agreement with Iraq for a residual military force that may have prevented the assault by ISIL. Instead, as threats from Al Qaeda and affiliated groups metastasized, the President focused on unwinding or reversing past policies through Executive order.

Uprisings in North Africa and the broader Middle East resulted in additional ungoverned space in Syria, Libya, and Yemen. The capital of Yemen is now occupied by the Houthi militia, and the Yemenis are no more ready to detain the terrorists at Guantanamo today than they were in 2009.

What has the President's response to all this been? To draw down our conventional forces and capabilities.
Even as China and Russia have grown more belligerent, the President sees no need to reverse the harmful damage of the defense cuts he has insisted upon. He sees no need to rebuild our conventional and nuclear forces. He also sees no need to accept that leaving behind residual forces in Iraq and Afghanistan represents an effective means by which to preserve the strategic gains we have made over the years, through tremendous sacrifice. The President has always assumed the role of Commander in Chief with great reluctance. That is particularly true of his dealings with Iran. For years, Iran has continued to enrich uranium. For years, Iran has refused to come clean to the IAEA. But ending Iran’s nuclear weapons program has never fit neatly between the administration’s policy bookends.

The President believed he could extend a hand of friendship and bring the Supreme Leader to the table. Even though that approach failed, the President now seems determined to conclude an agreement with Iran that would leave it with a threshold nuclear capability. It is an agreement that could allow Iran to retain thousands of centrifuges, master the nuclear fuel cycle, advance ballistic missile research and testing, and keep secret any possible military dimensions of nuclear development that have already occurred.

The administration has pursued these options not as part of an overall strategy to end Iran’s nuclear program, but as a stand-alone matter of litigation where a settlement must be reached. This negotiation should not be about getting the best deal that the Iranians will agree to, it should be about the strategic objective of ending Iran’s nuclear weapons program. To do this, the administration must be committed to using force if negotiations fail.

The strategic ambiguity of leaving “all options on the table” has never been convincing, and the administration refused to work with Congress on developing a sanctions and declaratory military response should negotiations fail. It is unlikely that this Congress could be convinced to lift sanctions absent a complete disclosure on the part of the Iranians of all previous research conducted in pursuit of a nuclear device.

And this gets back to the differences between the perspective of the Israeli government concerning Iran’s nuclear capability and those of the Obama administration.

Iran is pursuing full spectrum warfighting capabilities to wage war against Israel, the United States, and our Sunni allies in the region.

Iran is developing cyber capabilities to harass and harm its adversaries, ballistic missile capabilities, and conventional capabilities to deny United States warships access to the Persian Gulf.

Iran remains a state sponsor of terror.

Tehran also continues to push ever deeper into Iraq.

In its fight within Iraq, Iran’s proxy Shia militias have gained valuable combat experience on the ground to add to the terrorist tactics of employing IEDs that were perfected against United States forces. The withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq not only led to the abandonment of the Sunni tribes which had allied with us in Anbar Province, it led to a greater reliance upon the Iranians by the Baghdad government.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Qods Force are expanding their command and control and combat capabilities in Iraq and Syria and gaining valuable warfighting lessons.

The Qods force and Hezbollah are mastering an expeditionary fighting capability that should concern Israel, the United States, and our Sunni allies. The Iranians are advancing across the region in all other aspects of warfighting. All of this has occurred while sanctions have been in place and the price of oil has declined.

From the perspective of any Israeli Prime Minister, Iran’s advances have occurred while the terrorist presence in the Sinai has grown, the Nusarah front and ISIL are present in Syria, and Libya has become a terrorist training ground.

Because the administration has all but conceded the Iranian nuclear enrichment capability, Israel has grown more isolated. It has come to understand that it may have to act alone. Yet rather than ending Iran’s nuclear weapons program, President Obama’s objective seems to be to defer any decision about the use of force to one of his successors. Politically expedient, but it is inconsistent with the national security requirements of Israel.

I say all this to underline the importance of the Prime Minister’s address this morning.

We have seen the results of a politics-above-all foreign policy now for several years: It leaves our Nation strategically weaker, and will make challenges faced by the President’s successor all the more difficult.

Israel has seen this too. Israel knows it may well be the first to suffer if the Obama White House makes another flawed political decision, but Americans should understand it is not just Israel that needs to worry. We should be concerned by a nuclear Iran. The whole world should be concerned by a nuclear Iran, and the Prime Minister is right to help explain why United States is for Israel’s sake and ours, I for one am very glad he is.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today marks the 115th day since President Obama announced he was nominating Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General of the United States. That makes her the longest pending Attorney General nominee in more than four decades.

The Senate Judiciary Committee repeatedly her nomination favorably last week. So what is the wait? Why can’t we get this woman approved? It appears we are not going to this week.

She has a spotless record and credentials that are above reproach. There is absolutely no reason she should have to wait any longer for confirmation. Our Nation needs an Attorney General. Each day that passes without Ms. Lynch’s nomination being confirmed is yet another testimony to Republicans’ inability to govern.

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last December, rightfully, the National Labor Relations Board voted to make important changes to union election procedures. Their rule changes are good for workers and businesses. They modernize the election process and help prevent delays and frivolous litigation.

I am sure there are some businesses that oppose this, but I haven’t found them. This is simply a problem that has been engendered by the Republicans in the Senate. They are trying to roll back these reforms instead of supporting the rights of workers. The reforms they made are so basic, such as using email and using other processes such as a fax machine and using the employers’ records, not the unions’ records.

Later this afternoon the Senate will consider a Republican-introduced resolution of disapproval which seeks to undo the NLRB’s rule changes. This is yet another sad reminder of how little regard Republicans have for the American worker.

Last year we saw Republicans vote against an increase in the minimum wage, as well as legislation that would ensure American women get the same pay for doing the same work as men. Republicans in Congress I don’t think get it.

We are in this building, in this Chamber, to help the American people and want to work to make sure businesses are prosperous, but we also can’t lose sight of the fact that workers are what makes the businesses profitable.

So if you are for American workers and the families they support, then prove it with your vote on this resolution.

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 until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided, and the majority controlling the first half.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand the time is equally divided between now and 10:30. Is there sufficient time for the Republican Senator to use 20 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time would be 18 minutes on each side.

Mr. DURBIN. Then I have no objection to how the Senators choose to use that time.

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

WELCOMING PRIME MINISTER NETANYAHU

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I am here this morning to engage in a colloquy with the good Senator from South Carolina. We will be joined by the Senators from New Hampshire and Kentucky and perhaps the Senator from Arizona.

The purpose of the colloquy is to welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu this morning—who will be speaking in front of Congress—and to talk about why it is so important he is joining us today.

In a few moments we will hear remarks from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the House Chamber and welcome him to Congress to affirm the friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Israel and to assess the threats facing our two democracies.

Actually, today’s speech is not unusual. This is the 115th time a foreign leader has addressed a joint session of Congress. This is the seventh time an Israeli Prime Minister will address a joint session of Congress. It is Prime Minister Netanyahu’s third address to Congress.

It is not surprising we are hearing from the leader of our ally, Israel. Israel is a democracy in a neighborhood of authoritarian governments. Prime Minister Netanyahu speaks the language of freedom with us today. There can be no doubt of his passion on behalf of the people he represents and that inspires us to take his message very seriously.

So this joint session is not unusual nor surprising, but that does not mean that it is unimportant. In fact, today’s speech is profoundly important. The partnership between the United States and Israel is the security of the Middle East and the world. We need a strong U.S.-Israeli partnership to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. We need a strong U.S.-Israeli partnership to stand against the extremism that is ripping apart nations across the Middle East. We need a strong U.S.-Israeli partnership to demonstrate the value of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law for societies, Israel not the least and among the most no longer satisfied with dictatorships.

For all of these reasons it is good to have Prime Minister Netanyahu here today. It is good to reaffirm the bond between Israelis and Americans, and it is good to have an ally to stand against tyranny and extremism.

I look forward to hearing from the Prime Minister because views directly from Israel are extremely important.

Since its birth in 1948, Israel has faced one security threat after another. Israel’s strength and vitality in the face of these threats are a testament to the ability of its people and its leaders to head off threats to security before they become too large to overcome.

There is no substitute for the Israeli view of security in the Middle East and the Iranian threat in particular.

So today represents an important moment to learn how Israel sees its security and the next steps for the U.S.-Israeli partnership.

I now turn to my colleague from South Carolina and ask for his comments about this important speech from the Prime Minister of Israel today.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I appreciate being on the floor with the Senator from North Dakota who has been very involved in trying to secure America against a variety of threats.

I will get to the heart of the matter. Some people feel the Prime Minister should not be here at this time because in a couple weeks there will be an election in Israel. They have a parliamentary system. They do things differently—they vote for parties, not people—and they are having a real contest over there about who should be in charge and what coalitions will lead Israel.

I have a very simple comment: That is for Israelis to decide. They decide who they want to run their country. They can vote for the party or groups of people who they think best represent their view of Israel. That is their business, not mine. My business is to try to find out what is best for America when it comes to defending our Nation. That is why all of us are on the floor today.

I don’t think I can adequately do my job if I don’t hear from the Prime Minister of Israel, if he is willing to talk to me. Some people may be able to do that. God bless you.

If someone feels as though now is the time to boycott this speech, if they want to send a message about politics in Israel, be my guest. I am going to be at this speech to try to learn what to do regarding America and Israel concerning the nuclear threat.

Why do I think it is important for me to be there? I can’t think of a better voice to tell me what would happen in the region if we get a bad deal with the Iranians.

Israel is in the crosshairs of the Iranian ayatollahs—has been for decades—threatening to destroy the State of Israel. I want to hear from the people on the ground, learn firsthand, as to what a good deal would look like and what a bad deal would look like. I want to hear from the Prime Minister of Israel the consequences of a bad deal.

As to me, I do not trust this administration to negotiate a good deal, but maybe I am wrong; and the best way to find out is for Congress to look at the deal. If it is a good deal, I will vote for it, because the Arabs and Israelis will tell us if this is something we can live with. At the end of the day a good deal is a blessing for the world, and a bad deal is a nightmare.

(Mr. COTTON assumed the Chair.)

So to the good Senator from North Dakota, I not only welcome the Prime Minister of Israel to speak to Congress, I am looking forward to it because I hope to learn something that would make me a better Senator regarding our own national security. The only thing I can tell the American people without any hesitation—ISIL is a threat to us, a threat to the region. They are the most barbaric terrorist organization roaming the globe today. They represent a direct threat to our homeland. But the threat they represent is a distant second to Iran having a nuclear weapon. That ought to tell you a lot about how I feel. If I can watch TV, as you do every night, and see what ISIL is doing to Christians and others throughout the region and say that is secondary to Iran, I hope that means something. It means a lot to me. Because if Iranians get a nuclear weapon, then every Arab in the region who can afford one is going to get a nuclear weapon, and we are on our way to Armageddon.

North Korea in the making is what I worry about. The same people who are negotiating this deal with negotiating the North Korean deal. Congress was absent. Now it is time for Congress to be involved and say whether this is a good deal. I have legislation with Senator CORKER and six Democrats and six Republicans asking that Congress review any deal, and I would be curious to see what the Prime Minister thinks about that.

So in summary, this would be the most important decision we make as a body, how to deal with the Iranian nuclear threat. This will be the most important issue I will deal with as a U.S. Senator, and I have been here almost 20 years. The consequence of a bad deal is an absolute nightmare.

If you were to relieve the sanctions tomorrow and gave the Iranians the money they were due under construction relief, do you think they would build schools and hospitals or would they continue to pour money into their
military to disrupt the region and continue to build ICBMs? As I speak, without a nuclear weapon Iran is leading an offensive today in Iraq. And I know the President of the Senate was a ranger, an infantryman in Vietnam. Could you imagine, in your wildest dreams that the Iraqi security forces are marrying up with Shia milita and Suleimani, the head of the Revolutionary Guard is on the ground in Iraq leading the efforts, and we are sitting on the sidelines? You talk about a screw-up policy.

Are we going to let eight guys negotiate with Iran—the people who brought you Iraq and Syria and the mess you see in the region? You feel good enough about them doing a deal with the Iranians that you don’t even look at the deal yourself? This is beyond screwed up, and the worst is yet to come. A bad deal. But, maybe the best is yet to come, a good deal. I don’t know. But I want to hear what Israel believes this agreement looks like. And if you don’t want to hear that, then, boy, we are on different planets as to the consequences of what is going on in the world today.

With that, I would ask a question to the Senator from New Hampshire, who has been watching the Iranian behavior on the ground throughout the Middle East and the missile program in particular, and ask her what are her concerns about Iran with extra money coming into the coffers in sanction relief?

Ms. AYOTTE. I thank the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from South Carolina.

As I look at where we are right now—first of all, our support for Israel and our friendship with Israel—this has been a very strong bipartisan issue, and it is an issue that rightly crosses party lines because we share the same values, the relationship is very important, our security, our intelligence, and we share the concern that we do not want the world’s worst regime to obtain the world’s most destructive weapon, and that is the Iranian regime.

So I want to welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu to the Congress and very much listen to what he has to say. This is a bipartisan issue. This is about our security in the United States of America. They have called us “the great Satan,” and this is an issue that represents a threat to our core national security interests, to allow state-sponsored terrorism to obtain the most destructive weapon in the world. That is a danger we cannot afford in our country. It is one of concern. It is important to work with our strong ally, Israel.

They want to do everything we can in this Congress on a bipartisan basis to ensure that never happens. That is why I am honored to be a sponsor of bipartisan legislation that would give the Congress a say on this very important issue, because we worked together to put together some of the toughest sanctions that actually brought the Iranians to the negotiating table. We should not lift the sanctions that have been put together on a bipartisan basis ensuring that this is a good agreement that will end their nuclear program. When I say end it, I don’t mean end it for a decade, I mean end it permanently, because Iran has been engaged in terrorist activity for longer than a decade. So this is something we have to make sure is a transparent, verifiable agreement.

I would also add we cannot have a situation where we have a splitup. There has been a discussion about a year and a half ago that this agreement. I would like to hear what the Prime Minister thinks about that, because my concern about that is this will lead to the situation my colleague from South Carolina talked about, where we have a Sunni-Shia nuclear arms race in the Middle East, where everyone seeks to enrich uranium and to have a breakout period. That results in more proliferation of nuclear weapons in a way that makes the world less safe and endangers the United States of America.

So today we welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu. I very much look forward to listening carefully to what he has to say. This is a bipartisan issue. This is about the security of the United States of America. This is obviously about our strong friendship with Israel. We are aligned in ensuring that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon and ensuring that we work together to stop their support of terrorism around the world, to stop their proliferation of their ICBM program, which the estimates are they could hit the east coast of the United States of America by 2015 if they continue on this path. This is about us, this is about our relationship with Israel, and I very much look forward to hearing the Prime Minister today.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I wish to thank our colleague from New Hampshire and I would like to return to the Senator from South Carolina and pose a question.

I have been a supporter of the strong sanctions the Senate put in place with the Kirk-Menendez legislation the Senator from South Carolina was very involved with. During these negotiations those sanctions have been relaxed by the administration, which I think is of great concern. I think the biggest deterrent to Iran pursuing a nuclear weapon is the sanctions we put in place with our allies.

So now as the administration negotiates this agreement, my colleague from South Carolina and others on a bipartisan basis have put forward legislation requiring that that agreement would come to this body for an up-or-down vote. I would like him to describe what the important and why it is so important and why the speech today with the Prime Minister goes to the heart of that very important matter.

Mr. GRAHAM. I think the legislation the Senator from North Dakota described is the most important thing we will do this year. The sanctions against Iran, congressionally created, were 100 to 0. Every Member of the Senate believed the Iranians needed to be sanctioned for the mischief they have created and for their nuclear ambitions to stop their march toward a nuclear weapon.

The administration objected, but 100 Members of this body voted for those sanctions. If there is a deal with the Iranians, and I hope there is a good deal, the diplomatic solution to this problem is preferred by everyone. It is a simple concept. Before the sanctions Congress created can be lifted, Congress has to look at and have a say. Under the 1, 2, 3 sections of the Atomic Energy Act there is a provision that allows for Congress to approve commercial nuclear deals between the United States and another country when nuclear technology is shared. We have done that 24 times, but Congress had to approve nuclear deals between the United States and other nations, including Russia, China, Argentina, and that rogue country called Canada. I can imagine a look at a deal with Canada but not wanting to take a look at a deal with Iran.

This bipartisan legislation is very simple. Any deal negotiated with the P5+1 will come to the Senate and the House to be disapproved—not approved. Now I did that to accommodate my Democratic colleagues. There is concern that with 54 Republicans that we hate Obama so much we would just reject the deal because we don’t like him. I want to look at it and don’t like President Obama’s foreign policy, but I hope I am smart enough to understand that a good deal is a blessing. I
The President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, pursuant to the provisions of section 201(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, have appointed Dr. Homer Keith Hall as Director of the Congressional Budget Office, effective for the term expiring January 3, 2019.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

THE ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER’S SPEECH TO CONGRESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at 11 a.m. this morning there will be a historic joint session of Congress. Usually a leader from some other country speaking at a joint session of Congress doesn’t make history. It has happened over 100 times. I have attended many of those during the time I have served in the House and the Senate. What is historic about it is that it was called unilaterally by the Republican Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER. Usually and consistently, joint sessions of Congress have been called on a bipartisan basis and in most cases involve the administration and executive branch. But when an individual makes his own way by saying he would announce a joint session of Congress welcoming the Prime Minister of Israel.

I also checked with the Senate Historian, and it turns out there is another piece of history being made today. He can find no precedent where Members of Congress came forward from both the House and the Senate and announced publicly they would not attend a joint session of Congress, and that has happened today.

That is a personal and private decision by each Member of Congress as to whether they wish to attend the joint session this morning. I am going to attend it primarily because of my respect for the State of Israel and the fact that throughout my public career in the House and Senate, I have valued the bipartisan support of Israel which I found in both the House and the Senate.

I am proud that it was President Harry Truman—a Democrat—who was the first Executive in the world to recognize the nation of Israel. I am proud that throughout history Democratic and Republican Presidents alike have supported the United States for the State of Israel and the fact that throughout my public career in the House and Senate, I have valued the bipartisan support of Israel which I found in both the House and the Senate.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds to wrap up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority’s time has expired.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds to wrap up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. I wish to thank my colleagues from South Carolina and New Hampshire. This is a bipartisan effort to get the deal through.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleagues from South Carolina and New Hampshire. This is a bipartisan effort to get the deal through.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The PRESIDING OFFICER.
First, if we can reach an agreement, we have to verify it. We can’t take the word of Iran. We need to make certain that when they promise they will destroy certain equipment, they will not go forward in developing a nuclear weapon that we cannot verify. I worry that if we rush to verification, the agreement is worthless, and the President has said as much.

Let’s assume the worst case: Either the negotiations break down or the verification proves Iran did not negotiate in good faith. What then is the alternative? Well, if the coalition that imposed the sanctions believes we made good-faith efforts to bring Iran to a peaceful place and they failed, then we can continue the sanctions regime and put more pressure on them to move forward to a good solution. But if there is a feeling among our coalition that we have not negotiated in good faith, that we didn’t make an honest effort to find common ground with Iran that would allow them to continue with the sanctions regime, and then it would become next to impossible to put the pressure on Iran to make them change.

What the President is trying to do is to achieve through negotiations a peaceful end to this global challenge and secondly to make sure the sanctions regime—the countries that have joined us, P5+1 and others—will continue to believe we are operating in good faith and continue to support us. The alternative is to allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon. That is unthinkable. If it starts to occur, there will be a military response, and it will be deadly. I don’t know the scope or nature of it. There is no way to guess. But we understand what it would mean if military action is taken against Iran because of the development of these nuclear weapons.

Let me also say that I am considering the so-called Corker-Menendez proposal that the Congress will review any agreement that is reached with the Iranians. I have not reached a decision yet because I think it raises a serious and important question of policy and the Constitution. We know that if we are dealing with a treaty, it is up to the Senate to step forward and approve such a treaty. But this is not a treaty; this is in the nature of an agreement. We have had agreements in the past that were not subject to congressional approval. We have had agreements on the environment and other issues that were not subject to congressional approval. I need to look and review carefully whether the Corker-Menendez legislation that has been proposed is a reasonable assertion of congressional authority.

I will also add that it is obvious—and I wish to state it because it was raised as a question in the earlier comments—that any future imposed sanctions will require congressional action to suspend them. Ultimately, Congress has the last word on sanctions we have put into law. I don’t think there is any question about that. Those sanctions imposed by the executive branch the President may remove or change by Executive order should he choose, but the congressional authority to continue or even propose new ones is not diminished by any agreement which is reached by the President.

Earlier I listened to the majority leader as he came to the floor and spoke about a number of issues. I would like to address one of the issues he raised in criticism of the President. He criticized the President for proposing the closure of Guantanamo as a prison for those who we suspect are engaged in terrorism. The President’s position on this has been very clear, and I have supported it for two reasons. First, we know Guantanamo has become a symbol around the world—a symbol which has been used against the United States when they want to recruit terrorism around our country. I think Guantanamo has outlived its usefulness and should be closed.

The second point is one that is very obvious. We have over 300 convicted terrorists currently serving their time in the existing federal prison system. In Federal prisons across this Nation, including my State of Illinois, we have convicted terrorists who are reporting to their cells every day and are no threat to the community at large. They are being handled in a professional, thoughtful way by the men and women who work for the Bureau of Prisons, and there has never been any question as to whether the terrorists in this system are somehow a threat to this country. In fact, they are well contained and have been for a long time.

The alternative at Guantanamo is one that even fiscal conservatives ought to think about twice. We are currently spending up to $3 million per Guantamano prisoner to incarcerate them—almost $3 million a prisoner. What does it cost to keep the most dangerous prisoners in the Federal prison system in the maximum security prisons? No more than $60,000 a year—$60,000 to keep them in the Federal prison system and $3 million to keep them in Guantanamo. It is 50 times the cost, if my calculations are correct. That suggests to me a horrible waste of money—money that could be better spent to keep American families rather than maintain this symbol of Guantanamo.

Secondly, an argument was made by the majority leader earlier that we made the mistake of bringing our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan. I disagree. This notion of a permanent army of occupation by the United States in the Middle East is certainly not one that I welcome. We need to encourage those countries—Iraq and Afghanistan—to involve their own capacity to protect their own countries. The United States can be helpful. We can provide support. But ultimately we have to call on these countries to step forward and to defend themselves with our support so long as they are fighting the forces of terrorism.

I see my colleague Senator MENENDEZ is on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I appreciate my distinguished colleague yielding some time to me.

I rise in anticipation of the speech of our ally and our partner, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, to the soon-to-be joint meeting of Congress.

I agree with many of my colleagues that the political timing of the Prime Minister’s speech to the Congress is a challenging one and one that didn’t derive itself under the best of circumstances. But I also think very clearly that it is important to listen to what the elected leader of the people of Israel—the one true friend of the Middle East, a major trading partner of the United States, a major security ally of the United States, and the one country most likely to be voting with us in common cause in international fora has to say.

There is a history here that I think drives the leader of the Jewish people to the circumstances in which he feels so passionately about the security of his country. If you traveled to Israel, as I have, and you talk to the Members there here have as well, here is a country in which you can go from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem on a good day in 45 minutes. It is a country which—if you fly its width, it would take just a couple of minutes. It is a country which has its back to the sea and which is surrounded by neighbors who, generally speaking, are hostile. It is a country whose people have a history in which there are those who have sought to annihilate them. Maybe we cannot fathom the challenges that those are the challenges of the people of Israel. So when you have an issue such as Iran’s march toward nuclear weapons, you have an understanding of why the people of Israel have a concern for the existential threat that Iran, if it achieves nuclear weapons, is ultimately capable of creating.

I have worked as hard as anyone else. As a matter of fact, I started my focus on Iran when I was in the House of Representatives and found out that the United States was sending voluntary contributions to the International Atomic Energy Administration beyond our membership dues to do what? To create operational capacity of the Brezhnev nuclear facilities in the nation’s interest and a security threat of the United States, not in the interest of our ally, the State of Israel, and I led a drive to stop those voluntary contributions.

Secondly, then—it has been almost 20 years now—I have been following Iran’s march toward nuclear power, not for peaceful purposes—because, let’s be honest, a country that has one of the
A bill (S. 625) to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran’s nuclear program, and for other purposes.

Mr. McCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning Prime Minister Netanyahu laid out the threat posed by a nuclear Iran in very clear terms—not just to Israel, not just to the United States, but to the entire world. He reminded us that no deal with Iran is better than a bad deal with Iran.

That seems to run counter to the Obama administration’s thinking on the issue, which is worrying enough. What is also worrying is its seeming determination to pursue a deal on its own, without the input of the people’s elected representatives. Remember, it was Congress that helped bring Iran to the table by putting sanctions in place, actually against—against—the wishes of the administration.

Congress was right then. And Congress and the American people need to be a part of this discussion too. That is why I am acting to place this bipartisan bill on the legislative calendar. It is legislation crafted by Members of both parties that would ensure the American people have a say in any deal. Senators CORKER, GRAHAM, and others worked on similar legislation, and they will mark that bill up in committee.

Congress must be involved in reviewing and voting on an agreement reached between this White House and Iran, and this bill would ensure that happens.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BURDINE. I now ask for a motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 8, a joint resolution pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, relating to the National Labor Relations Board rule. Last December, the National Labor Relations Board issued a final rule disapproving a Board rule that would have allowed small businesses to use binding arbitration to resolve labor disputes. The Senate this afternoon will vote on disapproving that rule. This joint resolution disapproving the Board rule is necessary. The Senate adopted it 57-42. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed was agreed to.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, I move to proceed to 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, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today to discuss the Congressional Review Act resolution that Senator McConnell, the Republican leader, Senator Enzi, the Senator from Wyoming, and I have filed to stop a new National Labor Relations Board rule. Last December, the National Labor Relations Board issued a congressional disapproval resolution for a Board rule relating to representation case procedures. We have a responsibility to ensure that such rules are not implemented without appropriate congressional review. The resolution specifically directs the Senate Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee to conduct hearings on the Board rule and its impact on small businesses. I urge that this hearing be held as soon as possible.

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final rule that shortened the time between when pro-union organizers ask an employer for a secret ballot election and when that election actually takes place.

I refer to this as the “ambush election” rule. It forces an union election before an employer has the chance to figure out what is going on. Even worse, it jeopardizes employees’ privacy by requiring employers to turn over employees’ personal information, including email addresses, phone numbers, mailing addresses, and locations to union organizers.

This action by the National Labor Relations Board, which increasingly has become a union advocate instead of umpiring disputes between employers and employees, has attracted enormous attention across this country. I have letters from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Coalition for a Democratic Workplace, the National Council of Chain Restaurants, the National Retail Federation, the National Restaurant Association, Associated General Contractors of America—173 total organizations that have associated General Contractors of America, the Society for Human Resource Management, the Associated General Contractors of America—173 total organizations that have registered their deep concern about this ambush election rule.

Senator Enzi is already on the floor. He has for many years fought this battle. I want the American people to understand why the ambush election rule is such a bad idea, why it is so unfair to employers, forcing them to have a union election before they can figure out what is going on. For the same reason, it is unfair to employees. Employers have to vote in a union election before they have a chance to hear both sides.

Here is how the procedure will work. If a majority of the Senate approves this resolution, it will then go to the House for a vote. If it passes both chambers, the President can veto the resolution. It will take two-thirds of the Senate to override that veto.

If the NLRB’s new rule is disapproved, the Board cannot issue a substantially similar rule without congressional approval. The question I would ask is: What is the rush? What is the problem here? Today, more than 96 percent of elections occur within 56 days of the petition filing. But under this new rule, elections could take place in as few as 11 days. This rule will harm employers and employees alike. If you are an employer that is ambushed by that 11-day election, here is how it works: On day 1, you get a faxed copy of an election petition that has been filed at your local NLRB regional office stating that 30 percent of your employees support a union.

The union may have already been quietly trying to organize for months without your knowledge. Your employees have only been able to hear the union’s point of view. By day 2 or 3, you must publicly post an election notice in your workplace. If you communicate to your employees electronically, you have to publish the notice online as well. By noon on day 7 you must file with the NLRB what is called a statement of position. This is a comprehensive list in which an employer sets out legal positions and claims in writing. Under the NLRB’s new rule, you waive your rights to use any legal arguments not raised in this document. So it should be pretty obvious why you would have to have a lawyer on hand. You probably need that lawyer on hand on day 2, and hopefully on day 1, because if you make any mistakes in the lead-up to the election, the NLRB might set aside the result and order a rerun election. Worse, if a bigger mistake is made, it could require an employer to automatically bargain with the union.

Now think about the real world. At our hearing before the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, a representative of the National Federation of Independent Businesses testified. She said there are 350,000 independent business owners in the NFIB, with an average of 10 employees. So you have small businesses all over America. They do not sit around with labor lawyers; they do not have money to hire labor lawyers. They are expected to know in a day or two exactly what to do about a complicated petition before the NLRB because of this ambush election rule that could cause the election to happen within 11 days.

On day 7, you must also present the union and the NLRB with a list of prospective voters as well as their job classifications, shifts, and work locations.

Now if you are a business with five, six, seven, eight employees, you are going to be spending your time working. Your customers might want your services. They might want on-time deliveries. All of a sudden, you are running around trying to find a labor lawyer, trying to avoid making mistakes, so you can deal with this ambush election.

On day 8, a pre-election hearing is held at the NLRB regional office and an election day is set. By day 10, the employer must present the union with a list of employee names, personal email addresses, personal cell phone numbers, and home addresses. You have to hand this information over, even if the employees object.

Day 11 is the earliest day on which the NLRB can conduct the election under the new rule. The union has the power to postpone an election by an additional 10 days, but the employer has no corresponding power. The union has ambushed the employer and has the power to postpone the election, but the employer has no similar right.

Under this new NLRB rule, before the hearing on day 8, an employer will have less than 1 week to do the following things:

- Figure out what an election petition is. For most of those hundreds of thousands of small businesses with five, six, eight employees, they might have no idea what it is.
- Find legal representation. Finding a lawyer is not just a matter of looking in the Yellow Pages. Finding a lawyer from union organizers.

Communicate with employees about the decision they are making.

Correct any misstatements and falsehoods that employees may be hearing from union organizers.

As I mentioned earlier, making even the slightest mistake in the lead-up to an election can result in the NLRB setting aside the results and ordering a rerun election, or worse, when a bigger mistake is made, the Board could require an employer to automatically bargain with the union.

But it is the employees who stand to lose the most under the new rule. First, some of the employees may know what is going on before the union files its notice of an election. But all of the employees do not have a chance to hear both sides of the issue in an ambush election.

Second, because of the ambush, employees may have only heard half the story. Only 4.3 percent of union elections occur more than 56 days after the petition is filed. The current median number of days between the filing of an election is 38 days. These figures are well within the NLRB’s own goals for timely elections.

The unions won 64 percent of elections in 2013. In recent years the union win rate has actually been going up. What is the rush? Why is 38 days too long? It is well within the NLRB’s own goals and unions are winning more elections than they lose.

Let’s turn to 1959, when a former Member of this body, Senator John F. Kennedy, warned against rushing employees into elections in a debate over amendments to the National Labor Relations Act. This is what he said:

There should be a 30-day interval between the request for an election and the holding of the election in which both parties can present their viewpoints.

Senator John F. Kennedy, April 21, 1959.
work law, employees have dues money taken out of every paycheck whether they like it or not. They lose the ability to deal directly with their employers to address concerns or ask for a promotion or a raise. Instead, employees have to work through the union. Important considerations, such as which of their fellow employees will be included in a bargaining unit, will no longer be determined before the election. As the two dissenting members of the NLRB put it when this rule was decided, it will be asked to “vote now, understand later.”

I wish to emphasize what the employees are losing, in addition to the opportunity to fully understand the election before them. Employees are losing their privacy, because the rule requires employers to hand over employees’ personal email addresses, cell phone numbers, shift hours and locations, job classifications, even if the employees have made clear they do not want to be contacted by organizers.

Some on the other side say: It is the modern age. But I would say that in the modern age our privacy is assaulted from every side. We should be even more careful about rushing an election rule requiring personal information. Employers should not have to hand over employees’ personal email address, cell phone numbers, shift locations, and job classifications just because a petition is filed by 30 percent of the employees. Many employees may have no interest in creating a union.

This rule appears to be a solution in search of a problem. It is clear to see it is wrong, and that is why Senators Enzi, McConnell, and I are asking the Senate to disapprove it today and prohibit the NLRB from issuing any similar rule.

I will come back to the floor during our debate time to talk about how this rule is part of the National Labor Relations Board’s attempt to become more partisan advocacy than umpire. That is the reason Senator McConnell and I have introduced legislation that would change the National Labor Relations Board back from an advocate to an umpire by doing three things. First, it would end partisan advocacy by creating a six-member board of three Republicans and three Democrats where a majority would require both sides to find middle ground. Second, the legislation would rein in the general counsel. Finally, employers and unions would be able to challenge complaints filed by the general counsel in Federal district court. Third, it would encourage timely decisions. Either party in a case before the Board may appeal to the Federal court of appeals if the Board fails to reach a decision within a year.

When I come back to the floor I will also talk about the joint employer standard and the NLRB’s decision to destroy more than 700,000 American franchise businesses, these men and women operate health clubs, barber-shops, auto parts shops, childcare centers, neighborhood restaurants, music stores, cleaning services, and much more.

Combine the attack on franchises with the ambush election rule and an NLRB decision allowing micro-unions—where unions target small units—and it is clear there is a consistent trend by unions and their friends in the NLRB to tip the balance in ways never intended by the creators of the National Labor Relations Act.

The National Labor Relations Board is supposed to be an umpire, not an advocate. If there ever was an example of unfairness and tipping the balance in a single direction, it would be the ambush election rule. The rule allows union organizers to ambush an unsuspecting company and force an election in 11 days—before the employer and its employees have time to figure out what is going on.

In conclusion, I think Senator Kennedy’s advice is good advice to follow. That advice is: be fair,REAT, balance, and give everyone a chance to have an opportunity to know what is going on have not. Senator Kennedy thought 30 days was about right, and 38 days is the mean today. This ambush election rule would reduce it to 11.

That is the wrong thing to do, and I hope the majority in the Senate agrees with me on that. I hope the House agrees with us on that. I hope the President will agree with us on that. If he vetoes it, as he has said today he will, then I hope a majority of both parties will speak up for employers and employees in the United States and say no ambush elections for us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Lankford). The Senator from Washington.

MRS. MURRAY. Mr. President, I believe that real long-term economic growth is built from the middle out, not from the top down, and our government has a role to play in investing in working families, making sure they have the opportunity to work hard and succeed and offering a hand up to those who want to climb the economic ladder and provide a better life for themselves and their families. Our government and our economy should be working for all families, not just the wealthiest few.

Thankfully, we have had the opportunity to put in place over the past few years that have pulled our economy back from the brink and have started moving us in the right direction. We are not there yet, but across the country businesses have now added almost 12 million new jobs over 59 straight months of job growth, including almost 1 million manufacturing jobs. The unemployment rate is now under 6 percent. Health care costs are growing at their lowest rate in almost 50 years, while insurance premiums are down and we see more access to affordable coverage. The Federal budget deficit has been reduced by more than two-thirds since President Obama took office. Although some Republicans are now threatening to bring this back, we have been able to move away from the constant tea party-driven crisis and uncertainty that was destroying jobs and holding our economy back.

We are headed in a good direction, and I am proud of the policies we fought for that helped us get here, but we have a whole lot more to do. Over the past few decades, working families have seen their incomes stagnant while the cost of living and health care and education has continued to go up. For most workers, wages have stayed flat or have fallen over the past five decades. According to the National Employment Law Project, from 2009 to 2013 hourly wages declined by 3.4 percent. During that time low- and mid-wage workers experienced greater declines than higher wage workers. That means that across our country today too many families are struggling to make ends meet on rock-bottom wages and poor working conditions on the job.

While the middle class’s share of America’s prosperity is at an all-time low, the biggest corporations have posted record profits. Congress should be working on ways to build an economy that works for all of our families, not just those at the top. Unfortunately, once again, instead of standing up for workers, my Republican colleagues are now threatening to bring this back, we have been able to move away from the constant tea party-driven crisis and uncertainty that was destroying jobs and holding our economy back.

Workers have a right to decide whether they want union representation. To ensure they are able to exercise that right, the National Labor Relations Board—or the NLRB—helps to make sure workers have a fair up-or-down vote. Unfortunately, too often big corporations take advantage of loopholes in the current election process to delay a vote on union representation. Unnecessary litigation and excessive delays threaten the rights of workers who want to have a fair and free election. In too many cases big corporations take advantage of every possible opportunity and wasteful legal hurdle—sometimes on small technicalities—just to delay a vote.

The constant confrontation and hostility during the election process can be extreme. A study from the Center for Economic and Policy Research found that among workers who openly advocate for a union during an election campaign one in five is fired. Bureaucratic delays make to the worse. Another study—one from UC Berkeley—found the longer the delay before an election, the more likely the NLRB will charge employers with attempts to tamper with the vote.

What is clear from that research is that delays only create more barriers that deny workers their right to organize a union. The NLRB was absolutely
right to carry out its mission to review and streamline its election process and to bring down those barriers for workers to get a fair vote because it is clear the current system is outdated and vulnerable to abuse.

As I have mentioned, the current election process is overburdened by unnecessary and wasteful litigation which drags out elections and puts workers' rights on hold. Not only that, the election process for one region of the country whether to join is substantively different from another region, and that adds to inefficiencies and a lot of confusion.

Workers have the right to vote on union representation in elections that are efficient and free from unnecessary delays and wasteful stall tactics. So after a very rigorous review process, in December of last year, the NLRB made reforms to their election procedures. These updates will make modest but important changes to modernize and streamline processes. They will reduce unnecessary litigation on issues that will not affect the outcome of the election. The new reforms will bring the election process into the 21st century by letting employers and unions file elections electronically. They will allow the use of more modern forms of communication to employees through their cell phones and their emails.

It is important to note that in many regions the NLRB has already adopted some of the reforms which relate to the reform to the election process, so we know this can work. These reforms will simply standardized the best practices for the election process across regions, which will help all sides—all sides—know what to expect during the process to promote uniformity and predictability.

These changes aren't just good for the workers, but they are good for employers by streamlining the process when workers file a petition to have an election on whether to join a union, and the reforms will make sure all sides have the information they need.

I have laid out the improvements the new reforms will make, but let's talk about what these guidelines will not do. The new process does not require elections to be held within any specific timeframe. I want to repeat that because it is important. Contrary to what some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle take great offense to these modest changes. Instead of standing up for workers across the country who are struggling with stagnant wages and poor working conditions, Republicans have chosen to challenge these commonsense reforms with a resolution of disapproval, and that is why we are here today.

Instead of talking about how to create jobs and help working families who are struggling, Republicans are struggling to rather roll back workers' rights to gain a voice at the bargaining table. The Republicans' attempt to stop this rule through a resolution would have major consequences for businesses, for unions, and workers who want a fair election process.

Passing the resolution would not only prevent the NLRB from implementing these commonsense reforms, surely trying to exercise their basic right. We, as a nation, should not turn our back on empowering workers through collective bargaining, especially because that is the very thing that has helped so many workers climb into the middle class. Workers having a seat at the bargaining table is very critical to America's middle class. When more workers can stand up for their rights or wage increases or making sure their workplaces are safer or they have access to health care, those things get better for them.

In short, Americans are better able to share in the economic prosperity they have earned through their hard work. It is no coincidence that when America's middle class was at its peak in the middle of the last century, America's middle class grew strong. Collective bargaining is what gave workers the power to increase their wages. Unions helped workers get the training they needed to build their skills so they could advance on the job. They helped to make sure men and women had safe work places, and through collective bargaining access to health care rose. Workers shared in our country's prosperity and the benefits it strengthens economic security for the middle class and for those working hard to get there.

In Congress, we need to continue to work to expand economic security for more families. That should be our mission, to help move our country forward. This resolution would simply be a step backward. So instead of attacking workers who want a voice in the workplace, I hope my colleagues will reject this resolution. Instead, I really hope Republicans will join with Democrats and work with us to protect workers rights and increase wages and grow our Nation's middle class. I truly hope we can break the gridlock and work together on policies that create jobs, expand our economic security, and generate a very broad-based economic growth for our workers and our families, not just for the wealthiest few.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to object to another administrative overreach. As I travel the country and Wyoming, that is what I hear about—the way this administration keeps overreaching. Fortunately, there is a mechanism for us to object to the overreach; it is the Congressional Review Act. One of those instances is one of those instances where it can.

When it is published as a final rule, we have an opportunity to circulate a petition. If we get enough signatures on it, we can have what is a review of this rule. This is 10 hours of debate, with a vote up or down on whether that rule is what Congress intended—not what the administration intended but what Congress intended.

Unfortunately, when this rule was written, there was a provision that it went to the President. The President doesn't assign rules. Congress assigns rules, so Congress ought to have the final voice on whether a rule is appropriate. We don't. But we have a chance to vote on it. Because we are going to get 10 hours of debate to talk about this proposed rule by the National Labor Relations Board—a totally appointed board, not an elected board, three Democrats, two Republicans. If this were as modest a change as we just heard, there would have been some common ground that would have brought one or both of the Republicans along. That has been a thing of the National Labor Relations Board in the past, not anymore. Now the Republican members of this National Labor Relations Board are ambushed as well, and we come up with what we call the ambush elections rule.

So I rise to encourage my colleagues to support the Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval of the National Labor Relations Board ambush elections rule. I again thank my friend Senator ALEXANDER, the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee, for leading this resolution. Senator ALEXANDER's proposal benefits workers and is one of the most important duties of a committee chair, and I appreciate his work and the way he goes about it.
The National Labor Relations Board has proposed a rule that would drastically alter the way union elections are held.

A union election is one of the most significant decisions employees will have to make regarding their workplace, but it fundamentally alters their relationship with their employer, with the men and women they work with every day, and with the community. A union election means that small business employers have to meet union demands and comply with legal obligations, with serious consequences for failing to meet deadlines, file specific documents, or assert their rights in the process.

The current process for holding union elections is both fair and timely. It ensures that businesses and employers have the necessary time to fully meet their legal requirements. It gives employees time to educate themselves about what unionization will mean for them and their families and to investigate the union that would be representing them to ensure that it is consistent with their values and priorities.

Under the current process, the average time between when an election petition is filed and ballots are cast is only 38 days—which means many elections happen sooner than that—and that nearly all elections are completed in less than 2 months. Under the new rule, a small business is going to have two options—either go into an election blind and hope they don't make any mistakes and hope everything comes out OK or take every precaution, hold every hearing, and answer any questions employees might have; and to meet all their legal obligations during the union election process. But it is not so simple because under the rules, employers must follow specific guidelines about what they can and cannot say and even who can say it.

I don't know any entrepreneurs who started a business because they were excited about understanding the ins and outs of the National Labor Relations Act. That is why it is important to maintain the current system, which includes sufficient time for employers to make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election.

Most small business owners are not familiar with the complex business laws that determine what they can and cannot do during a union election. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election. Let me repeat that. They might not know that if they make certain statements or take certain actions, the National Labor Relations Board can impose a bargaining obligation on them even without a secret ballot election.

The rule the National Labor Relations Board is pushing would squeeze union elections even further as well. No, it doesn't require 11 days; it can shorten the time to as few as 11 days. That is just 11 days for employees to learn about the union that would have overwhelming influence on the future of their work conditions and to learn about what unionization would mean in their workplace and what duties they would have to pay. That is 11 days for employers to learn about their rights and requirements during the election, to collect information about employees that must be submitted, to draw up the final documents, to ensure that they haven't missed anything, and to make their position clear to their employees—all that while running their business. It is not enough time. The smaller the business, the more critical it is.

It is important to point out that a union that wants to organize in the workplace isn't subjected to that timeline at all. A union can start its campaign much earlier, maybe even years. Professional union organizers can start making their pitch long before they intend to petition for an election. Organizers have plenty of time to figure out which employees are union supporters and which employees might be on the fence but could be convinced. A union can take its time to create a narrative and build its case to workers, and it can do so without the business ever knowing. And then when the union decides the time is right, it can petition for the election when it is most advantageous for the union.

This is why we call it the ambush election rule—because if this rule goes into effect, after a union has had months to build its case in its favor, a business will only have a few days to respond. That is only a few days to figure out what union officials have told employees; to determine if there are any misrepresentations; falsehoods, or misrepresentations that need to be addressed in what employees have been told; to make the employer's position clear and answer any questions employees might have; and to meet all their legal obligations during the union election process. But it is not so simple because under the rules, employers must follow specific guidelines about what they can and cannot say and even who can say it.

I believe small business owners want to work in good faith with unions through this process, but the ambush election rule is going to make it harder for them to do that. And in my view, that rule is supposed to be targeted at fixing a system that already isn't fair or timely enough for everyone. Businesses can get back to work faster, unions can hold an election sooner, and employees get a fair and timely vote. But this rule is going to make it harder for that to be the case.

The National Labor Relations Board says it is making this rule because the process needs to be streamlined and updated. But what the Board is doing in a very partisan way simply doesn't make sense in light of the fact that the average time for a union election is 38 days—which means many elections happen sooner than that—and that nearly all elections are completed in less than 2 months.

The Board says these rules are meant to address problems with some elections that have been held up for a long time for months or years. That would really affect these mean numbers, so that can't be much of the case. If that is the case, why did they write a rule that is going to undermine a system that already provides for timely elections and gives businesses the time they need to work cooperatively with unions? When an agency makes a rule, it is supposed to target a specific problem, and that rule is supposed to be targeted at fixing this problem. In this case, NLRB's rule has not targeted the problem they want to fix. What is worse, this rule is going to undermine a system that meets the needs of businesses, unions, and employees in all but a handful of cases.

This rule doesn't make sense, and the way the Board is pushing this rule doesn't fit with how labor laws should be updated and improved. The National Labor Relations Act is a carefully balanced law that hasn't been changed very often. When changes have been made, it has been the result of careful
negotiation, input from stakeholders, and thoughtful debate. Unfortunately, it looks as though the only stakeholders in the room when the Board wrote this ambush elections rule were the unions.

The rule also says that its rule is intended to update the elections process to account for new technology, such as email and cell phones. Unfortunately, the rule fails to take into account the key concerns about data privacy and security that we face today. It undermines employees’ privacy at a time when identity theft, computer crimes, and cyber security are serious issues.

Under current law, an employer is required to turn over employees’ names and addresses within 7 days once an election is set. The proposed rule would not only expand the type of personal information that must be turned over, but would require that information be handed over to the union within 2 days. The information that the Board wants employers to give to the unions includes all personal home phone numbers, all cell phone numbers, and all email addresses that the employer has on file. It would also require work location, work designation, and employment classification. All of that can be used to harass the employee whether they want to be contacted or not, whether they want information or not. No one in mind that under the new rule, the question is who is eligible to unionize or to participate in the vote is determined only after the election. What? They are not going to know which workers are eligible to unionize or to participate in the vote until after the election. That is a strange rule. The ambush election rule would require employees to hand over personal information on their employees to unions without confirming which employees should or should not be on that list. That is part of the process that gets left out.

The purpose of requiring the information, of course, is so the union organizers can come to your home, call you whenever they want, email you, find you after work, and intercept you before or after your shift. There is no time limit to how many times union organizers can contact you or at what time. There is no opt-out for employees who simply don’t want to be contacted. That could turn into a serious invasion of privacy for any employee, but for an employee who isn’t eligible to participate in the election but has his or her information turned over to the union anyway, that is a serious breach of privacy.

It is important to point out how this rule undermines employee privacy, particularly when we frequently hear about news of data breaches, stolen credit card numbers, and identity theft. Protecting personal information is not something that can be taken lightly. Union elections can be very intense, an emotional experience for employees, employers, and union organizers alike. The last thing this rule should do is create a situation where an employee’s personal information is used as a tool for harassment or intimidation.

The National Labor Relations Board is supposed to be an impartial body that hears cases, weighs the facts, and makes fair, unbiased decisions according to the law. Although the Board’s decisions set precedents that determine how labor law is applied going forward, it has not traditionally been a rulemaking agency. It has issued only a small number of rules, especially compared to other departments and agencies. Unfortunately, the Board has gone too far with the ambush elections rule. It has taken upon itself to impose new regulations that would hurt businesses, undermine a sensitive process that has already provided fair and timely elections, give up employee privacy, and deny employees the right to have a free and fair election.

That could turn into a serious invasion of privacy, a breach of employee privacy. The expanded information the Board required to turn over employees’ names, which were turned over to the union within 2 days. That information that must be turned over, not only expand the type of personal information that was already provided fair and timely elections, give up employee privacy, and deny employees the right to have a free and fair election, it undermines the fair and timely process for union elections that is currently in place.

As you heard a number of times, John F. Kennedy, when he was a Member of the Senate, said 30 days was a pretty good time. Moving it down to 11 days—I don’t think he would approve of that. This is one of the most important votes on labor issues we will have this year, and I urge my colleagues to put a stop to this burdensome rule. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum, and I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally allocated to the two sides.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the disapproval of that rule be stricken.

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

(The remarks of Mr. FLAKE pertaining to the introduction of S. 638 are printed in today’s RECORD under Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, on a separate topic, I would like to urge my colleagues to support S.J. Res. 6, the joint resolution of approval under the Congressional Review Act of the National Labor Relations Board’s final rule regarding union representation election procedures.

As we heard today, it is often called a no-brainer election rule. It gained its namesake because it shortens the time between when a union files a petition for an election and the holding of that election.

As a cosponsor of this resolution and a signer of the discharge petition to bring it before us for consideration, I believe this rule needs to be stopped before it takes effect on April 14.
According to NLRB data for the last 10 years, the median time before the union election was 38 days. This proposed rule could shorten that timeframe to as few as 11 days. The rule gives employers only 7 days to find legal counsel and appear before an NLRB regional office at a pre-election hearing. Prior to that hearing, the employer must file a Statement of Position, which raises any and all legal challenges they may use later on. This is particularly burdensome for small businesses who do not have inhouse legal counsel. They have little time to get advice on what is permitted during this process.

There are also privacy issues with this rule’s requirement that employers must hand over employees’ personal information—including cellphone numbers, personal email addresses, shift times, and locations—to unions. With more than 95 percent of these elections occurring in less than 2 months, it is hard to understand why this onerous ambush election rule is even necessary.

Instead of burdening small businesses with complicated legal work and increased regulations, this administration and the NLRB should be focusing their time on increasing job growth and improving the economy.

I encourage my colleagues to support this resolution of disapproval.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

The PRESIDING OFFICER.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. 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. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Democrats control the time between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. and the majority control the time between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. and the majority control the time between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Democrats control the time between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. and the majority control the time between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. and the majority control the time between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, tomorrow morning the Supreme Court is going to hear oral arguments in King v. Burwell. The Supreme Court’s ruling could have sweeping consequences for the well-being of millions of Americans and for our Nation’s entire health care system.

The issue at hand is whether Americans who signed up for the opportunity to buy quality health insurance thanks to the Affordable Care Act, can get assistance in paying for that care. The law gives our States a choice. Our States can design and manage an insurance exchange on their own or they can allow their citizens to shop on a federally run exchange. Furthermore, the law created tax credits to help Americans afford the cost of health insurance.

Thirty-six States took the Federal option. Eighty-seven percent of the people who signed up in those States get some measure of assistance so as to be able to afford coverage. However, the petitioners in King v. Burwell argue that the whole of Americans should be denied any assistance.

In my view, the answer is simple. Let’s help those who are in need. Let’s not go back to that time in America when health care was for the healthy and for the wealthy.

If one flips on C-SPAN and listens to the Congress debate and question the administration, one might hear something wildly different. Some Members of Congress seem to be rooting for Americans to lose their subsidies and consequently their access to affordable health coverage. In fact, Members of Congress have filed briefs with the Supreme Court making essentially that argument. At the same time, they have joined the Obama administration and would clean up the aftermath. To me, that is like pouring gasoline on a fire and then indignantly demanding that somebody else go put it out.

There is no question that the law’s implementation has been a challenge. That is true of all major legislation. It is clear there ought to be bipartisan interest in continuing to improve the law. But the reality has been what we have had is a wornout, 6-year-old fight over the Affordable Care Act. The act’s core purpose, which has been clear from the outset, is to help as many of our people get affordable, high-quality health insurance as possible, and the tax credits are absolutely key to making that work. In this case, those tax credits are in question.

To make their argument, the King petitioners scoured the text of the law and plucked out one obscure phrase buried in the text. That phrase is “established by the State,” relating to how the tax credits are calculated. According to the petitioners, those four words—that one small phrase—is enough to put millions of Americans in danger of losing their health insurance. The petitioners are arguing, against common sense and the actual text and intent of the Affordable Care Act, that the intent was supposed to deprive millions of struggling families and individuals of affordable health care coverage.

In my view, this should not be a difficult case for our Supreme Court to decide. Looking at the law itself, the text is clear. To cite some examples, when a State declines to establish an exchange, the Federal Government is directed to fill in and establish “such exchange.” That language, insurance coverage and tax credits become available to any “applicable taxpayer,” regardless of where that taxpayer might live. Furthermore, the information used to calculate the subsidies is gathered from everybody who buys an insurance plan. That would be unnecessary if Americans in only some States were eligible for the tax credits.

On top of that, it is a firmly established principle of statutory construction that when interpreting a provision of a law, a court should read the provision in context, not in isolation. It should consider how the part fits into the whole. As the Supreme Court has said, it is a “fundamental canon of statutory construction that the words of a statute must be read in their context and with a view to their place in the overall statutory scheme.”

Here, looking at the overall statutory scheme, in my view there is only one plausible explanation. States have the option of establishing exchanges. If they decide, elefants in a room, the administration will establish an exchange for them. It was written that way so everyone who needs assistance and meets the relevant qualifications can receive that assistance. In my view, we just can’t reach any other conclusion. Without the broadest possible access to health insurance—and financial assistance for those who need it—the system would simply be at risk.

The interpretation made by the petitioners makes absolutely no sense in the context of the overall statutory approach. It would contradict the fundamental purpose of the Affordable Care Act which, as stated in the title, is to provide “quality, affordable health care for all Americans.”

Finally, a statute should be interpreted under the assumption that as the Court has said: “Congress . . . does not sit as a group of lawyers.” Congress does not slip major rules, which have huge ramifications, into obscure corners of the law. In this case, Congress would not slip a major rule denying tax credits to millions—what would be the effect there?—the Congress would not slip that deep into a line that simply defines the term “coverage month.”

Furthermore, there is no evidence in the legislative history to support what I consider to be a warped reading of the law by the petitioners. If the Congress wanted to help only some Americans, the Congress would have said that. The issue would have come up in committee hearings and markups and press conferences or in debates in the Senate or in the other body. It would have been reflected in fact sheets and in press releases that were made available to the public. It would have come up in committee reports that accompanied the bill’s long journey through the Congress. It never did, not even once. The only way to get to the petitioners’ view is by cherry-picking and contorting a four-word phrase.

Look at the long record of analysis provided by the trusted nonpartisan...
staffs of the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation. We rely on them. They are bipartisan. They are nonpartisan. It was their job to do the math, to score the bills and figure out exactly what the economic impacts would be. In every analysis and in every communication the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation had with the Congress, they correctly presumed that tax credits would be available if people qualified. The tax bills and reports prepared by the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation are all online. So what I have said can be backed up, and anyone can read these materials.

In my view, the petitioner’s argument in this case is weak and the text of the law and congressional intent is clear. But, still, the wrong decision could make quality health insurance unaffordable for more than 7 million Americans. Only those most in danger of needing serious medical assistance would remain insured. The cost of insurance premiums, particularly in the individual market, would skyrocket for all. As a result, a crisis that would begin with 7 million people could grow to affect 8, 9 or 10 million and perhaps even more. In my view, it would send our country back to the days when health care in America was for the healthy and the wealthy. That is what the Affordable Care Act is intended to prevent. That is not what the American people want.

The Federal Government, independent organizations, and those whose insurance is at stake agree—the tax credits are meant for all. Even America’s Health Insurance Plans, particularly in the individual market, would oppose this resolution which would overturn modest but vitally important updates to the process that enables workers to exercise their rights to join a labor union. Today’s attack on the NLRB’s rule to modernize its election process is misplaced and misguided.

Today middle-class families are struggling with wages that aren’t keeping up with expenses, while large corporations make record profits, and those not covered. Unionized workers are more likely to have health care, retirement benefits, and paid leave benefits than other workers.

So, again, the changes made by the election rule are just one of the many updates that will support these important objectives. I urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution so that these commonsense reforms will be able to ensure a fairer election process for everyone.

I yield to the Senator from New York.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Minnesota for his outstanding remarks.

I want to rise to make one thing clear in this debate. My friends on the other side of the aisle once again have taken up the cause of special interests at the expense of hard-working Americans. Once again they are using their new majority in the Senate to find ways to keep the rules rigged against American workers.

Let’s look at this. The bottom line is very simple. Middle-class incomes are declining. It is more ominous that the middle-class incomes are declining is the decline of unions. That is what just about everybody who studies it says.
We are now 11 percent unionized. We were 30 percent, private sector only 6 percent. The bottom line is we had a lot of poor Americans in the 1920s.

Laws that were enacted by this Congress allowed unions to organize and workers to collectively bargain. By and large, workers were able to gain some of the wealth from their labor. We had broad prosperity as America was unionized in the 1950s and 1960s and 1970s and 1980s.

What happened was that corporate America learned how to both prevent new workers from entering new industries and breaking old unions.

As a result now, middle-class incomes are declining. Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, once again, they talk they want to help the middle class, but in all the obvious ways to help the middle class—and unions do, whether the management likes it or not, they manage to give the workers more money—they do not walk the walk.

These NLRB changes are simple. There have not been substantial updates to the NLRB election process since the 1970s. The new changes pull the process into the 21st century, letting unions and employers file electronic communications, modernizing communications such as cell phones. Our colleagues are opposed to this. They want to undo it. My God, the changes will modernize union elections, prevent delays, reduce frivolous litigation, something modernizing, for example, the National Labor Relations Board members on the NLRB supported in principle in their dissent.

Right now big corporations can use delays in labor elections to try and take advantage to postpone and even deny workers’ rights to vote. This is what my friends on the other side of the aisle are rising up against: workers whose incomes are declining trying to get a little more money when corporate profits are at a record. The other side, side with corporate profits over middle-class wages. That is what they are saying. That has been the theme in this Congress. It is going to continue to be the theme.

We will make it clear to the American people who is on their side. The congressional review process on these changes allowing employers and unions to file forms electronically, and we have to invoke this unique process, streamlining the process so workers are not kicked around with an army of lawyers.

It is disappointing that my friends across the aisle have made such a mountain out of a molehill with these rules. At the beginning of this Congress, I was hopeful my colleagues were ready to join us and go to work for working families who have experienced a lost decade of economic advancement, whose real wages have declined.

In an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal this year, Leaders John B. McCONNELL and Boehner said one of their party’s goals was helping struggling middle-class Americans who are clearly frustrated by a lack of opportunity and a stagnation of wages. If their only answer is to reduce regulations on corporations, lower corporate taxes, lower the taxes of the wealthy, and that is going to help the middle class, I have news for them, that is not going to fly.

I feel in my heart deeply that the decline of middle-class wages is a decline of America. I feel we have to do something about it, but we certainly should not regress. My colleagues, with this motion, it will make it harder for the middle class, make it easier to say even a larger share of productivity goes to capital and a smaller share to labor, despite their rhetoric and despite the problems we face.

I see my dear friend from Tennessee. I hate to oppose him in such strong language because I think he is a fine gentleman, but on this issue we disagree.

I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I wish to talk about protecting the middle class.

I am on the side of an economy that works for everyone and building a stronger middle class to bring opportunities to families across the Nation.

What is an economy that works for everyone? It means that if you work hard and play by the rules, you deserve a fair shot at the American dream.

An economy that works for everyone also means giving workers the right to organize, negotiate, and exercise their rights under the law in a timely way. I believe this can be done in a way that also enables businesses to prosper and to create jobs.

Unions raise wages, improve working conditions, and ensure fair treatment on the job. In many jobs they make the difference between living in poverty and making ends meet or the difference between just getting by and making enough to make a better life for a family. The right to unionize and collectively bargain helped grow the middle class.

When workers are choosing whether to unionize or not, they need a process that is fair, predictable, and efficient. But unfair rules, lax enforcement, and insincere negotiating has crippled union organizing and threatened the middle-class lifestyle that was once the economic pride of our country.

The main role of the National Labor Relations Board is to manage the relations between unions, employees, and employers in the private sector. The purpose of the Board is to prevent or resolve unfair labor practices and to supervise union elections so that they are done accurately and fairly.

Now, the NLRB has put out rules that make modest updates to the election process that make sense in the 21st century. The rules would eliminate needless delays that slow the election process to a halt and modernize the process for sharing contact information to allow employees to communicate about the election.

But this and other commonsense updates are under attack in Congress. Under this Congressional Review Act resolution, the whole rule would get tossed out. There is limited debate and there is no chance for offering amendments. Middle-class workers deserve better than this.

Currently, workers organize themselves by signing a document saying they want to join a union. Once a majority of workers sign up, they can ask their employers to be recognized as a union and collectively bargain for a contract.

However, some employers delay, delay, delay—refusing to recognize the union and requiring workers to go through an intimidating antiballot campaign that ends in an unfair election. Workers should be protected from these kinds of stall tactics and intimidation.

It is common sense that communication should be allowed to take place over email. These rules would allow for that. Documents should be allowed to be transmitted electronically. These rules would allow for that, too. This creates a more efficient process that benefits workers.

I want workers to make more money. When families have more money in their paychecks, it is good news for the middle class and it is good news for our Nation’s economy. When workers have a seat at the table, it means they have a better chance at getting the wages and the protections at the workplace they deserve. I want to grow our middle-class by giving more workers this critical seat at the table. But they won’t get it if Congress pulls the chair out from underneath them by throwing out this rule.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I know we are in Democratic time right now. So if a Member of the other side shows up, I will sit down. I appreciate courtesy of my colleagues on the other side allowing me to continue my remarks. I will not take more than 7 or 8 minutes.

My good friend from New York just spoke. We have worked together on a number of things. He talked about the middle class. I think he is right to talk about the middle class and the effect of the National Labor Relations Board on the middle class.

Let me give a little bit different perspective on it. My problem with this NLRB is that it is not acting like an umpire between employers and employees, it is acting like an advocate for the unions. It did so in 2011 with the micro-union decision. It is doing so with the ambush elections rule, going against the advice of Senator John F. Kennedy in 1959, who said 30 days seemed like a fair time to give employees to consider whether to have a union.

They are ambushing employers—it’s like riding through a canyon and suddenly people start shooting at you. In just 11 days—we have hundreds of thousands of small businesses across the
country that are trying to work, sell their goods, make a living, improve their status. That is the middle class we talked about.

Say you have five employees, say you are down in Maryville, TN, or Wichita, KS, the last thing on your mind is a labor lawyer. Has corporation, has deadline in 11 days. Suddenly small businesses have to find and pay a labor lawyer. They need legal advice at every step because in as few as 11 days they might have an election. There is no need to rush to an election but rather than to give union organizers an opportunity to force a union election before the employer and its employees know what is going on.

Let me give one more example of the assault on the middle class that I see from this NLRB and our friends on the other side. In every community in America, there are lots of franchisees. These are the men and women who operate health clubs, barber shops, auto parts franchise, barber shops,附近的餐馆, music stores, cleaning services, and much more.

We had some franchisees testify before the labor committee the other day. These franchisees could have worked for McDonald’s or Ruby Tuesday’s, Rainbow Stations. The parent company would own all of the McDonald’s stores, our stores. So we will own all of them. Franchisees can own a Ruby Tuesday’s, a Rainbow Station, or an auto parts franchise. They own that business. They run that business.

They want to have a franchisee to help them succeed. They use brand names like Planet Fitness, Merry Maids, or Panera Bread. They might work 12 hours a day serving customers, meeting a payroll, or cleaning. This is hard work, but 700,000 Americans do it because it is their way up the economic ladder. It is their way to say: I have my own business. I do not work for the big guys. I am a little guy working my way up.

Successful franchisees are one of the most powerful ways to climb the economic ladder of success. Yet this NLRB, the same one that wants to have ambush elections, has a pending decision that would threaten franchisees’ very way of life. It is called the joint employer standard, which since 1984 has required a business to hold direct control over the terms and conditions of a worker’s employment.

Through broad language, the NLRB is saying to McDonald’s or Ruby Tuesday’s, is part of the parent company, and anything they do at their store has to be accepted by the parent company.

What are the consequences if that happens? The parent companies are going to say, we are not going to take that risk. We are going to own all of our stores. So we will own all of the Rainbow Stations. The parent company will own all of the McDonald’s stores, or all of the Ruby Tuesday’s.

What was that? That might protect the parent company because it can hire a team of labor lawyers. It can instruct its employees what to do and what not to do to avoid problems. But it takes away the middle-class opportunity of moving up the economic ladder from these 700,000 franchisees. That is what this NLRB is doing. The ambush election rule is nothing more than speeding up the time that it takes between when franchisees ask an employer for a secret ballot election, and when that election actually takes place.

Every step you take has to be perfect according or else you might have to pay lawyers. Don’t think we hope we have to spend more time negotiating with the union. That jeopardizes the fairness in our system. The National Labor Relations Act was intended to create an environment of balance and fairness among employers and employees. Senator Kennedy said in 1959 that 30 days would be a reasonable amount of time between when a union organizer files a petition and when an election is held.

Senator McConnell, and I have another, there is no balance in the law. We make the rule for Federal court. If the NLRB takes longer than 1 year to decide a case, then, the other party can take it to Federal court. That is fair. That is the kind of umpire we need in labor relations today. So this is about the middle class. This is about moving up the economic ladder. This is about the kind of actions that give 700,000 Americans their franchise business. This is about the hundreds of thousands of Americans, with 4, 5, 6, 10, 15 employees, who do not need to be ambushed as they try to earn a living, pay their bills, sweep the floor, make a profit, pay employees, and create the American dream.

The stakes are high. We are right to say let’s return the National Labor Relations Board to an umpire. Let us hope the House agrees. Let us hope the President agrees. It’s time to return fairness and balance to labor-management relations in this country.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, are we in a quorum call?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are not.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I rise to speak and to commend the chairman, Mr. ALEXANDER, for this resolution that is on the floor to rescind and overturn the ambush election rule the NLRB has asked to go in effect on April 14. It is just dogmatically wrong. It is a solution in search of a problem.

We don’t have a problem in terms of labor relations. Ninety-five percent of all the elections for unionization take place within 56 days. The median term is 36 days. That is 2 months. Twenty-one out of 36. That is 11⁄2 months to 2 months. This would compress that period of time from the average now of 38 days to 11 days.

Is 11 days enough time for a worker to get all the information they need to find out whether they want to become unionized? No, it is not. Is it fair to an employer to give them only 11 days to defend himself against a union organization trying to take him to a union accuses him of not being fair for the middle class? No, it does not. This is a solution for an issue, as I said, that doesn’t exist, a problem that doesn’t exist. It is time we stood up for American business and American workers.

I ran a sub S corporation, which is a small business in Georgia. Most everybody thinks this is a big business issue. It is not; it is a small business issue. It is a repeat effort by the NLRB to continue to meddle and tilt the playing field between labor and management. Everybody knows that during the Industrial Revolution this country overlooked the worker. We had child labor, we had workers working too long, and that has to be good. We all know labor unions came about because businesses failed to address their needs. But that was 100 years ago. Today we have good labor law, we have fair labor law, and we have opportunities for people to unionize.

Of all the elections called in the last 2 years, 64.2 percent have gone to a unionized shop—64.2 percent. In other words, the law we have now today works. It works for the worker and it works for the union. It doesn’t work to compress that time period to 11 days. That would cause confusion, it would cause discord, it would cause a terrible burden on the employer and terrible pressure on the employee.

Included in the rule are, in my opinion, privacy violations by the organizers. It will require the company to turn over cell phone numbers, private information and all of that, so the unions can harass them to try to get them to sign a petition for a clarification and certification. It is just downright wrong.

The chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee is exactly right: This is an unfair rule. It has no place being passed and adopted. We have every right to rescind it, which I hope this Senate will do.

Let’s remember who the middle class really is. Let’s remember who small business really is. Let’s remember why the unions exist. It is not to do or tilt the playing field in favor of labor or in favor of management. We have it to be fair, so everybody gets a fair shake and a fair notice and a fair time to have their say.

So I rise to commend the chairman for his efforts and what he has done. I support his effort and what he has done, and I hope the Members of the Senate agree. It is time for us to rescind this rule before it goes into effect. It would be a terrible one-two punch to have this rule go into effect on April 14.
and the IRS’s tax day be April 15. That is too much punishment for one period of time. It is just not the right thing to do.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, my Democratic colleagues and I come to the floor all the time talking about how we grow a middle class, how we help middle-class families, and how we make sure we have a strong economy because we have a strong middle class. Yet what we are seeing on the floor right now is an effort by our Republican majority to keep a system which is rigged against American workers being able to get a livable wage, to have a voice in the workplace.

We know what we ought to be doing is looking for every possible way to support our workers and every day, to have a wage that allows them to care for their family, to send their children to college and achieve the American dream. They should have a voice in the workplace around safety issues that are important for working men and women. We have in front of us a National Labor Relations Board rule change that was made to basically modernize the system around employee elections so that people have a fair shot to have their voice heard in the workplace.

It is pretty interesting to me that we are talking about simple changes that allow the use of email communications or fax communications—not exactly radical things in the world we live in. Without this modernization by the NLRB, we actually have a situation where people are denied the ability to communicate through email; to be able to talk about forming a union and communicate with each other through email, which is pretty crazy when you think about it. This particular vote would stop folks from using email or faxes.

The NLRB rule change was to modernize the election process, to eliminate paperwork hurdles that didn’t make any sense, so an employer could not delay the ability for folks to vote as to whether they want to be part of a union. That is what is in front of us now.

What I wish was in front of us is the agenda we have been pushing, which is to actually strengthen the middle class. Instead, what we have in front of us is a vote about keeping the system rigged against American workers. There is no mistake about it. A “yes” vote, which eliminates this modernization process, is a vote to keep the system rigged against men and women who are working hard every day in the workplace and who just want a fair shot to make it.

Interestingly, this only affects about 10 percent of union elections, because 90 percent of elections are done through agreement with employers and employees. That is a testament to the fact that the majority of folks can work together, if 90 percent of them are working out agreements.

What we really ought to be talking about is equal pay for equal work and how we enforce that. I am stunned that we have the Republican majority fighting to keep the system rigged against American workers and then turning around and saying, well, are we going to pass laws that create a livable wage so people who are working are out of poverty, so that we rewire work by having a livable wage. To talk about forming a union and communicating through email; to be able to talk about protecting pensions earned by workers over a lifetime, who are counting on those to be protected. We are not talking about how we strengthen and expand and guarantee Social Security for the future, or any neat is of things we could be talking about. If we just made sure that equal pay for equal work wasn’t a slogan but actually a reality of this country, we would jump-start the middle class. We would jump-start the middle class by giving to those at the top and having enough money to raise their families every single day, and we are not going to pass laws that create a livable wage or work, or we are not going to pass laws that create a livable wage so people who are working are out of poverty, so that we rewire work by having a livable wage.

What is on the floor is an effort to roll back the modernization of a process that would make sure the system is not rigged against workers.

Why are we not talking about equal pay or raising the minimum wage or talking about the cost of going to college? The majority of people today, who are playing by the rules, trying to do the right thing, trying to get the skills they need to be responsible citizens and work in the workplace, come out of college buried in debt—buried in debt—but we are not talking about that. We are not spending our time on that.

We are not talking about protecting pensions earned by workers over a lifetime, who are counting on those to be protected. We are not talking about how we strengthen and expand and guarantee Social Security for the future, or any neat is of things we could be talking about. If we just made sure that equal pay for equal work wasn’t a slogan but actually a reality of this country, we would jump-start the middle class. We would jump-start the middle class by giving to those at the top and having enough money to raise their families every single day, and we are not going to pass laws that create a livable wage or work, or we are not going to pass laws that create a livable wage so people who are working are out of poverty, so that we rewire work by having a livable wage.

Interestingly, this only affects about 10 percent of union elections, because 90 percent of elections are done through agreement with employers and employees. That is a testament to the fact that the majority of folks can work together, if 90 percent of them are working out agreements.

So I urge a “no” vote on this particular resolution, and hopefully we can stand together and actually create a future and a better standard of living by doing those things that are going to help middle-class families across America.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, would you advise me what the time allotment now is for debate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority controls the time from 5 until 6.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the time allotted now be extended to 7:30 p.m.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, it is interesting, when we get on the topic of unionism, how all we come to this with such a different point of view. I come to it as a person who grew up in a household where every member of my family was a member of a union. My father and mother, who each had eighth grade educations, belonged to railroad unions in East St. Louis, Ill. Because of that, there was bargaining for their wages and benefits—which I didn’t understand as a kid, but I do now—that resulted in the quality of life and the joy in our family. We weren’t wealthy, but we were comfortable. I never went hungry, and I thought we lived a pretty good life. Mom and dad were hard workers. If you were a hard worker in those days and had the benefit of union representation, you could make a decent living. And we did.

If we study history, we will find that is what has gone on in America. Primarily after World War II, we saw two things happen: unionism—a particular resolution, and hopefully we can stand together and actually create a future and a better standard of living by doing those things that are going to help middle-class families across America.

In that period from post-World War II until the 1960s, the United States real¬
duly took its place on the map in terms of our position in the economy. Ex¬
ally the opposite has been true since. Unionism—those who belong to organized unions—has been going down in most sectors except for government employment, and we have also seen a decline in the middle class. I don’t think that is a coincidence; I think that is an indication that when workers do not have a voice in the workplace, they lose that bargaining ability to get a just wage, a good wage, a liv¬

The irony is that American workers are still the best in the world. If we
just look at the issue of productivity of American workers, there is no reason for us to apologize. Our workers know how to create profit for the people they work for. Sadly, though, when it comes to this, we don’t find that the companies have made it easy for them to reward their productivity with more wages and benefits. They don’t. As a result, workers are working harder, making more profits for their company than ever, and yet they aren’t seeing any real growth in their wages.

So one comes a time when workers should have the power to make a choice in their lives, and that is when they decide whether they want representation—an election to form a union where they work. That is what this bill is all about.

The National Labor Relations Board came up with a process that said: If you are going to have an election in the workplace so that workers can decide whether they want to belong to a union, make it fair, make sure that employers and employees and the unions have enough information. They can tell the workers their point of view, and the workers can decide.

I come to the floor today in support of the National Labor Relations Board’s rule for modernizing and streamlining the election process for the workers. There is a wide divergence of opinions on both sides of the aisle here in terms of the value of unions. I value them. So do most Americans. But I think the ability of workers to organize and bargain collectively is about the only way to level the playing field and to create a growing middle class, which we need in America.

Last December the National Labor Relations Board came up with a rule, after a long process, to modernize the election process—the first time in almost 50 years. Fifty years ago they wrote the rules, and they said: You know what? We didn’t get a lot of things that have changed in 50 years.

Here is what they said: The rule moves preelection problems, such as the 25-day waiting period and review, and consolidates options for delay and appeal into a single appeals process. In a nod to modern communications, the rule says employers and unions can file election petitions electronically rather than by fax or mail. This does not strike me as radical thinking. Think of all the things we do electronically today, from paying our bills each month, to communicating with one another, to gathering information. Bringing this to the labor situation, the choice of a union, is certainly not radical. And it requires employers to provide unions with the employees’ personal email and phone numbers in addition to the existing requirement for names and addresses—personal email and phone numbers. When is the last time you filled out an application on the Internet and they didn’t ask for your email address or your phone number? It is routine, and we want to make this routine part of the process for unions and employers to get in contact with employees.

Republicans have called this an “ambush rule.” They say it deprives employers of the time they need to explain why the worker should vote no. But the rule limits an employer’s ability to pursue adequate representation. But that is not a fair claim. Union elections are only triggered when 30 percent of the workers sign a petition favor of organizing. The new rule does not change that at all.

Under the new rule employers have time to talk to their workers; they just have fewer options to delay the actual election. It looks to me as if it is an advantage to employers going in, and the changes by the NLRB are really not that substantial.

Last year at this time workers at the Rock River Academy and Residential Center in Rockford, IL, wanted to form a union. Rock River provides mental health and educational services for young girls with emotional disabilities. The workers didn’t like the working conditions in the workplace, the short staffing and stagnant wages. They wanted to work together to address these problems and to do a better job. They quickly signed up a majority of their coworkers and filed a petition with the NLRB office in Peoria. From the outset, the workers felt the employer were trying to do everything they could to stop this election. The delay in finalizing a union gave the residential center time to wage an aggressive anti-union campaign.

There was a hearing eventually at the NLRB, but it was nearly 3 weeks after the petition was filed. On the first day the employer’s attorneys claimed that all the workers at the residential center were nonprofessional, even though they also claimed special education teachers, and licensed therapists and social workers. They wanted to decertify the union. The following day they reversed their position and argued that the employer themselves, I mean all the other workers at the facility should be considered professional—this was the next day—even though many employees lacked a college degree. That stretched the hearing out for 4 days. When it comes to these elections, delay is really the tool that is used to stop a final decision.

The regional director at the NLRB ruled in favor of the union’s position and ordered an election held 82 days after the petition was filed in which more than a majority of the workers said they wanted an election. Eighty-two days later they actually got an election. During that time the employer hired two anti-union consultants to wage an anti-union campaign that included threats and interrogations and even the installation of a video surveillance system to monitor employees at all times throughout the workplace. Pro-union workers saw their hours cut, while non-union workers were given all the overtime they wanted. Worst of all, the employer terminated or laid off six employees in what they believe was retaliation.

Despite the delays and discomfort the employers created, a slim majority of the workers voted yes, and they formed a union. But the employer continues to raise objections and intimidate the workers. Is that really what we want to see—the majority of the workers want the election, it takes 82 days to have the election, and then the rejections and problems that follow? It doesn’t seem as if this is workplace democracy, the way it was designed.

So I support this NLRB rule, and I come to the floor today in support of the National Labor Relations Board rule limits an employer’s ability to pursue adequate representation. But that is not a fair claim. Union elections are only triggered when 30 percent of the workers sign a petition favor of organizing. The new rule does not change that at all.

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again overstepped the line. I am not sure it is a red line, but I do know this—that the Board has become a hyperpartisan, pro-union entity, and that does not benefit the American people.

We saw it in my home State of South Carolina, in my hometown of North Charleston, when the NLRB and the IAM attempted to destroy what was at the time 1,100 jobs at Boeing. Boeing represents more than 8,000 jobs in North Charleston because of the success of South Carolina’s pro-business, pro-employee—I want to emphasize “pro-employee”—environment. But the NLRB and the President simply decided that didn’t fit their tastes. So afterward, more than a year later, we saw the NLRB’s general counsel joke about destroying the American economy and call Members of Congress names, they finally relented when they realized South Carolina and the American people were not going to stand for it.

But since then, the NLRB has continued to push policies loved by union bosses, even though it was created to be an unbiased arbiter. So today we are taking a step—invoking the Congressional Review Act—because the NLRB decided to do union bosses one more favor.

The ambush elections rule, which the Board has now finalized, will allow as few as 10 days to pass between the employer filing a petition to unionize and employees filing a petition to unionize and a vote occurring. This rule is perhaps the most pro-Big Labor action taken by the current administration, which is quite a feat for this administration. Ambush elections force employers to make a well-informed choice on joining a union as it gives limited time to hear both sides of the debate. The rule also requires unprecedented amounts of employees’ personal information to be given to union representatives, such as personal cell phone numbers and email addresses. The NLRB is also now placing burdensome requirements on employers that unions do not have to follow themselves, giving them an unfair advantage to union organizers.

In South Carolina, we have seen the potential ramifications that come as a result of a widely partisan NLRB, and this rule simply reinforces the fact that the Board must return to acting as the neutral arbiter it was intended to be. But since that does not seem likely anytime soon, as my friends on the left resist efforts that Senator AXELROD and I and others have introduced to reform the Board, we find ourselves here today.

I will leave you with just a few quotes. One is from Brian Hayes:

“The principal purpose for this radical manipulation of our election process is to minimize, or rather, to effectively eviscerate an employer’s legitimate opportunity to express its views about collective bargaining.”

I urge every step—vote to disapprove of the ambush elections rule and return workplace decisions to employees—not to Big Labor and a partisan administration.

Just a few weeks ago we had a hearing in the HELP Committee. Sometimes when we have this conversation about what is good for employees versus what is good for employers, we find a way of taking these two groups of folks and trying to put them in competing categories. And on a very simple question at one of the hearings, and I wish to take a few minutes to walk through what we are expecting of employers as we engage in this new process of elections. I think we will see very clearly why we call them ambush elections.

For the last 13 or 14 years, before entering Congress, I was a small business owner, an entrepreneur. I thought I had found the American dream. We were making a profit. We were moving forward. We were hiring people. And now, as I think it through, if I were still in business today, what are we asking employers to do in as short a window as 10 days?

With less than two dozen employees and no in-house legal counsel, I am expected in as few as 10 days to understand what an election position is; to find labor law experts with NLRB experience, and hopefully, NLRB expertise; to learn what can and cannot be said to employees; to figure out which employees are eligible to vote; to submit to the union names of eligible employees, their addresses, personal emails, their cell phone numbers, their work location, shift information, employee classifications; and to ensure all legal arguments are raised at this point in time so that I do not waive my right to use those arguments in the future. All of this must be done with amazing haste and great precision.

Meanwhile, the clock is ticking. The clock is ticking on my right to talk with my employees before an election. My business is being neglected. Bear in mind that employers and entrepreneurs start businesses so that we can actually accomplish a task, not necessarily to defend ourselves in this process. So while we are building our businesses and incurring substantial legal costs, I have to ask myself one very simple question—and I think many people are going to ask themselves the same exact question—and it is simply this: How does this lead to a fair election for any employee or any employer? It seems to me that it simply cannot and it will not.

I thank the Presiding Officer. I suggest the presence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER’S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this morning we were fortunate enough to hear Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu address a joint meeting of Congress. I was disappointed the Vice President and a number of Democratic Members of Congress chose not to attend this event. They missed a powerful speech, and they missed an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to our strongest ally, Israel.

In his speech before the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee yesterday, Prime Minister Netanyahu spoke about Israel’s alliance with the United States to, as he put it, “defend our common civilization against common threats.” He spoke of “values that unite us . . . values like liberty, equality, justice, tolerance, and compassion.” These are the values that unite us. They are the values both our Nations are committed to defend. It is an area of the world where respect for liberty and equality is often nonexistent. Israel stands up for these most essential principles. America is proud to be there.

The Prime Minister spoke this morning about the dangers of a nuclear-armed Iran. I scarcely need to enumerate the reasons why Iran possessing a nuclear weapon is such a dangerous prospect.

First and foremost, Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. That rather bureaucratic phrase obscures the full horror of what it signifies—that Iran’s Government helps advance the activities of those who advocate violence, and have and have kept millions of ordinary men, women, and children in the Middle East from living in stability and peace. Iran has fomented hostility toward the State of Israel, and its leaders have publicly stated the desire to wipe the entire Nation of Israel off the map. As Iran spreads violence and oppression abroad, it also uses the same tactics against its people at home. Iran’s Government is hostile to any kind, whether it be freedom of speech or freedom of religion, and thousands of its own citizens have been tortured and imprisoned and executed for daring to stand up for their human rights.

Keeping such a regime from developing a nuclear weapon must be a priority.

Unfortunately, since November of 2013, when the Obama administration first reached an interim nuclear agreement with Iran, all we have seen from those negotiations are extensions while Iran has received an easing of sanctions. We hear it repeated that “no deal is better than a bad deal.” Yet while Israel has made it clear that an agreement which recognizes Iran’s right to enrich uranium is unacceptable, our own administration has yet to clearly state what a good deal would look like.

When the Senate made efforts to set up the parameters for an acceptable final agreement by introducing the bipartisan Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2015, which I cosponsored, the President announced that he would veto such a bill without even waiting to see
what it would look like after being fully debated and amended.

Last week two of my colleagues introduced the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015, which would give Congress 60 days to approve or disapprove any final agreement. It will be telling if the Senate takes a stand on it as we veto this bill as well. It is essential that any final agreement on Iran’s nuclear capability be acceptable to the American people, and congressional review is therefore indispensable.

I am eager to work with the White House and my colleagues across the aisle to provide the American people and our allies abroad with the assurance that Iran will not be allowed to arm itself with a nuclear weapon. However, I am concerned that if the President continues his go-it-alone approach, Americans may not like the deal that emerges.

KING V. BURWELL

Mr. President, I wish to pivot to an issue that is being considered over in the Senate this week. Tomorrow the Supreme Court is going to hear oral arguments in the case of King v. Burwell, which challenges the extension of ObamaCare subsidies to States with federal exchanges.

The administration’s health care law states that individuals who enroll through “an exchange established by the State” are entitled to receive subsidies to help with their premium payments.

ObamaCare architect Jonathan Gruber made it clear this was intended to give States an incentive to create their own exchanges. At an event in 2012, he told the audience:

What’s important to remember politically about this is if you’re a state and you don’t set up an exchange, that means your citizens don’t get their tax credits—but your citizens still pay the taxes that support this bill.

That is from ObamaCare architect Jonathan Gruber back in 2012.

In the wake of the health care law’s passage, however, States made it clear they were reluctant to take on the costs and burdens associated with ObamaCare. More than two-thirds of the States declined to set up their own exchanges, and the Obama administration provided the subsidies to those enrolled on Federal exchanges despite there being no authority in the law for it to do so. The concept was expressed by members of the President’s own administration who were doubtful about the legality of such a move.

The administration’s decision to push forward with the subsidies despite the lack of legal authority could have serious consequences for millions of Americans. If the Supreme Court finds the Obama administration overstepped its authority, 5 million Americans could lose their ObamaCare subsidies.

I recently joined several of my colleagues in sending a letter to the administration of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Treasury Secretary to ask what the administration’s plan is for dealing with the aftermath of an unfavorable Supreme Court ruling. The administration’s answer: Nothing. That is right. Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell told us the administration has no administrative plans for what it will do if the Court makes an unfavorable decision by the Supreme Court.

In fact, the administration declined to even warn Americans enrolling this year of what could happen if the Supreme Court overturns the administration was illegally providing subsidies.

Clearly the millions of Americans who could lose their health care premium subsidy, thanks to the administration’s abuse of its authority, need a solution, and Republicans have been working on solutions. The junior Senator from Nebraska has put forward a plan to use the 1985 COBRA law to extend temporary health care assistance to these Americans for 18 months.

Other Senator HATCH from Utah, Senator ALEXANDER from Tennessee, Senator BARRASSO from Wyoming—have offered their own plans which would also provide temporary financial assistance to affected Americans while they recover from the loss of the subsidies.

The chairman of the House Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce Committee has released a roadmap for replacing the tax-based and structure-based solutions. Their plan allows States to opt out of many ObamaCare mandates while maintaining protections for Americans. It would also make refundable tax credits available to Americans who lose their subsidies.

All of these plans seek to replace the broken ObamaCare system with real health care reform that would lower costs, expand access to care, and to put patients, not the government, in charge of their health care decisions. We don’t need this court case to demonstrate that ObamaCare has been a massive failure. We already had the unexpected tax bills, the higher premiums, the loss of doctors and hospitals, the health care plans Americans were not allowed to keep, the law’s negative effect on employment, and I could go on and on.

This court case underscores what all the other law’s problems have demonstrated: ObamaCare is not fixing the health care challenges facing our country. If anything, it is making them worse. ObamaCare has been tried, and it has been found wanting. It is time to repeal this law and to replace it with health care reforms that will actually fix the ObamaCare with market-based solutions and improve affordability and access for all Americans. Five years of ObamaCare is long enough.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. 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. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the National Labor Relations Board representation case procedures rule, which is set to go into effect April 14.

This rule unfairly expedites union elections and squelches individual self-determination during democratic decision-making, and freedom of expression. It is also a blatant attempt to circumvent Congress’s legitimate constitutional role in how—if at all—to reform the National Labor Relations Act. It is a clear case of regulatory overreach, and it is an abuse of power.

The National Labor Relations Act seeks to create equity—or a “level playing field,” so to speak—in labor relations. Now, I believe the NLRA is far from perfect. In fact, I introduced multiple pieces of legislation over the years to amend the NLRA. Nevertheless, any reform must be openly debated and enacted by Congress, not decided unilaterally by an accountable bureaucracy.

I am concerned because this National Labor Relations Board case representation rule clearly favors the unions. I am not anti-union. I oppose this rule because I am a champion for both workers and businesses, for employee freedom of choice, and the employer community. This rule hurts both. I oppose this rule not because I am against a worker’s right to join a union but because this rule is detrimental to both employers and employees.

The NLRA guarantees the right to engage in union activities. It also ensures the right to refrain from such activities. This rule dramatically shortens the period of time that exists between a union filing an election petition and the actual election. Shortening this time period undermines an employer’s ability to hold a lawful exchange with its employees on whether to select union representation. It also deprives workers of their right to receive key information from all sides, as the NLRB currently provides—a system that allows for a full and robust debate between unions, employees, and employers.

Moreover, there is simply no need for this rule.

Both businesses and workers deserve a process that is free of unnecessary delays. Nearly 95 percent of all elections take place within 2 months after a petition has been filed, and the unions have won more than two-thirds of these elections during that time. No one can claim that this process is fraught with unnecessary delays.

Unions favor this rule because it riggs the system by allowing them to campaign without the employer’s knowledge. While some argue that employers are free to talk to their employees about unionization at any time, employers are unable to rebut a union’s
argument if they are unaware the arguments are even being made. This rule leaves employers with insufficient time to respond to a union’s arguments—and they know that. That is what is wrong with this legislation. Once again, this hurts both the worker and the employer.

While my main objection to this rule is that it precludes workers and employers from necessary and protected information sharing, I also oppose the rule because it is likely to throw many employers for a loop and create confusion and opposition. Under this rule, voter eligibility for quickie elections would be deferred to postelection procedures. Employees would be asked to vote on joining a union without knowing which employees will ultimately make up the bargaining unit. Simply put, unions are trying to win representation elections without defining whom they are representing.

Furthermore, there are serious due process concerns surrounding the initial burden of proof statement of requirements. It is particularly burdensome to small employers to collect the required information following the filing of the petition in this drastically shortened timeframe.

Largely unnoticed is the fact that with this rule the NLRB is invading employees’ privacy and exposing them to potential identity theft by mandating that employers turn over employees’ personal telephone numbers and email addresses in their entirety. That is outrageous. The rule tramples on workers’ individual liberties by allowing unions to unfairly obtain an employee’s private information.

The NLRB should be a neutral arbiter—an impartial overseer of the process—working to enforce the law, and to stop violations, and to intervene in attempts to sway benefit from one side or the other. It should not be an advocate for organized labor. Rather than approach regulation from the traditional perspective, this rule makes a value judgment that favors unions based on false assumptions.

The NLRB should properly be safeguarding labor relations processes. I urge us all to support workers’ personal liberties by providing them ample opportunity to make up their own minds. I urge all of my colleagues to support employers in preserving due process while cultivating constructive dialogue between businesses and workers.

I thank Senators Alexander and Enzi for leading this action under the Congressional Review Act. I am proud to stand with the majority of my Senate colleagues today in preventing the NLRB from abusing regulatory power by supporting this resolution of disapproval.

I am well aware of these types of tactics by the union movement. I am one of the few people in this body who was really raised in the union movement, who actually learned a skilled trade, who actually worked as a union member for 10 years in the building and construction trade unions as a metal lather.

I have to tell my colleagues that some of these people in the NLRB and others have been trying to get quickie elections through for a long time, and we are looking at this as an attempt to slant everything in their favor, when they win a majority of the NLRB votes anyway. No, they just want to win all of them without giving the employees the necessary information to be able to make wise decisions as to whether or not to join a union, and then they cloud it up by making it almost impossible to know which part of the union or which methodology they are going to go into. We have had such elections for years. We have had good Democrats and good Republicans vote against quickie elections. It is not fair to slant the system totally against employers, which is what this bill will do. Frankly, it is time we quit pulling these dirty tricks. It really never ceases to amaze me. When Republicans appoint—and they are in the majority—people to the NLRB, as a general rule, they try to make things more fair. They try to make things more fair and be fair. When Democrats do it—when Democratic Presidents do it—they try to pull tricks such as this that really are unworthy of the type of considerations that really are involved in these union elections. I don’t mind unions winning, but they ought to win fair and square. They shouldn’t win because they stacked the deck against the businesses. There are enough rules to give unions advantages in union elections as it is. But to have quickie elections so that the owner of the business or the owners of the business don’t have a chance to answer the questions that come up or even speak to their employees is just wrong. I am opposed to it, and I hope enough in this Senate is opposed to it as well.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, the Keystone XL Pipeline means opportunity for the American people. The President is standing in the way of jobs. He is standing in the way of affordable energy for the middle class. He is standing in the way of our Nation’s energy security. His recent veto threat and now carrying through with the veto sent a clear message that he is more concerned with political games than increasing opportunity for the American people.

We are here today to send a strong message that this fight is far from over.

The Keystone XL Pipeline is a lifeline for many Montana communities. In fact, the Keystone Pipeline enters the United States through Montana, and that is why I will keep fighting to get this project moving forward.

In fact, in our State of Montana alone, the Keystone Pipeline means $80 million to Montana counties and schools per year. Now, $16 million per year of that goes directly to our Montana university systems. This is how we continue to fund our infrastructure, our schools, and our higher education.

A couple of weeks ago I got a call from Rion Miles. He is the business manager for the Operating Engineers Local 400 in Montana. He told me the Keystone XL Pipeline will create 300 jobs for just the members in Montana alone. Like most Montanans, Ryan is scratching his head. He doesn’t understand why the President is standing in the way of these good-paying union jobs.

A while back, I was in my pickup traveling in eastern Montana in the town of Glasgow. I stopped by the NorVal Co-Op. This co-op supplies electricity to a few thousand Montana families in northeast Montana. They told me over a cup of coffee that morning that they will keep electric rates flat for the next 10 years if the Keystone Pipeline is approved. Why is that? That is because the NorVal Co-Op is supplying the electricity to a couple of the stations on the Keystone Pipeline. That extra volume of electricity will help keep costs down for everybody.

I asked: What happens if the Keystone Pipeline is not approved? They told me over a cup of coffee that morning that they would have to raise electric rates by about 40 percent over the next 10 years. That is nearly $500 a year of increase per family. These are hardworking Montana families living month to month. These are senior citizens living on fixed incomes, where we can hold their utility rates, electric rates flat for the next 10 years by passing the Keystone Pipeline bill.

What about North American energy independence? Up to 830,000 barrels a day will be transported through this pipeline. Contrary to what the President has said, 100,000 barrels a day from the Bakken, which is shared between North Dakota and Montana, will be put into that pipeline close to Baker, Montana.

The President was just given four Pinocchios by the Washington Post yesterday for claiming that the Keystone Pipeline bypassed the United States. The truth is that if he would like to have the President come to Montana, I will pick him up in Billings, and we will drive in my pick-up. I will show him where the proposed siting is for the Baker onramp where 100,000 barrels a day of made-in-Montana and made-in-North Dakota oil will enter the Keystone Pipeline. The people of Montana and the people in the Bakken region know the President’s claim is absolutely false.

With gas dropping under two bucks a gallon where I am from, that has been a welcomed change for many, many hard-working Montana families. Why are gas prices dropping? It is because we are seeing more made-in-America

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energy. Again, this lowering in gas prices will result in approximately $750 a year of savings for the average American household. That is a good thing. But rather than hitting pause on our energy production, it is time to encourage it.

Just this morning we were reminded by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu that we are living in an increasingly dangerous world. Our energy security isn’t just about jobs and low energy prices. It is directly tied to our national security. Whether it is ISIS, whether it is Boko Haram in Nigeria and Chad, whether it is the Russian aggression in Eastern Europe or the growing threat of a nuclear Iran, it is vitally important we move forward with more made-in-America energy because many of these regions that are filled with turmoil supply much of the world’s oil and natural gas.

I remember just a year ago when we were having some challenges and we looked at the numbers of what is going on in Ukraine. Nearly 40 percent of the natural gas that is supplied in Europe comes through pipelines going through Ukraine. Thankfully, as the United States becomes the world’s largest oil producer this year, surpassing both Russia and Saudi Arabia, there are positive steps forward towards a more secure future for our children and grandchildren. We need more made-in-America energy, not more made-in-the-Middle East oil. The Keystone Pipeline will help us do just that.

Looking forward, the President’s veto isn’t the end. This week we will vote to override the President’s veto. I hope we can get three or four more Senators onboard for this veto vote, and we can do it in the Senate. I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. It was encouraging to see a good bipartisan vote in the Senate and in the House in support of the Keystone Pipeline. Let’s stand together, and let’s override the President’s shortsighted veto. Regardless of the vote, the fight is not over.

This week the President himself said he would make a final decision on this pipeline. I hope he does. You realize it took the Canadians just 7 months to approve the Keystone Pipeline—7 months. It has now taken our President over 6 years without approving the pipeline. We must keep the pressure on this administration. We must continue to fight for American jobs, American opportunity, American energy independence, and low energy prices.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

REMEMBERING MINNIE MINOSO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on Sunday, America lost a baseball legend when Saturino Orestes Armas Minoso Arrieta passed away. We knew him as the Cuban Comet, as Mr. White Sox, as the heart and soul of Chicago baseball on the South Side, and a beacon of hope for Cuban athletes everywhere. It is with great sorrow that Chicago loses its South Side champion only days after the North Side Cubs lost their champion, Ernie Banks.

Before Minnie was Major League Baseball’s first black Latino star, he was the son of a sugarcane plantation worker on Cuba. He started his professional baseball career in Cuba, playing for $2 a game with the Ambrosia Candy team in Havana for the 1943 season. He also worked in the company garage for $5 a week. But within a couple of years, he made it to Havana’s Mariano team, making $150 a month, which soon became $200 a month to keep him from moving even more quickly in his career.

By 1946, Minnie’s talent couldn’t be kept away from bigger leagues. He signed a $300 deal to play for the New York Cubans of the Negro National League. Minnie played third base for the Cubans, batted .294, played in the All-Star Game, and helped them win the pennant and beat out the Cleveland Buckeyes in the World Series.

The Cleveland Indians hired Minoso in 1949, but the Indians barely used him. He spent the next 2 years in the minor leagues. In 1951, the Indians made a three-team trade with the White Sox and Philadelphia Phillies, and Minnie arrived in Chicago.

Minnie Minoso was the first Black player to wear a Chicago White Sox uniform. His first at-bat was a home run. That first year, the fans gave him his own day, and he was selected for the All-Star Game. He drove opponents mad with his ability to get on base and steal bases. He unabashedly crowded the plate and was hit by a pitch 192 times—just so he could steal second.

Minnie Minoso played 12 seasons with the White Sox over five decades. The seven-time All-Star was The Sporting News Rookie of the Year in 1951, he won three Gold Gloves in left field, and finished in the top four in American League MVP four times. His number was retired in 1983. Minnie had a wonderful career. He is one of two players ever to appear in a major league game in five decades. During the 1951’s, two players had 100 home runs, 100 stolen bases, and batted .300. Those two were the legendary Willie Mays and Minnie Minoso.

But his life was bigger than numbers. He brought optimism to all those around him. Nothing made him happier than when the White Sox won the World Series in 2005 with fellow Cubans Jose Contreras and Orlando Hernandez playing pivotal roles.

Minnie Minoso was a great treasure to Chicago. He loved to cruise the Chicago streets in his big car with a White Sox flag flying and his dog Jewel on the front seat. Through all the decades he spent in Chicago, he helped make the town, the White Sox, and the sport of baseball a joy for thousands of fans. He will be missed.
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VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for yesterday’s vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to go to conference on the House message to accompany H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act. I would have voted nay.

As well, I was necessarily absent for yesterday’s vote on the motion to table the request to go to conference on H.R. 240, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act. I would have voted nay.

TRIBUTE TO DAN HAMMER

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a great friend and gifted wordsmith, Dan Hammer, who is retiring after a long and distinguished career in public service.

Born and raised in San Jose, Dan attended UC Santa Cruz before moving to Boston to manage an antihar printing press. He returned to the San Francisco Bay area soon afterwards, where he currently serves as a typesetter for Rolling Stone magazine.

I first crossed paths with Dan during my 1992 Senate campaign. Dan stopped by my San Diego campaign office after work one day, and his immense talents immediately caught the attention of my local campaign manager. Dan quickly became one of my hardest working volunteers, doing everything from writing memos and news advisories to helping manage my public events. After I won the election, I knew I had to have Dan on my team. Although it took some convincing, he joined my San Diego district office in 1994.

Dan has held many positions in my offices over the years. As a San Diego-based field representative, he served as my eyes and ears on the ground, keeping me apprised of critical issues in southern California. As my deputy press secretary based out of my Washington, DC office, Dan worked many late nights writing press releases and staffing me at events. As my constituent communications director, Dan moved my entire legislative correspondence operation from DC to southern California, managing the full operation with discipline and precision. Under his leadership, my legislative correspondence team answers 200,000 letters and emails every month, and he uses his exceptional communications skills every day to share my work with the constituents I serve. Through it all, he has helped teach a generation of young staffers how to effectively communicate about the most important issues and ideas of our time.

Outside of work, Dan selflessly gives his time to the causes he believes in. Whether volunteering with environmental organizations like the Planning and Conservation League, working for other elected officials including Congresswoman Susan Davis, or joining the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Dan has always been dedicated to making his community a better place to live.

For more than 20 years, Dan has been a trusted ally, advisor, and friend. As he begins his retirement and embarks on the next exciting chapter of his life, I send him, his wife Shelley, and their entire family my best wishes, deep affection, and abiding gratitude.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13660 ON MARCH 6, 2014, AS MODIFIED BY THE ORDER OF DECEMBER 19, 2014, WITH RESPECT TO UKRAINE—PM 8

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the Federal Register for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.


CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13288 ON MARCH 6, 2003, WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE ZIMBABWE’S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS—PM 9

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the Federal Register for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA


MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:17 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 288. An act to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup bonuses and awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

H.R. 294. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the placement of veterans in non-Department medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 2 of the Migratory
Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 715a), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

The Sergeant at Arms further announced that pursuant to Executive Order No. 12131, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the President’s Export Council: Mr. KILDEE of Michigan and Ms. DELBENE of Washington.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 280. An act to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recoup bonuses and awards paid to employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

H.R. 294. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the placement of veterans in non-Department medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 625. A bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran’s nuclear program, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ROBERTS for the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

*Jeffery S. Hall, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring October 13, 2018.

*Dallas F. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2020.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee’s commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. JOHNSON:

S. 623. A bill to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to train Department of Homeland Security personnel how to effectually deter, detect, disrupt, and prevent human trafficking during the course of their primary roles and responsibilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WICKER, Mr. CARDIN, and Ms. COLLINS:

S. 624. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCONNELL:

S. 625. A bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran’s nuclear program, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 626. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by pediatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYotte (for herself, Mrs. McCaskill, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. KLOUCHAK, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TRUMKA, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 627. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, bonuses paid to employees involved in electronic wait list manipulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 628. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the designation of maternity care health professional shortage areas; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HAMRICK (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. PISCHER, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 629. A bill to enable hospital-based nursing programs that are affiliated with a hospital to maintain payments under the Medicare program to hospitals for the costs of such programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. BAKIEA):

S. 630. A bill to establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. MURkowski (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 631. A bill to exempt National Forest System land in the State of Alaska from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 632. A bill to strengthen the position of the United States in the world’s leading innovator by amending title 35, United States Code, to protect the property rights of the inventors that grow the country’s economy; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 633. A bill to prohibit certain assistance to the Palestinian Authority; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. GARDNER:

S. 634. A bill to prohibit the Federal Emergency Management Agency from recouping certain assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. COTTON:

S. 635. A bill to amend the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 to provide guidance and limitations regarding the integration of unmanned aircraft systems into United States airspace, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. UDALL:

S. 636. A bill to reduce prescription drug misuse and abuse; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. MORA, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 637. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 638. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to exceptional event demonstrations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. LEE, Mr. COATS, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 639. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to include in any proposed rule that limits greenhouse gas emissions and imposes increased costs on other Federal agencies an offset from funds available to the Administrator for all projected increased costs that the proposed rule would impose on other Federal agencies; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mrs. ENSST):

S. 641. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the employer wage credit for activated military reservists; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 642. A bill to aid human trafficking victims’ recovery and rehabilitation; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 643. A bill to amend titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to strengthen connections to early childhood education programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURkowski (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN):

S. 644. A bill to resolve title issues involving property rights to lands required using funds provided under the Alaska Klin Drying Grant Program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 645. A bill to assist States in providing voluntary high-quality universal prekindergarten programs and programs to support infants and toddlers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. HENRICH):

S. 646. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide an individual with a mental health screening before the individual enlists in the Armed Forces or is commissioned as an officer in the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.
Federal Government facility; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENCE AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. Kaine (for himself, Mr. Portman, Mrs. Baldwin, Mr. Isakson, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Coons, Mr. Wyden, Mr. Brown, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Boozman, and Mr. Schumacher):
S. Res. 94. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. Coons (for himself and Mr. Brown):
S. Res. 95. A resolution designating March 3, 2015, as “World Wildlife Day”; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. Brown (for himself, Mrs. Murray, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Tester, Mr. Nelson, Ms. Cantwell, and Mr. Schatz):
S. Con. Res. 7. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Doolittle Raiders; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 51
At the request of Mr. Vitter, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Cotton) was added as a cosponsor of S. 51, a bill to amend title X of the Public Health Service Act to prohibit family planning grants from being awarded to any entity that performs abortions, and for other purposes.

S. 178
At the request of Mr. Cornyn, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Wicker) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 228
At the request of Mr. Crapo, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Wicker) was added as a cosponsor of S. 228, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide for congressional and State approval of national monuments and restrictions on the use of national monuments.

S. 259
At the request of Mr. Hoeven, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. Donnelly) was added as a cosponsor of S. 259, a bill to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters.

S. 362
At the request of Mr. Leahy, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. King), the Senator from Washington (Ms. Cantwell) and the Senator from California (Mrs. Feinstein) were added as cosponsors of S. 262, a bill to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.

S. 275
At the request of Mr. Isakson, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. Bennet) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. Grassley) were added as cosponsors 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. 280
At the request of Mr. Portman, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. Donnelly) was added as a cosponsor of S. 280, a bill to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and for other purposes.

S. 301
At the request of Mrs. Fischer, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. Thune) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. Daines) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. Manchin) 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. 317
At the request of Ms. Hirono, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. Casey) was added as a cosponsor of S. 317, a bill to improve early education.

S. 322
At the request of Mr. Grassley, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. Shaheen) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 356
At the request of Mr. Lee, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. Durbin) was added as a cosponsor 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 names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. Collins) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. Cornyn) were added as cosponsors 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. 375
At the request of Mr. Cardin, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. Stabenow) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. Bennet) were added as cosponsors of S. 375, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reduced rate of excise tax on beer produced domestically by certain qualifying producers.

S. 388
At the request of Mr. Booker, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. Reid) 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. 439
At the request of Mr. Franken, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. Carper) 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. 440
At the request of Mr. Crapo, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. Kirk), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. Thune) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Boozman) were added as cosponsors of S. 440, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion from assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness.

S. 449
At the request of Mr. Thune, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. Schatz) was added as a cosponsor of S. 449, 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.

S. 499
At the request of Mr. Hatch, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. Perdue) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 578
At the request of Mr. Collins, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. Durbin) was added as a cosponsor of S. 578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 588
At the request of Mr. Durbin, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. Schumer) was added as a cosponsor of S. 588, a bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to establish a consumer product safety standard for liquid detergent packets to protect children under the age of five from injury or illness, and for other purposes.

S. 599
At the request of Mr. Cardin, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCaskill) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.
At the request of Mr. Grassley, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. Udall) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. Sullivan) were added as cosponsors of S. 607, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a five-year extension of the rural community hospital demonstration program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Paul, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 615, a bill to provide for a five-year extension of oversight and of agreements relating to Iran’s nuclear program, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. Menendez, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. Lankford) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 87, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and to encourage greater cooperation with the European governments, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in preventing and responding to anti-Semitism.

At the request of Mr. Cochran, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. Sessions) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 88, a resolution celebrating Black History Month.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the "Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT OF AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN RELATING TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN.
The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 134 the following new section:

"SEC. 135. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW AND OVERSIGHT OF AGREEMENTS WITH IRAN RELATING TO THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF IRAN.
"(a) Transmission to Congress of Nuclear Agreements With Iran and Verification Assessment With Respect to Such Agreements.—
"(1) Transmission of Agreements.—Not later than 5 calendar days after reaching an agreement with Iran relating to the nuclear program of Iran, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees—

"(A) the text of the agreement and all related materials and annexes;

"(B) a verification assessment report of the Secretary of State prepared pursuant to clause (2) with respect to the agreement, and

"(C) a certification that—

"(i) the agreement includes the appropriate terms, conditions, and duration of the agreement, including with respect to Iran's nuclear activities and provisions describing any sanctions to be waived, suspended, or otherwise reduced by the United States, and the extension of any other provision of law or relaxation of any other restriction under any provision of law or clause (1),

"(ii) the President determines that the agreement meets United States non-proliferation objectives, does not jeopardize the common defense and security, provides for a five-year extension of Iran's nuclear activities and provisions describing any sanctions to be waived, suspended, or otherwise reduced by the United States, and the extension of any other provision of law or relaxation of any other restriction under any provision of law or clause (1),

"(iii) the capacity and capability of the International Atomic Energy Agency to effectively implement the verification regime required by the agreement, including whether the International Atomic Energy Agency has the required funding, manpower, and authority to do so,

"(iv) the extent to which the Secretary will be able to verify that Iran is complying with its obligations under the agreement, and

"(v) the adequacy of the safeguards and other control mechanisms and other assurances contained in the agreement with respect to Iran's nuclear program to ensure Iran's activities permitted thereunder will not be incompatible with or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security, and ensures that Iran's nuclear activities permitted thereunder will not be incompatible with or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security, and

"(2) Verification Assessment Report.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall prepare, with respect to an agreement described in paragraph (1), a report assessing—

"(i) the extent to which the Secretary will be able to verify that Iran is complying with its obligations under the agreement;

"(ii) the adequacy of the safeguards and other control mechanisms and other assurances contained in the agreement with respect to Iran's nuclear program to ensure Iran's activities permitted thereunder will not be incompatible with or constitute an unreasonable risk to the common defense and security, and

"(B) Assumptions.—In preparing a report under subparagraph (A) with respect to an agreement described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall assume that Iran could—

"(i) use all measures not expressly prohibited by the agreement activities that violate its obligations under the agreement;

"(ii) alter or deviate from standard practices in order to impede efforts to verify that Iran is complying with those obligations;

"(iii) classified annex.—A report under subparagraph (A) shall include a classified annex, prepared in unclassified form, that shall include a classified annex prepared in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information;

"(B) Exception.—The requirements of subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1) shall not apply to an agreement defined in section 1(j)(4).

"(C) Period for Review by Congress of Nuclear Agreements With Iran.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—During the 60-day period following transmittal by the President of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a), the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives shall, as appropriate, hold hearings and briefings and otherwise obtain information in order to fully review such agreement.

"(2) Period Limiting Congressional Review of Actions During Period of Review.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided in paragraph (3), during the period for review provided in paragraph (1), the President may not waive, suspend, delay, or otherwise defer, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of statutory sanctions pursuant to an agreement described in subsection (a), under subsection (2) does not apply to any deferral, waiver, or other suspension of statutory sanctions pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action—

"(A) consistent with the law in effect on the date of the enactment of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015; and

"(B) not later than 45 days before the transmission by the President of an agreement described in subsection (a), the Joint Plan of Action—

"(A) may be taken, consistent with existing statutory requirements for such action, if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b)(1), the Congress adopts, and the President transmits, a joint resolution declaring in substance that the Congress does favor the agreement;

"(B) may not be taken if, during the period for review provided in subsection (b)(1), the Congress adopts, and there is enacted, a joint resolution stating in substance that the Congress does not favor the agreement; or

"(3) Exception.—The prohibition under paragraph (2) does not apply to any deferral, waiver, or other suspension of statutory sanctions with respect to Iran under subsection (a) or the Joint Plan of Action.

"(D) Congressional Oversight of Iranian Compliance With Nuclear Agreements.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, within 10 days of receiving credible and accurate information relating to a potentially significant breach or compliance incident incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), submit such information to the appropriate congressional committees.

"(2) Material Breach Report.—Not later than 10 days after submitting information about a potentially significant breach or compliance incident by Iran with respect to an agreement subject to subsection (a), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the matter, including—

"(A) a description of the breach or compliance incident and actions taken by Iran to cure the breach, and the status of Iran's efforts to cure the breach.

"(3) Semi-Annual Report.—Not later than 180 days after entering into an agreement under any provision of law or clause (1), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the matter, including—

"(A) an analysis of the matter, including the material breach, actions necessary for Iran to cure the breach, and the status of Iran's efforts to cure the breach.
(A) Any action or failure to act by Iran that breached the agreement or is in non-compliance with the terms of the agreement;

(B) Any delay by Iran of more than one week in providing inspectors access to facilities, people, and documents in Iran as required by the agreement;

(C) Any progress made by Iran to resolve concerns by the International Atomic Energy Agency about possible military dimensions of its nuclear program;

(D) Any procurement by Iran of materials in violation of the agreement;

(E) Any centrifuge research and development conducted by Iran that—

(i) is not in compliance with the agreement; or

(ii) may substantially enhance the enrichment capacity of Iran if deployed;

(F) Any diversion by Iran of uranium, carbon-fiber, or other materials for use in Iran’s nuclear program in violation of the agreement;

(G) Any covert nuclear activities undertaken by Iran;

(H) An assessment of whether any Iranian financial institutions are engaged in money laundering or terrorist finance activities, including names of specific financial institutions if applicable.

(I) Assessment of—

(i) whether, and to the extent to which, Iran supported acts of terrorism; and

(ii) whether Iran directly supported, financed, or carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or a United States person anywhere in the world.

(4) ADDITIONAL REPORTS AND INFORMATION—

(A) AGENCY REPORTS.—Following submission of an agreement pursuant to subsection (a) to the appropriate congressional committees, the Department of State, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense shall, upon the request of either of those committees, promptly furnish to those committees their views as to whether the safeguards and other controls contained in the agreement with respect to Iran’s nuclear program provide an adequate framework to ensure that Iran’s activities permitted thereunder will be in compliance with the terms of the agreement.

(B) TREATMENT OF JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISRECOGNITION.—If the President does not submit a decertification pursuant to subsection (d)(5) or has determined pursuant to subsection (d)(2) that Iran has materially breached an agreement subject to subsection (a) or has failed within 60 days expedited consideration of qualifying legislation pursuant to this subsection.

(C) CONGRESSIONAL FEEDBACK.—For purposes of subsection (a), the term ‘qualifying legislation’ means only a bill of either House of Congress—

(1) the title of which is as follows: ‘A bill reinstating statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran’; and

(2) the matter after the enacting clause of which is: ‘Any statutory sanctions imposed with respect to Iran is not in compliance with the agreement or, if such agreement is not in compliance with the agreement, or in violation of the agreement.

(4) COMMITTEE REFERRAL.—Qualifying legislation introduced in the Senate shall be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and in the House of Representatives to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

(5) DISCHARGE.—If the committee of either House of Congress relating to the legislation has been referred and has not reported such legislation within 10 session days after the date of referral of such legislation, the House receiving the legislation is authorized to consider such legislation, and the qualifying legislation shall be placed on the appropriate calendar.

(6) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) PROCEEDING TO CONSIDERATION.—After each house has determined the legislation to which the House of Representatives or has been discharged from its consideration, it shall be in order to move to proceed to the consideration of the legislation in the House. All points of order against the motion shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The motion shall not be debatable. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is not agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. A motion to postpose, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the qualifying legislation is not in order.

(B) CONSIDERATION.—The qualifying legislation shall be considered as read. All points of order against the legislation and against its consideration are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the qualifying legislation to its passage without intervening motion except 2 hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the qualifying legislation shall not be in order. No amendment to, or motion to recommit, qualifying legislation shall be in order.

(C) APPEALS.—All appeals from the Chair relating to the application of the Rules of the House of Representatives to the proceedings relating to the qualifying legislation shall be decided without debate.

(7) FLOOR CONSIDERATION IN THE SENATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, it is in order at any time after the committee authorized to consider qualifying legislation receives such legislation and discharges it from its consideration (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of qualifying legislation, and all points of order against qualifying legislation (and against consideration of the qualifying legislation) are waived. The motion to proceed is not debate subject to a motion to postpone. A motion to reconsider the vote by which the motion is agreed to or disagreed to shall not be in order. A motion to proceed to the consideration of the qualifying legislation is agreed to, the qualifying legislation shall remain that the House has agreed to.

(B) DEBATE.—On qualifying legislation, and on all debatable motions and appeals in connection therewith, shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. A motion to further limit debate is in order and not debatable. A motion to postpone, or a motion to proceed to the consideration of other business, or a motion to recommit the qualifying legislation is not in order.

(C) VETO MESSAGE.—The vote on passage shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the debate on the qualifying legislation and a single quorum call at the conclusion of the debate, if requested in accordance with the rules of the Senate.

(D) RULINGS.—The Chair on Procedure and Rights shall be afforded an opportunity to rule on a point of order relating to qualifying legislation, and a ruling of the Chair shall be final.

(E) DISPLACED FLOOR BUSINESS.—If the Chair rules that qualifying legislation shall be decided without debate, the Chair shall order all pending business to be disposed of immediately.

(F) CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGES.—Debate on the Senate’s veto message in connection with qualifying legislation shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between the majority and minority leaders or their designees.

(G) RULES RELATING TO SENATE OR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(A) COORDINATION WITH ACTION BY OTHER HOUSE.—If, before the passage by one House of qualifying legislation of that House, that House receives qualifying legislation from the other House, then the following procedures shall apply:

(i) The qualifying legislation of the other House shall not be referred to a committee.

(ii) With respect to qualifying legislation of the House receiving the legislation—

(I) the procedure in that House shall be the same as if no qualifying legislation had been received from the other House; but

(II) the vote on passage shall be on the qualifying legislation of the other House.
California, will manage the Heritage Area. It will ensure an open and public process, working with all levels of Federal, State, and local government, tribes, local stakeholders, and private property owners as it develops and implements the management plan for the Heritage Area. The bill authorizes $10 million in Federal assistance over the next 15 years to provide technical assistance and matching grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations to implement a management plan to conserve and protect the delta’s natural, historical, and cultural resources.

It is also important to understand what this legislation will not do. It will not affect water rights. It will not affect water contracts. It will not affect private property. It will not affect fishing or hunting.

Nothing in this bill gives any governmental agency any more regulatory authority than it already has. It does not take away regulatory from agencies that have it.

In short, this bill does not affect water rights or water contracts, nor does it impose any additional responsibilities on local government or residents. Instead, it authorizes Federal assistance to a local process already required by State law that will elevate the Delta, providing a means to conserve and protect its valuable communities, resources, and history.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is the largest estuary on the West Coast. It is the most extensive inland delta in the world, and a unique national treasure.

Today, it is a labyrinth of sloughs, wetlands, anddeepwater channels that connect the waters of the high Sierra mountain streams to the Pacific Ocean through the San Francisco Bay. Its approximately 60 islands are protected by 1,100 miles of levees, and are home to 3,500,000 residents, including 2,500 families of farmers. The Delta and its farmers produce some of the highest quality produce in the world. The Delta offers recreational opportunities to the two million Californians who visit the area each year for boating, fishing, hunting, visiting historic sites, and viewing wildlife. It provides habitats for more than 75 species of plants and wildlife. These include sandhill cranes that migrate to the Delta wetland from places as far away as Siberia. The Delta also provides habitat for Pacific salmon, some as large as 60 pounds, that return each year to travel through the Delta to spawn in the tributaries. These same waterways also channel fresh water to the Federal and State Heritage Areas. The bill authorizes $23 million in Federal assistance to the Delta and State Heritage Areas. The bill authorizes $23 million in Federal assistance to the Delta and State Heritage Areas.

This bill will establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as a National Heritage Area. The purpose of the heritage area is to conserve and protect the Delta, its communities, its resources, and it’s history.

The Delta Conservation Commission, created by California law and responsible to the citizens of the Delta and California, will manage the Heritage Area. It will ensure an open and public process, working with all levels of Federal, State, and local government, tribes, local stakeholders, and private property owners as it develops and implements the management plan for the Heritage Area. The bill authorizes $10 million in Federal assistance over the next 15 years to provide technical assistance and matching grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations to implement a management plan to conserve and protect the delta’s natural, historical, and cultural resources.

It is also important to understand what this legislation will not do. It will not affect water rights. It will not affect water contracts. It will not affect private property. It will not affect fishing or hunting.

Nothing in this bill gives any governmental agency any more regulatory...
The Delta was the gateway to the gold fields in 1849, after which Chinese workers built hundreds of miles of levees throughout the waterways of the Delta to make its rich peat soils available for farming and to control flooding.

Japanese, Italians, German, Portuguese, Dutch, Greeks, South Asians and other immigrants began the farming legacy, and developed technologies specifically adapted to the unique environment, including the Caterpillar Tractor, which later contributed to agriculture and transportation internationally.

Delta communities created a river culture befitting their dependence on water transport, a culture which has attracted the attention of authors from Mark Twain and Jack London to Joan Didion.

The National Heritage Area designation for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will help local governments develop and implement a plan for a sustainable future by providing federal recognition, technical assistance and small amounts of funding to a community-based process already underway.

Through the Delta Heritage Area, local communities and citizens will partner with Federal, State and local governments to collaboratively work to promote conservation, community revitalization, and economic development projects.

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. 630

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 “Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Establishment Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(a) HERITAGE AREA.—The term “Heritage Area” means the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area established by section 3(a).

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The boundaries of the Heritage Area shall be in the counties of Contra Costa, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, and Yolo in the State of California, as generally depicted on the map entitled “Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area Proposed Boundary”, numbered T27/105,030, and dated October 2012.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The map described in subparagraph (b) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service and the Delta Protection Commission.

(d) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY.—The local coordinating entity for the Heritage Area shall be the Delta Protection Commission established by section 7925 of the California Public Resources Code.

(e) ADMINISTRATION.—(1) AUTHORITY.—For purposes of carrying out the Heritage Area management plan, the Secretary, acting through the local coordinating entity, may make amounts made available under this Act—

(A) make grants to the State or a political subdivision of the State, nonprofit organizations, and other persons;

(B) enter into cooperative agreements with, or provide technical assistance to, the State or a political subdivision of the State, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties;

(C) hire and compensate staff, which shall include individuals with expertise in natural, cultural, and historical resources protection, and heritage preservation strategies;

(D) obtain money or services from any source including any that are provided under any other Federal law or program;

(E) contract for goods or services; and

(F) undertake to be a catalyst for any other activity that furthers the Heritage Area and is consistent with the approved Heritage Area management plan.

(2) DUTIES.—The local coordinating entity shall:

(A) in accordance with subsection (f), prepare and submit a Heritage Area management plan to the Secretary;

(B) assist units of local government, regional planning organizations, and nonprofit organizations in carrying out the approved Heritage Area management plan by—

(i) carrying out programs and projects that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values in the Heritage Area;

(ii) establishing and maintaining interpretive exhibits and programs in the Heritage Area;

(iii) developing recreational and educational opportunities in the Heritage Area;

(iv) increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for, scenic, historic, and cultural resources of the Heritage Area;

(v) protecting and restoring historic sites and buildings in the Heritage Area that are consistent with the Heritage Area;

(vi) ensuring that clear, consistent, and appropriate signs identifying points of public access and sites of interest are posted throughout the Heritage Area;

(vii) promoting a wide range of partnerships among local and State and Federal governments, businesses, organizations, and individuals that have been made by the local coordinating entity that includes a description of—

(I) actions to facilitate ongoing collaboration among partners to promote plans for resource protection, restoration, and construction; and

(II) specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the local coordinating entity or any government, organization, or individual for the first 5 years of operation;

(viii) an identification of sources of funding for carrying out the Heritage Area management plan;

(ix) analysis and recommendations for measures by which local, State, and Federal programs, including the role of the National Park Service in the Heritage Area, may best be coordinated to carry out this Act; and

(x) an interpretive plan for the Heritage Area;

and

(E) recommend policies and strategies for resource management that consider and depict the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area.
(3) Restrictions.—The Heritage Area management plan submitted under this subsection shall—

(A) ensure participation by appropriate Federal and local agencies, including the Delta Stewardship Council, special districts, natural and historical resource protection and agricultural organizations, educational institutions, businesses, recreational organizations, community residents, and private property owners; and

(B) not be approved until the Secretary has received a recommendation from the Delta Stewardship Council that the Delta Stewardship Council has reviewed the Heritage Area management plan adopted by the Delta Stewardship Council pursuant to State law.

(4) Deadline.—If a proposed Heritage Area management plan, as submitted by the Secretary by the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the local coordinating entity shall be ineligible to receive additional funding under this Act until the date that the Secretary receives and approves the Heritage Area management plan.

(5) Approval or Disapproval of Heritage Area Management Plan.—

(A) In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the Heritage Area management plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary may approve or disapprove the Heritage Area management plan.

(B) Criteria for approval.—In determining whether to approve the Heritage Area management plan, the Secretary shall consider whether—

(i) the local coordinating entity is representative of the diverse interests of the Heritage Area, including governments, natural and historic resource protection organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and recreational organizations;

(ii) the local coordinating entity has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public and governmental involvement in the preparation of the Heritage Area management plan; and

(iii) the resource protection and interpretation strategies contained in the Heritage Area management plan, if implemented, would adequately protect the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Heritage Area.

(C) Action following disapproval.—If the Secretary disapproves the Heritage Area management plan under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

(i) advise the local coordinating entity in writing of the reasons for the disapproval;

(ii) make recommendations for revisions to the Heritage Area management plan; and

(iii) not later than 180 days after the receipt of any proposed revision of the Heritage Area management plan from the local coordinating entity, approve or disapprove the proposed revision.

(D) Amendments.—

(i) In general.—The Secretary shall approve each amendment to the Heritage Area management plan that the Secretary determines makes a substantial change to the Heritage Area management plan.

(ii) Use of funds.—The local coordinating entity shall not use Federal funds authorized by this Act to carry out any amendments to the Heritage Area management plan until the Secretary has approved the amendments.

(g) Relationship to Other Federal Agencies.—

(1) In general.—Nothing in this Act affects the authority of a Federal agency to provide technical or financial assistance under other laws for the purposes for which those funds were authorized; or

(2) Consultation and coordination.—The head of any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that may have an impact on the Heritage Area is encouraged to consult and coordinate the activities with the Secretary and the local coordinating entity to the maximum extent practicable.

(3) Other Federal Agencies.—Nothing in this Act—

(A) modifies, alters, or amends any law or regulatory authority of any Federal, State or local agency to manage Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Federal agency;

(B) limits the discretion of a Federal land manager to implement an approved land use plan within the boundaries of the Heritage Area; or

(C) modifies, alters, or amends any authorized use of Federal land under the jurisdiction of a Federal agency.

(b) Private Property and Regulatory Protections.

(1) In General.—Subject to paragraph (2), nothing in this Act—

(A) abridges the rights of any property owner (whether public or private), including the right to refrain from participating in any plan, project, program, or activity conducted within the Heritage Area;

(B) requires any property owner to permit public access (including access by Federal, State, or local agencies) to the property of the property owner under any other Federal, State, or local law; or

(C) alters any duly adopted land use regulation, approved or other regulatory authority of any Federal, State or local agency, or conveys any land use or other regulatory authority to the local coordinating entity.

(2) Determinations of viability.—If the Secretary determines whether to approve the Heritage Area management plan, the Secretary shall—

(A) consider whether—

(i) the local coordinating entity is representative of the diverse interests of the Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the Heritage Area, partnerships, and funding of the Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the Heritage Area;

(ii) the appropriate time period necessary to achieve the recommended reduction or elimination of the allowable timber harvest in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which has been the subject of congressional review and special legislation twice in the past 35 years, first in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980, which reduced the allowable timber harvest in...
the 16.9-million acre forest from nearly 1 billion board feet a year to a 450 million board foot harvest level, and later by the Tongass Timber Reform Act of 1990, which further reduced the allowable harvest level to 267 million board feet annually in 1998 and 5.75 million acres of wilderness by creating 14 wilderness areas in the forest, and in 1990 further reduced the lands available for timber harvesting by creating five additional wilderness areas totaling 297,000 acres and 12 Large Unit Designation 11 areas of 727,700 acres that increased the protected acreages in the Tongass to more than 6.4 million. With the passage of the Sealaska lands bill in 2014, total protected acreage in the Tongass has risen to 6.55 million acres.

Lands classified for potential timber production have been drastically reduced since the 1980 Act’s passage. In the Tongass Land Management Plans, TLMPs, crafted after ANILCA’s passage, 13.3 million acres of the forest, nearly 80 percent, have been restricted from resource development. Of the 9.5 million acres of commercial timber lands in the Tongass only 3.4 million were open for harvesting in 2001, after IRA’s, 96 percent of the Tongass timber base would allow a timber industry to again help the region’s economy. But that would not harm the environment and wildlife. Already of the 577,451 acres of productive old-growth, 81 percent. The roadless rule may make sense in the contiguous states since there are at least some roads and utility lines that cross those States’ national forests. In Southeast Alaska, however, there is no transportation network except a marine ferry and no permitted electrical transmission system. It simply made no sense in 2001 for the Inventoried Roadless Rules to apply to Alaska. The rule is not needed since by existing plans and regulations, even without IRA’s, 96 percent of the Tongass will remain protected. An exemption from the rule will simply allow Alaskans an opportunity to make thoughtful decisions on development in a region 18 times larger than the state of Delaware, but with 1,380 miles of road in the entire region, 1/10 of the road miles of tiny Delaware.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. McCaIN, Mr. Lee, Mr. Crapo, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 638. A bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to exceptional event demonstrations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I thought I would rise to discuss legislation designed to address the bureaucratic overreach in the Environmental Protection Agency’s air regulations.

Since I last introduced these bills in June of 2014, EPA’s failures in this area have become even more glaring. At present, air regulations are stifling to both businesses and private citizens, and they are negatively impacting our economy.

Let me say from the outset, we all want clean air. We are always in favor of protecting the environment and the air we breathe. I think we are not in favor of an EPA that places real regulations over common sense.

Today I am introducing S. 638, the CLEER Act, the OR-Deal Act, and the Agency PAYGO for greenhouse gases.

The CLEER Act eases the regulatory burden on States, including desert States such as Arizona that are home to so-called exceptional events such as dust storms.

Dust storms in Arizona are not caused by man. They are naturally occurring events, just like tornadoes or blizzards in other parts of the country. When these dust storms occur in Arizona, they can cause a spike in the PM-10 level. This is nothing the State can control. Yet this blip can cause Arizona and other affected States to fail out of compliance with Federal air quality standards. Again, this is through no fault of their own. It can lead to a loss of transportation dollars, even from the Federal Government.

Thanks to EPA rules, States end up wasting vast amounts of manpower, countless work hours, and lots of taxpayer dollars on reviews and appeals for events they cannot control or avoid.

For example, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, the Maricopa Air Quality Department, and the Maricopa Association of Government in 2011 and 2012 spent $675,000 and 790 staff hours just to prove a spike in PM-10 levels was caused by a dust storm, not pollution.

These EPA reviews are arbitrary, cumbersome, and costly. They lack an appeals process that further defies common sense. The EPA has continually assured me it would issue a rule to help ease the burdens on States, all the States that have to weather forces the EPA cannot control. Yet this blip is no different. Despite these promises, the EPA has continued to backtrack and shift deadlines, and to date has not issued a workable proposed rule.

My legislation on the CLEER Act would require the EPA to move forward with a rulemaking, and it would require decisions on such events be based on a preponderance of evidence, and will afford deference to States’ own findings of when such events happen.

It would also require the EPA to review the States’ exceptional-event documentation within a reasonable time period of 90 days instead of dragging...
out the process. Part of the cost is due to the fact that the EPA drags out the process. These practical fixes will alleviate the undue hardship States are having to deal with and when we have to deal with the effects of these natural events.

Secondly, the ORDEAL Act is an attempt to overhaul the EPA’s unnecessary ozone standard reduction until 2018. When the EPA reduced permitted ozone standards in 2008, counties across the country that were in nonattainment were forced to implement costly and complicated compliance plans.

Relying on a dubious scientific basis, the EPA has proposed lowering the ozone emissions standards even further to 65 parts per billion, while accepting comments on lowering it to 60 parts per billion. By some estimates, this proposal to lower the ozone level may be the most expensive regulation in EPA history—and that is saying something—costing as much as $1.7 trillion. Lowering the standards from 75 parts per billion to 65 parts per billion will cost a whopping $140 billion annually. Yet EPA’s own science advisers disagree on the very basis upon which this regulation is built.

The ORDEAL Act will stop shaky assumptions and assumptions from being used as a basis for long-term public policy, and will give States the flexibility and the time to implement their own innovative and proactive measures.

The ORDEAL Act will extend our quality standards reviews, including ozone, to a 10-year timeline instead of the current 5 years.

Third, Agency PAYGO. This administration has set its sights on reducing carbon emissions, most recently putting draconian regulations on existing powerplants, despite the inevitable job losses and spikes in energy costs. It has placed a mandate on Arizona to reduce 52 percent of its carbon emissions by 2030. Arizona, like all Western states, is forced to greatly reduce their standard of living.

The Agency PAYGO Act I am introducing would simply give the EPA a taste of its own medicine by requiring the Agency to offset the Federal cost of any greenhouse gas rules to an equivalent reduction in Agency spending. If the EPA proceeds without offsetting these costs from its own budget, the final greenhouse gas rule must be approved, simply approved, if you cannot do this as an offset within your own budget, bring it to Congress and let’s approve it. This bill specifically forbids the EPA from denying costs to Federal agencies by passing on costs to the Federal agency’s rate-payers. If capital costs are imposed by a greenhouse gas rule, the EPA must offset those costs or get Congress’s approval.

The EPA has a history of implementing costly and stringent standards for negligible and even questionable benefit. All three of these bills—the CLEER Act, ORDEAL Act, and Agency PAYGO Act—provide more certainty than presently exists to States and counties and businesses that have to deal with the EPA and will hold the Agency accountable for its decision-making process.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting these measures.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 94—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

Mr. KAINÉ (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DUBBIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. SCHUMER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 94

Whereas a competitive, globally economic requires workers trained in skilled professions;

Whereas according to a report by the National Association of Manufacturers, 80 percent of responses include a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers, such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education is a tried and true solution to ensure that competitive skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers, such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education is a tried and true solution to ensure that competitive skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers, such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas career and technical education helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas 14,000,000 students are enrolled in career and technical education, which exists in every State, providing nearly 1,300 public high schools and 1,700 2-year colleges;

Whereas 10 of the 20 fastest growing occupations in the United States require an associate’s degree or a lesser credential, 13 of the 20 occupations in the United States with the greatest number of projected new jobs require on-the-job training and an associate’s degree or certificate, and nearly all occupations in the United States require real-world skills that can be mastered through career and technical education;

Whereas career and technical education matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary, post-secondary, and adult learners;

Whereas career and technical education affords students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas secondary school students participating in career and technical education are significantly more likely than students not participating in career and technical education to develop advanced skills during high school in problem solving, project completion, research, mathematics, applying to colleges, work-related contexts, communication, time management, and critical thinking;

Whereas students at schools with higher integrated rigorous academic and career and technical education programs have significantly higher achievement in reading, mathematics, and science than students at schools with less integrated programs; and

Whereas the Association for Career and Technical Education has designated February as “Career and Technical Education Month” to celebrate career and technical education across the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month; and

(2) recognizes the role and importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(3) encourages educators, counselors, and administrators to promote career and technical education as an option for students.

SENATE RESOLUTION 95—DESIGNATING MARCH 3, 2015, AS "WORLD WILDLIFE DAY"

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. INHOFFE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 95

Whereas wildlife has provided numerous economic, environmental, social, and cultural benefits during the course of human history, and wildlife protection will secure these gifts for future generations;

Whereas each plant and animal species plays an important role in the stability of diverse ecosystems and the conservation of this biodiversity is critical to maintain the delicate balance of nature and keep complex ecosystems thriving;

Whereas observation of wild plants and animals in their natural habitat provides individuals with a more enriching world view and a greater appreciation of the wonders of the natural environment;

Whereas tens of millions of individuals in the United States strongly support the conservation of wildlife nationally and abroad, and wish to ensure the survival of species in the wild, such as rhinoceroses, tigers, elephants, pangolins, turtles, seahorses, sharks, ginseng, mahogany, and a greater appreciation of the wonders of the natural environment;

Whereas according to a report by the National Association of Manufacturers, 80 percent of responses include a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including front-line workers, such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas career and technical education helps the United States meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement, and global competitiveness;

Whereas 14,000,000 students are enrolled in career and technical education, which exists in every State, providing nearly 1,300 public high schools and 1,700 2-year colleges;

Whereas 10 of the 20 fastest growing occupations in the United States require an associate’s degree or a lesser credential, 13 of the 20 occupations in the United States with the greatest number of projected new jobs require on-the-job training and an associate’s degree or certificate, and nearly all occupations in the United States require real-world skills that can be mastered through career and technical education;

Whereas career and technical education matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary, post-secondary, and adult learners;

Whereas career and technical education affords students the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to secure careers in growing, high-demand fields;

Whereas secondary school students participating in career and technical education are significantly more likely than students not participating in career and technical education to develop advanced skills during high school in problem solving, project completion, research, mathematics, applying to colleges, work-related contexts, communication, time management, and critical thinking;

Whereas students at schools with higher integrated rigorous academic and career and technical education programs have significantly higher achievement in reading, mathematics, and science than students at schools with less integrated programs; and

Whereas the Association for Career and Technical Education has designated February as “Career and Technical Education Month” to celebrate career and technical education across the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month; and

(2) recognizes the role and importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(3) encourages educators, counselors, and administrators to promote career and technical education as an option for students.
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 7—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE WORLD WAR II MEMBERS OF THE DOOLITTLE TOKYO RAIDERS

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. NELSON, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. SCHATZ) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CERTAIN CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO WORLD WAR II MEMBERS OF DOOLITTLE TOKYO RAIDERS.

(a) Authorization.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on April 15, 2015, for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders, collectively, in recognition of the military service and exemplary record of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders during World War II.

(b) Preparations.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “America’s Health IT Transformation: Translating the Promise of Electronic Health Records Into Better Care.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jamie Garden of the committee staff on (202) 224–1409.

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AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 2:15 p.m., in the President’s Room of the Capitol.

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Federal Reserve Accountability and Responsibility.”

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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 March 5, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Federal Reserve Accountability and Responsibility.”

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 9 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Examining the FY 2016 Budget Requests for the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Transportation.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 9 a.m., in room SD–224 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Examining the FY 2016 Budget Requests for the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Transportation.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 9 a.m., in room SD–224 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Examining the FY 2016 Budget Requests for the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Transportation.”

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION AND NATIONAL INTEREST

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Immigration and National Interest be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2015, at 11 a.m., in room SD–227 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Oversight of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: Ensuring Agency Priorities Comply with the Law.”
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 94) supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 94, introduced earlier today.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 94) supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations that are critical components to every student's education, creating diverse pathways into further education and careers. Today, these programs serve 94 percent of all high school students and 12 million postsecondary students. In both rural and urban communities, CTE programs tap into the skills training and meaningful credentials that can be met by improved access to CTE programs.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution 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 resolution (S. Res. 94) was agreed to. The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations to executive session:

PN100 AIR FORCE nominations (16) beginning GERARD IRVRET BAZILE, and ending FREDERICK L. YOST, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN101 AIR FORCE nomination of Stephen L. Nelson, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN102 AIR FORCE nominations (8) beginning MARY J. ABERNETHY, and ending KAREN B. STEINER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN103 AIR FORCE nominations (6) beginning MICHAEL D. AYRES, and ending MICHELLE L. WAGNER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN104 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning LAURA J. McWHIRTER, and ending GREGG E. WENTWORTH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN105 AIR FORCE nomination of Nicholas J. Zimmerman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN106 AIR FORCE nomination of Eric M. Chumbley, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN107 AIR FORCE nomination of Scott L. Wilson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN133 AIR FORCE nomination of Kirsten E. Delambo, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN134 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning Salvatore Peligra, and ending Rebecca A. Anderson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN135 AIR FORCE nomination of Dell P. Dunn, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN136 AIR FORCE nomination of Latrise P. Searrow-Norris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN137 ARMY nomination of Fred J. Burpo, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN171 AIR FORCE nomination of Jeffrey B. Harlow, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 4, 2015.

IN THE ARMY

PN108 ARMY nomination of John P. Hartke, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN138 ARMY nomination of Paul A. Bunch, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN139 ARMY nomination of Mikelle J. Adams, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN140 ARMY nomination of Robert G. Heskett, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN141 ARMY nomination of John M. Gillis, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN142 ARMY nomination of Andre M. Takacs, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.
PN143 ARMY nomination of Ines H. Berger, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

IN THE COAST GUARD
PN94 COAST GUARD nominations (260) beginning GEORGE F. ADAMS, and ending ANDREW H. ZUCKERMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 28, 2015.

IN THE MARINE CORPS
PN112 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning JERMAINE M. CADOGAN, and ending AUSTIN E. WREN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN113 MARINE CORPS nominations (7) beginning ANTHONY K. ALEJANDRE, and ending JONATHAN R. Rißger, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN114 MARINE CORPS nominations (4) beginning PAUL M. HERRLE, and ending ROBERT W. PUCKETT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN115 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning JAY B. DURHAM, and ending ANDREW K. LAW, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN117 MARINE CORPS nominations (6) beginning DANIEL H. CUSINATO, and ending WILLIAM F. PACK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN118 MARINE CORPS nomination of Ryan M. Cleveland, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN119 MARINE CORPS nominations (5) beginning BRETT K. OLSON, and ending KOLLEEN L. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN120 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jonathon L. Riggs, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN121 MARINE CORPS nominations (657) beginning BRETT D. ABBAMONTE, and ending JASON E. ZELLEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN123 MARINE CORPS nomination of David C. Walsh, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN124 MARINE CORPS nomination of Scott W. Zimmerman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

IN THE NAVY
PN109 NAVY nominations (37) beginning ALYSSA B. Y. ARMSTRONG, and ending KARI E. YAKUBISIN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN114 NAVY nomination of Rachel A. Passmore, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 26, 2015.

PN145 NAVY nominations (2) beginning JUSTIN R. MILLER, and ending JAMES R. SAULL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN146 NAVY nomination of Candia A. Ferguson, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN149 NAVY nomination of Richard R. Barber, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 29, 2015.

PN178 NAVY nomination of Benigno T. Razon, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

PN179 NAVY nomination of Donna L. Smoak, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

PN180 NAVY nomination of Shawn D. Wilkerson, Jr., which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

PN182 NAVY nomination of Fabio O. Austria, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

PN183 NAVY nomination of breadcrumbs Bergloff, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015
Mr. MCConnell. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 4, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be extended, and appear in the Congressional Record of February 5, 2015.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sergeant at Arms will now resume legislative session.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT
Mr. MCConnell. Tomorow Senators should expect two rolcall votes at approximately 11:30 a.m. on passage of the resolution of disapproval on ambiguous elections, followed by cloture on the Keystone veto message.

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

PROGRAM
Mr. MCConnell. Tomorrow Senators should expect two rolcall votes at approximately 11:30 a.m. on passage of the resolution of disapproval on ambiguous elections, followed by cloture on the Keystone veto message.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate from Pennsylvania.
Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the National Labor Relations Board and the reforms that have been proposed in the new rule. I rise first of all to provide by way of a predication or background what happened in 1935 when the National Labor Relations Act was passed. There is a lot to talk about in that act, but just like when a major piece of legislation passes, we have findings that undergird the statute itself.

I will not go through all of those today, but I think some of the language in there is especially appropriate for what we are talking about. The floor and support for the benefits of collective bargaining—the benefits of organizing and collectively bargaining, and asserted at one point very early in the statute, in the findings, the first couple of paragraphs of the findings that experience—I am paraphrasing this but I will get to specific words in a moment.

But experience has shown that collective bargaining and organizing—and these are the exact words—‘‘safeguards commerce from injury, impairment or interruption.’’ It goes on to talk about why it was better—why they believed it was better to pass a statute to resolve labor-management disputes instead of the old rules, which was constant conflict, conflict, fighting, in some cases even violence.

So we did the right thing in 1935 as a country. We have had some history since then to draw from. The National Labor Relations Board, of course, is the entity that gives meaning to what we intend when we pass laws such as the National Labor Relations Act.

Now we are having a dispute here in this body and in this body, and the jury is out about what these rules ought to be. What are the rules that govern the National Labor Relations Board, but in particular, what are the rules that govern elections?

With all of the challenges we are facing in the country right now—the middle class has nowhere near recovered from the last—the great recession. Wages have been declining over a generation, or at least not increasing at the level that costs have been increasing.

So with all of that pressure on families, you could think this could be an area of common ground, but it is not. With all of those challenges facing middle-class families, it is disappointing that Republicans in the Senate have chosen to focus on rolling back the National Labor Relations Board modest and commonsense reforms that would help workers at the table, so they can increase their wages and their economic security.

Democrats are fighting to increase wages and we are also fighting for economic security, at the same time Republicans seem to be constantly fighting to increase corporate profits while making workers pay the price. All of us, whether we are Democrats or Republicans, should be coming together to expand workers’ voices at the table and not attacking workers’ right to collectively bargain.

We are talking about something fundamental here, the opportunity to have
an election in a workplace, and the benefits that flow from that. That is really about empowering workers. I believe that is one of the reasons why we passed the National Labor Relations Act, not just to have a board that can settle disputes, but for those individual workers in that worksite, but in an economy that works for all families, not just the wealthiest few. When the workers have a seat at the bargaining table, our economy prospers and the middle class thrives. I have always believed that if we did not have unions and collective bargaining and organizing since World War II and even since the 1930s, we would have a much less robust middle class. Some people believe there would not be a middle class. I am not willing to set that right that the right to organize and collectively bargain is not just good for that worker and his or her family, but it is also good for the economy as well.

Those workers are the ones who drive the economy to grow. That is what they do, but the expenditures they make on behalf of their family. So even though workers are more productive in the United States than ever before, workers are still struggling with those stagnant wages. Today the middle class accounts for the smallest share of the Nation's income since World War II. Hard to believe that the middle class has been so devastated.

We know from our history that when workers have a voice in the workplace through collective bargaining, wages increase, workplace safety improves, and workers have increased retirement and health security. All of those benefits have helped grow America's middle class. These particular reforms make that economic prosperity that they have helped to create through their hard work.

One of the great moments I have had as a Senator from Pennsylvania is when you go to a manufacturing plant and take you on a tour. I am sure the Presiding Officer has done this a number of times. They take you on the tour not just to show how they are producing something, how they manufacture it, but also to let employers and unions file forms electronically. Sending that information electronically is what we are talking about when we talk about streamlining the election process, to prevent delays and reduce litigation. The current process in the 21st century—one that is going to drag out for a long period of time, drag out the election process and put workers' rights on hold.

These reforms will reduce unnecessary litigation that is not relevant to the outcome of the election. In the past, employers and unions had to send information about the election process to the Post Office, which would cost time and money. The new rule brings this election process into the 21st century—which is 15 years old now—by letting employers and unions file forms electronically.

I think that is the least that can happen. You would think in this era we are living in, that everything is done electronically, that at a minimum we should have information transmitted about an election—something valuable in a workplace. We hold elections with real pen and paper. I keep it simple. Those reforms will reduce the number of elections. So the least we could do is make sure those workers have the benefits of something that would transmit the information electronically. Sending that information in that fashion makes all of the sense in the world.

Then the rule also allows the use of modern forms of communications through cell phones and emails. That is not asking too much, to be able to transmit information to prepare workers for an election by the use of email or cell phones.

The reforms are commonsense steps to make sure the NLRB, the Board, is using its taxpayer dollars efficiently and effectively.

These changes, as I referred to earlier, are not just good for workers, they also help businesses by streamlining the whole process, the elections process in this case. Right now the election process is not that easy. Streamlining the process will provide certainty for both employers and workers themselves. The new rule allows businesses and unions to file forms electronically, as I mentioned, instead of using postage. This will save everyone time and money. So modernizing—this is what we are talking about here—modernizing election rules allows businesses and unions to use these basic forms of communications in a way that promotes common sense.

The rule will at its lowest level the playing field for smaller businesses. Right now the biggest corporations can exploit the system with long and costly litigation to deny workers, if they choose to do so, a fair up-or-down vote on joining a union. By making the election process more consistent and transparent, the Board's reforms level the playing field for the smaller businesses that already play fair.

One of the great moments I have had as a Senator from Pennsylvania is when you go to a manufacturing plant and take you on a tour. I am sure the Presiding Officer has done this a number of times. These particular reforms make that happen. You would think in this era we are living in, that everything is done electronically, in banking and in other industries, that at a minimum we should have information transmitted about an election—something valuable in a workplace. We hold elections with real pen and paper. I keep it simple. Those reforms will reduce the number of elections. So the least we could do is make sure those workers have the benefits of something that would transmit the information electronically. Sending that information in that fashion makes all of the sense in the world.

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The rule will at its lowest level the playing field for smaller businesses. Right now the biggest corporations can exploit the system with long and costly
time this works out just fine. For most of the cases that make it to an election, employees and employers agree about the process and an election is held without a dispute. Done.

But in the remaining handful of cases, the rules have to be resolved; these concerns are turned into a single issue. Over time, a hodgepodge of different rules for resolving these disputes has emerged in each of the country's 26 NLRB regions. To fix this, the NLRB recently finalized a set of rules that set out clear procedures for resolving these issues. In other words, the NLRB is trying to make dispute resolution clearer, more efficient, and more consistent from region to region.

Trying to make government work better should not be controversial. But it is controversial. Why? Because some employers simply oppose union votes altogether. They do not want the NLRB to work. They do not want union elections to happen at all. So they are lobbying Congress for new rules, and congressional Republicans are standing up for them, advancing a proposal to stop the NLRB from implementing its final rules and doing the job Congress gave it 80 years ago.

Republican claim they were concerned about workers being able to ambush their employers with workplace elections. That is just plain nonsense. Employers are always notified at the beginning of the election process, and according to Caren Sencer, a top labor attorney who testified a few weeks ago in the HELP Committee hearing, there is nothing—nothing—in the new rule that would stop an employer from having its relevant concerns heard and addressed prior to an election.

Let's be honest. The only ambush here is the Republican ambush on workers' basic rights. According to a 2001 study from the Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, long election delays correspond with higher rates of labor law violations. A delay gives any union employer more time to retaliate against a union organizer, and to intimidate workers and delay work.

According to NLRB data, nearly one-third of the time when employees file a petition to request an election, they never actually get one. Employers who want to keep their workers out of a union prefer a broken, inefficient system to overturning the law to level the playing field, in every fight for working families, labor has been on the frontlines.

Powerful interests have attacked many of the basic foundations of this country's labor regulations that once built a strong middle class—and too many times those powerful interests have prevailed. So it comes down to a question I have asked before: Whom does this Congress work for? Republicans say government should keep on working for powerful CEOs who don't like unions and who have figured out how to exploit a tangled system. Republicans complain about government inefficiencies, but then they introduce a bill that is so broken, inefficient system will stay broken and inefficient, even when we know how to fix it.

Well, we weren't sent here just to represent CEOs who don't like unions. We were sent here to support workers who just want a fighting chance to level the playing field. I urge my colleagues to vote against this Republican resolution and let the NLRB do its job.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT REVIEW ACT

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor to express my disappointment that the majority leader is asking to rule XIV the bipartisan Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act.

I must ask the majority leader, what happened? Where is the bipartisanship part? Where is the bipartisanship that we have expressed and that I expressed this morning on the floor and last night at AIPAC? I ask again, what happened to putting aside political posturing to make clear that happened to the majority leader's pledge in January to “decentralize power in the Senate” and “open up the legislative process”?

“We need to return to regular order,” he said. I agree with him. Let's do it. Let's return to regular order.

Frankly, this is not what was intended, and it is certainly against my better judgment, against procedure, against any understanding we might have had to take the politics out of our effort to establish congressional oversight of any nuclear agreement with Iran. I am more than disappointed; I am pretty outraged.

I said last night and again this morning that I join Chairman Corker and Senators Graham, Kaine, Donnelly, Heitkamp, King, Nelson, Ayotte, Rubio, McCain, and Risch in introducing bipartisan oversight legislation that Congress will have the chance to review the deal before it goes into effect and to oversee its compliance after it goes into effect. And now, putting any bipartisanship aside, we are back to politics as usual. The only way to make this work is to let the NLRB do its job.

The provisions of the bill itself are good ones. It would require the President to submit an agreement to Congress within 5 days of reaching it. It would give Congress 60 days to consider the agreement before sanctions relief could be provided. It would outline consequences should Congress decide to disapprove the agreement. And in terms of oversight, it would require information on potential breaches to be promptly reported to Congress, along with a comprehensive report every 180 days of any Iranian action inconsistent with the agreement. It would require a report every 90 days from the President on Iran's compliance, informing us of any actions that might advance Iran's nuclear weapons program, that has not supported or financed or carried out any acts of terrorism, and that any sanctions relief is both appropriate and proportionate to Iran's efforts under the agreement. Of course, it would have more in the bipartisan vote threshold, so that means it would have to be a bipartisan determination.

We in good faith agreed to introduce this legislation and take it through the committee process and to the floor so that Congress—which was responsible for bringing Iran to the table in the first place to negotiate—would have a role in reviewing the agreement before it goes into effect, whether to provide sanctions relief, and overseeing implementation and Iran's compliance after it goes into effect because, as I said last night, a deal cannot be built on trust alone. Now, I was talking about Iran; I did not know that I was talking about our deal to pass a bipartisan review act.

So let me conclude. I can't imagine why the majority leader would seek to short-circuit the process, unless the goals are political rather than substantive. And I regret to say these actions that aren't substantive, that it is political. On a day that has been defined by serious discourse about Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program, at a moment when legislators contemplate the most serious national security issue of our time, I am disappointed that the leader has chosen to proceed outside of regular order. By bringing the Corker-Menendez legislation directly to the floor for debate, the majority leader is singlehandedly undermining our bipartisan effort in the Senate.

Nobody in Congress has worked harder on this issue, and I certainly don't take a backseat to anyone in pursuing
Iran's nuclear weapons program and standing up for Israel, but I sincerely hope that we can restore regular order and that this bill can be fully considered by all the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in due time.

Finally, there is no emergency. This deal—if there is one—won't be concluded until the summer, so there is plenty of time to wait until March 24, find out whether we have a deal, and then act to be able to be in a posture to oppose it. And to deal with it accordingly. There is no reason to accelerate this process in this way, to go outside of regular order, bypass the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and come directly to the floor.

I know I cannot object to the rule XIV process under the rules, but I say to my colleagues, if this is the process, then I will have no choice but to use my voice and my vote against any motion to proceed. I hope that is not the case. We worked too hard to get to this moment. But if that is the way we are going to proceed, then I will certainly have to vote against proceeding at that time.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I rise to oppose S.J. Res. 8, a misguided resolution that targets workers' right to organize and hurts working families in Hawaii and around the country.

Union election rules haven't been updated since the 1970s. The National Labor Relations Board—or NLRB—is trying to bring union election rules into the 21st century, but today's Senate resolution will block the NLRB's commonsense updates.

The right to organize is a crucial part of our democracy. Unions have helped build the middle class in Hawaii and nationwide. It is disappointing that companies working to create jobs or help the middle class get ahead, today we are debating whether to make it harder to join a union.

Workers wishing to join a union already face many barriers. For example, companies have significant opportunities to make their case to employees about why they should oppose a union. Meanwhile, unions are not allowed to visit the worksite to make their case for joining a union, and they do not have the freedom to contact potential members such as emails and cell phone numbers—unbelievable as that may sound—to contact workers.

In addition, companies can delay union elections with what amounts to frivolous litigation and appeal after appeal. Nationwide, in contested cases workers already have to wait an average of 4 months to vote whether to join a union.

While most employers in Hawaii want to support their workers, there have been those rare cases of companies exploiting the current system to prevent workers from having a voice in the workplace.

Let me share a situation that happened in Hawaii where workers had not been given a raise in 6 years. They asked a local union for help in organizing their union. In the runup to the union elections, the workers were forced to attend one-on-one or group meetings on work time where their management could convince workers to vote against the union. This company hired a private security firm and posted security guards outside the voting area during the vote. Workers felt intimidated.

The company appealed election results and NLRB rulings over and over again, adding delay after delay and revote after revote. In July 2005, 40 months after a petition was first filed to hold an election, the NLRB finally certified a union for the workers. Still, the company continued to offer appeal after appeal of the election results and even fired 31 union supporters in 2007.

Finally, at the end of 2012, after 7 years, the certified union reached its first union contract.

Remember, I noted that where most workplaces are organized, things are done in 4 months. That is not always the case. The NLRB's updated union election rules would help reduce this kind of intimidation and delay, which happens all too often, and would allow organizers to contact workers by email and cell phone. It is pretty astounding that we had to have a rule change in order to make this kind of commonsense change available to organizers—which, by the way, this resolution which I ask my colleagues to vote against disallows.

The rule will make it easier for small businesses to follow labor election laws. Currently, big corporations can use expensive lawyers to litigate and prevent union elections, while small businesses don't have those kinds of resources.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting these modest, commonsense updates to NLRB rules and voting no on the resolution. Let's stand with our working men and women in this country and support the middle class.

I want to end with a quote from one of our labor organizers and leaders in Hawaii, Hawaii Laborers' business manager Peter Ganaban. In a recent piece in Pacific Business News, Mr. Ganaban explained that "Hawaii's union climate is an extension of our local culture of helping each other and caring for our communities."

Allowing workers a fair choice and a fair chance to join a union is the least we can do for our workers in the middle class.

I yield my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The resolution (S. Res. 95) was agreed to.

The resolution (with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")
It cuts down on lengthy litigation that could cause union formation to drag on for a year or more. It modernizes the election process. And, very importantly, it allows for the electronic filing and transmission of petitions for union representation. Believe it or not, previously all of it had been done by fax or mail—not exactly the latest or least expensive technology—and it ensures that unions and employers have enough information about each other so they can communicate in advance of the election.

It streamlines the NLRB’s procedures, and with all due respect to the NLRB, what is needed there is practices that are uniform throughout the regional offices so that organizers can better interact with the agency. Its effect is not only on unions and businesses but also on the NLRB in speeding and streamlining and improving the way it does its work.

Its effects are seen in other areas too. The opponents of this measure forget to mention that these new rules apply equally to both elections seeking to certify a union and elections to decertify one. Believe it or not, more efficient procedures will help not only workers who want to choose a union, it will help workers who want to get rid of an existing union. It is a level playing field, fairness, efficiency, less cost, and less time.

The rule still gives employers the opportunity to inform workers about the drawbacks of having a union so that workers have a fair opportunity to decide if they want union representation. This is a fair way of fair and balanced and more efficient kinds of rules.

The people in this body know that the simple fact is—and folks across America know it—the majority of American workers want representation. Fifty-three percent of workers want a union in their workplace, but because of the broken election process, fewer than 7 percent of workers are represented. That is a stark fact. As Ronald Reagan said, “Facts are stubborn things.” Thirty-five percent of the time that workers file a petition for a union election, they never even get to an election.

The current election process is full of delays and costs, and unfortunately in many cases litigation gives way to outright discrimination.

According to a 2011 University of California-Berkeley study, the longer the delay from the filing of a petition and the election date, the more likely it is that the NLRB will issue complaints charging employers with illegal activity. In other words, basically the election process is drawn out and leads to growing dissatisfaction and contempt and thereby damages everyone.

This rule is a necessity and will have a real impact on real people. In Connecticut, I have spoken to people who have spoken to others about the stories of individuals who have been deprived or inhibited in exercising their right to vote in the election process. This process is broken.

The new NLRB will prevent frivolous litigation from delaying an election. I have spoken to workers who wanted the election to be held on a date that was beyond the allowed waiting period. They told me that they were told if they didn’t file the election, the employer would “make sure the process would be lengthy and difficult.”

The new rule will itself push back on intimidation. In the face of these kinds of threats, some have persevered, but only through tremendous resolve. They triumphed in a seriously flawed and failed NLRB election process.

In short, these rules are important step in the right direction. They provide for fair choice that is fair and will protect both sides. They will reduce costs and time and litigation.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this measure as ill-conceived and ill-considered, and I hope we will preserve the NLRB’s new rule.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 3, 2015:

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 606:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. KENNETH F. KENNY

IN THE AIR FORCE

Air force nominations of mark e. heatherly, to be colonel.

Air force nominations beginning with karis k. graham and ending with marvin williams, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with jesus a. flores and ending with robert c. goldtrap, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with erica r. austin and ending with richard g. stephenson, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with german hviles and ending with frederick wagner, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with stephen l. nelson, jr., to be colonel.

Air force nominations beginning with mary j. ahrenholz and ending with charles a. anderson, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with michael d. avery and ending with donald w. mcclure, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations beginning with laura j. mowrer and ending with gregg e. wentworth, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Air force nominations of nicholas j. zimmerman, to be major.

Air force nominations of eric m. chumbley, to be lieutenant colonel.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

Marine corps nominations beginning with jermaine m. cadoano and ending with austin e. wheeless, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Marine corps nominations beginning with anthony k. alejandrin and ending with jonathan r. bervin, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Marine corps nominations beginning with paul m. hebler and ending with richard w. puckett, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Marine corps nominations beginning with ryan m. cleveland, to be major.

Marine corps nominations beginning with nicholas k. eddins and ending with kelly k. young, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Marine corps nominations of david c. walsh, to be lieutenant colonel.

Marine corps nominations of scott w. zimmerman, to be lieutenant colonel.

IN THE NAVY

Navy nominations beginning with alvissa r. y. armstrong and ending with karee k. yakubkin, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Navy nominations of rachel a. pasmore, to be lieutenant commander.

Navy nominations beginning with justin b. mclaurin and ending with jonathan j. boehm, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Navy nominations of candice a. ferguson, to be lieutenant commander.

Navy nominations of richard r. barber, to be commander.

Navy nominations of kenny a. collins and ending with jason m. leidig, which nominations were received by the senate and appeared in the congressional record, on January 26, 2015.

Navy nominations of donna l. smow, to be lieutenant commander.

Navy nominations beginning with fabio o. austria, to be lieutenant commander.

Navy nominations of shawn d. wilkerson, jr., to be commander.

Navy nominations of rudolf r. bieblov, to be captain.
Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Paul Volcy, a former Buffalo City Court Judge and decorated Vietnam veteran. Throughout his lifetime, Mr. Volcy sought out adventure and faced the challenges of his era, finding hope and overcoming them with life's thrills with an enterprising spirit and “can-do” attitude. Mr. Volcy was born and raised in the South Bronx, before moving back to his mother's homeland of Puerto Rico. After completing a semester at the University of Puerto Rico, Mr. Volcy soon realized his current pursuits were boring and unfulfilling. This realization led him to join the U.S. Army in 1966. He began his tour in Vietnam as a first lieutenant, but was soon promoted to captain. His bilingual ability and training in the Vietnamese language helped him function as a troubleshooter for his colonel in Saigon. When supplies diminished, he had a unique ability to fill up shortages. At the end of his tour, which also included field duty, he was awarded a Bronze Star.

After his military discharge, Mr. Volcy completed his Bachelor's Degree at the University of Puerto Rico and then returned to the United States to earn his law degree from the University at Buffalo. Post-graduation, he briefly worked in private practice before recognizing his call to public service. Mr. Volcy became an attorney in the office of Buffalo's corporation counsel, working there for five years on civil rights cases, and then an additional two years in the New York State Attorney General's Office. In 2001, then-Mayor Anthony Masiello appointed Mr. Volcy as a City Court Judge. After completing his term, Mr. Volcy returned to the Attorney General's Office in Buffalo, where he spent 10 years in the Court of Claims, specializing in defending against medical malpractice and in personal injury cases. He retired as an Assistant Attorney General in 2011.

Complementing his passion for service was his knack for organizing and community activism. Mr. Volcy was a leader in the Buffalo Hispanic community and helped to found the Western New York Hispanic and Friend's Civic Association, an organization committed to social justice and empowerment of Buffalo's growing Hispanic community. Mr. Volcy was admired for his dedication to and tireless efforts toward empowering the Hispanic community.

He enjoyed a wonderful life with his wife Susan and his daughter Suzanne.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to celebrate the life of Mr. Paul Volcy. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Volcy and his contributions to the Buffalo community.
and manage the WC Parish Co., DBA Lee Associates until her second retirement in 1998 when she moved to Sun City, Arizona until 2010. In addition to her prolific career, Mrs. Mildred Massey broke barriers and was a dedicated civil rights advocate. Among her efforts, she worked with Mary McLeod Bethune to come to Southern University in Baton Rouge to change her University's discriminatory policy surrounding sorority pledging. Mrs. Massey was also an active member of the Easter Star Lodge, Phyllis Wheatley Club, the NAACP, and Mt. Olive Avenue Methodist Church, among her many trips. She was intrigued with the beauty of butterflies and had a wonderful collection of butterfly ornaments and personal items, which brought her a lot of joy.

As Mildred's daughters Barbara Lee, Mildred Whitfield, and Beverly Hardy mourn her death, they celebrate her life well-lived. They remember their mother as a kind and gentle soul, yet a strong woman who taught them to be confident, to be kind and to live life to its fullest.

At 90 years of age, Mildred stayed connected with her family and friends through texting and the use of technology. She played bridge, was very independent, and determined to "do it her way" even while struggling with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

Today, The California Democratic Congressional Delegation salutes and honors an outstanding civil servant and individual, Mrs. Mildred Parish Massey. Her dedication and efforts have impacted so many lives. We join all of Mrs. Massey’s loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.

CONGRATULATING ZACH BENNER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Zach Benner, of the Fulton High School Hornets Wrestling team, on his win in the 195 Class 2 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing Zach Benner for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL DRESS IN BLUE DAY

HON. ALAN GRAYSON
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize March 6, 2015 as National Dress in Blue Day, which was created to bring greater awareness to colon cancer during National Colon Cancer Awareness Month. During Dress in Blue Day and the month of March, patients, survivors, caregivers and advocates unite to spread colon cancer awareness by wearing blue, holding educational events, and spreading the word about screening.

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. Sadly, 1 in 20 people will develop colon cancer and every 10 minutes a life is lost to the disease. This year alone, 137,000 new cases of colon and rectal cancer will be diagnosed in America and over 50,000 deaths are expected to result from the disease.

A simple screening test is recommended to individuals over age 50 and those with a family history to help combat the disease. Education and increased awareness can help inform the public about methods of prevention and the early detection of colon cancer. Through recommended screenings, this cancer can be caught early when treatment is most effective.

National Dress in Blue Day will help bring greater awareness to the disease and the importance of regular screenings. I ask my colleagues to please join me in recognizing March 6, 2015 as National Dress in Blue Day.
CONGRATULATING KYRAN HAGAN

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in con- gratulating Kyran Hagan, of the Eureka High School Wildcat Wrestling team, on his win in the 120 Class 4 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be com- mended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community. I ask you in joining me in recognizing Kyran Hagan for a job well done.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

HON. GWEN MOORE
OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues and the other 6,800 Peace Corps vol- unteers around the globe in commemorating National Peace Corps Week which coincides with the 54th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. Since its beginning in the Kennedy Administra- tion, nearly 220,000 Americans have served in 140 developing nations around the world. These volunteers serve as teachers, health care service providers and educators helping to bring needed care to communities that lack access. Their vision and commitment to betttering the world around them has helped make enduring contributions in agriculture, education, health and HIV/AIDS, youth, and technology in developing countries. Addition- ally, returned Peace Corps volunteers are the type of leaders we need in all sectors of our society to help face the many challenges in our own country.

And as a strong reminder that growing num- bers of young Americans want to go and make a difference in this world, in 2014, the Peace Corps received a 22-year high of 17,336 applications. But it is not only young Americans making a difference in the Peace Corps. A growing number of volunteers are over age 50.

A total of 5,800 volunteers from my home state of Wisconsin have served in the Peace Corps since its founding, including my distin- guished former colleague from Wisconsin, Congressman Tom Petri. On a per capita basis, Wisconsin ranked 9th in the nation in sending Peace Corps Volunteers in 2013 with the University of Wisconsin-Madison among the tops in the nation among large colleges and universities in sending Peace Corps vol- unteers overseas.

Over 200 Wisconsinites are currently serv- ing. I want to personally thank the seven vol- unteers from my district who are currently serving in the Peace Corps. Caitlin Connolly, volunteers from my district who are currently serving. I want to personally thank the seven vol-

As a representative for the great state of Wisconsin, I strongly support the goals of the Peace Corps and the passion and commit- ment of its volunteers on behalf of the United States. I am pleased that the President's FY2016 request includes $30 million increase in funding to help increase the number of vol- unteers serving.

As our world continues to struggle with nat- ural disasters, diseases such as Ebola, conflict and instability, fledging transitions to democ- racy, and poverty and hunger, the Peace Corps will be a vital part of the U.S. diplomatic and development response and around the world.

I congratulate the Peace Corps and their volunteers on this momentous occasion. It is an excellent example of the type of program we need to invest in as part of our efforts to promote development, peace, and stability around the globe.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID P. ROE
OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote yesterday because of a serious illness in my family. Had I been present, I would have voted:

Roll Call #107—YEA.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF FATHER THEODORE HESBURGH

HON. NANCY PELOSI
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to praise a great man, Father Theodore Hesburgh, on whom Congress proudly bestowed the Con- gressional Gold Medal in 2000. On Thursday, February 26, America lost a dedicated mem- ber of the clergy, an exceptional educator, a caring humanitariain, a civil rights champion, and one of the most outstanding leaders of our era: Reverend Theodore Martin Hesburgh, former president of the University of Notre Dame, who passed away last week at the age of 97. Father Hesburgh leaves behind a tow- ering legacy that inspires all of us to keep fighting for a world that honors the spark of di- vinity in each one of us.

Father Hesburgh was called to serve the fu- ture of our country as a brilliant educator and administrator. He ministered to the Notre Dame community as a professor, chairman of the Department of Religion, and executive vice president, and in 1952, at the age of 35, Fa- ther Hesburgh became the 15th President of the University of Notre Dame. Under his historic 35 years of leadership, Notre Dame opened its doors to women, increased work- force diversity, doubled, ex- panded its endowment, and cemented its place as one of the greatest universities in the world.

Yet President Hesburgh’s imprint extended further than a single campus. He dem- onstrated how to transform Catholic univer- sities into exemplary institutions of higher edu- cation in modern times. He championed aca- demic freedom and the pursuit of academic excellence. In recognition of his extraordinary leadership, he was entrusted with 16 presi- dential appointments, including service on the Presidential Clemency Board, the National Science Board, and as ambassador to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development. He served as the Holy See’s permanent representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency under three popes. In 1999, he received his 150th honorary degree, more than any other person in history.

In every position, after every honor, Father Hesburgh never lost sight of his purpose. As he once told a group of graduates, “We will not be judged by our degrees, but by our lives.” By any standard, President Hesburgh was exceptional.

Father Hesburgh’s career illustrates the quote attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, “Preach the Gospel and sometimes use words.” As a patriot of our country, as a lead- er of his church, as a teacher and mentor, he lived the Gospel each and every day of his storied life.

On the streets, in classrooms, and in board- rooms, Father Ted—as he was known by his friends and his students—was courageous enough to speak out against injustice, com- passionate enough to bring healing to the downtrodden, and creative enough to propose ideas that improved the lives of all people. Today and forever more, the legacy of Father Ted is one in the lives he touched, the in- stitutions he influenced, the Church he loved, and the nation he was proud to call home. We are grateful for his courage, in awe of his
leadership, and humbled by his generosity of spirit. May it be a comfort to all who loved Rev. Hesburgh that so many share in their grief during this sad time.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. SHEILA GREGORY

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform my colleagues of the passing of a dear friend and a friend of this body, Mrs. Sheila Gregory, a Florida native and former employee of the House of Representatives.

Sheila was a woman of many talents, having worked as a journalist, an educator, a financial planner, and a realtor. It was, however, in her many years of service to several members of Congress that Sheila found her greatest passion. She loved the history of the House, the legislative process, the politics of this great institution and took great pride in her opportunity to humbly serve the public. It was here in the House that she met many members of Congress, a number of whom still serve here today. And it was here that she met her former husband Douglas Gregory.

Sheila leaves behind three adult daughters, Angela Oler, Nancy Gregory, and Jennifer Gregory, all of whom were in her loving company at the time of her passing last Wednesday, February 25, 2015 in Fair Oaks, Virginia. In addition to Doug and her daughters, Sheila leaves behind five grandchildren, Alexis, Jordan Douglas, Sasha, Jack, and Mya, as well as two sisters.

Sheila Isbel was born on May 30, 1947 and raised in Clewiston, Florida. She moved to Northern Virginia in 1979 to begin her Congressional service. She was a devoted mother and grandmother who will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, Sheila Gregory was one of the many people that have come here to serve our colleagues in Congress and in turn help us serve the American people. Even though she left this House to pursue many other varied careers, she never lost her love for Congress and the legislative process. Please join me in sharing our deepest condolences to the Gregory and Isbel families on their tremendous loss.

CONGRATULATING JOSH McCLURE

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Josh McClure, of the Fulton High School Hornets Wrestling team, on his win in the 138 Class 2 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community. I ask you in joining me in recognizing Josh McClure for a job well done.

A TRIBUTE TO ALLISON GREGG IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

HON. DAVID YOUNG
OF IOWA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Allison Gregg, a second grade teacher at Sidney Elementary School. Ms. Gregg received the STEM Education Award for Inspired Teaching.

This award, sponsored by Kemin Industries, a Des Moines-based nutritional ingredient manufacturer, celebrates teachers whose leadership and dedication to Iowa’s STEM initiative increases student interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Ms. Gregg said she found courses on NASA online where they could hold Iowa Communications Network classes with a NASA educator that opened the children’s eyes. She is also always looking for ways to not only incorporate technology into her teaching, but also to make learning fun.

I applaud and congratulate Allison for her award and for providing the youth in Iowa’s 3rd district the education that they will need to be successful in the future. I am proud to represent her, her fellow teachers and students in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in congratulating Allison Gregg and wishing her well and continued success in the future.

CONGRATULATING TRENTON Clines

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th anniversary of the Texas County Food Pantry, of the Fulton High School Hornets Wrestling team, on his win in the 145 Class 2 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community. I ask you in joining me in recognizing Trenton Clines for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes 100–106 due to a family emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted no on #101, no on #102, no on #103, no on #104, yes on #105, and yes on #106.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TEXAS COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

HON. JASON SMITH
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th anniversary of the Texas County Food Pantry in Houston, Missouri. For twenty-five years the wonderful staff of this pantry has embodied the spirit of generosity by providing food, shelter, healthcare, and clothing for our neighbors. The Texas County Food Pantry has partnered with several organizations over the years to establish new connections for programs in nutrition, job research services, medical prescriptions, emergency assistance and homeless prevention.

The Texas County Food Pantry was formed after the Ministerial Alliances of Cabool, Houston, and Licking consolidated their many church pantries in order to help ease poverty in Texas County. In March of 1990, this non-profit corporation was formed and began its role assisting those suffering in poverty. Texas County Food Pantry staff and volunteers have continuously been committed to providing exceptional care for the people of Texas County.

For the many years of service and commitment to helping others, it is my pleasure to recognize the Texas County Food Pantry before the United States House of Representatives.
Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the recent passing of two Veterans of the Second World War; one a Pearl Harbor Survivor of the U.S. Navy and the other a Reservist in the Coast Guard, a branch of the service which has just celebrated its 74th Anniversary.

Gennoro “Hank” Mascolo passed away at the age of 92 this January, after battling lung cancer for several months. Hank, the youngest of seven children born to Italian immigrants, began serving our country by enlisting in the U.S. Coast Guard in 1942. After his service, he opened his own barbershop in 1955 in the City of Orange, where he remained the Town’s barber for 60 years. An active Elk and Vice President of the famous Orange International Street Fair for over 20 years, he was a devoted family man. Along with his skill as a pair of shears, Mr. Hank Mascolo be a role model to all those around him. They showed steadfast and unwavering commitment to their families and their communities. They don’t come better than “Hank” Mascolo and Jack Hammett.

Jack Hammett, a Pearl Harbor survivor, passed on in December last year at 94 years-old. After serving in the Navy for 22 years, Jack served decades on the Costa Mesa City Council, The Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce, the City planning commission, the Costa Mesa Police Reserves, and eventually Mayor of Costa Mesa. Jack lived his whole life in service to his country and community. As a member of the Freedom Committee, Jack was committed to educating youth on the stories of our veterans, giving innumerable presentations on his experiences in the war. His legacy will be felt for many years to come.

Both of these men, Hank Mascolo and Jack Hammett, served as role models to all those around them. They showed steadfast and unwavering commitment to their families and their communities. They don’t come better than “Hank” Mascolo and Jack Hammett.

CONGRATULATING SIDNEY OLIVER
HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Sidney Oliver, of the Holt High School Indians Wrestling team, on his win in the 113 Class 4 2015 State Wrestling Championship match. This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community. I ask you in joining me in recognizing Sidney Oliver for a job well done.

SUPPORT H. RES. 56, AFFIRMING THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR MACEDONIA’S ACCESSION TO NATO
HON. CANDICE S. MILLER
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Macedonia and Macedonian-Americans, and as someone who represents a district home to the largest community of Macedonian-Americans in our nation, to introduce H. Res. 56, affirming strong U.S. support for Macedonia joining NATO, and recognize the strategic U.S.-Macedonian partnership with our friends and ally Macedonia.

The U.S.-Macedonia relationship is one of critical importance in today’s increasingly volatile world. Macedonia is strategically located in Southeast Europe, providing a unique gateway for trade between the European Union and the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe in order to maintain regional stability as various national security challenges arise. Our friendship with Macedonia has never been more critical.

The U.S. has a vested interest in the stability and security of Macedonia and Southeast Europe. In the 1990s, we sent troops to the northern border of Macedonia to ensure stability in the aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia. Due in part to this American commitment, Macedonia was the only nation to peacefully declare independence without any bloodshed. Since then, the U.S. has assisted Macedonia on its path to partnership in Europe and across the Atlantic aisle, with a track record of military, economic, and political support ever since.

In 1999, Macedonia opened its borders to 400,000 refugees from Kosovo and hosted the NATO Logistical Support Center for Kosovo Forces. In 2001, Macedonia was one of the first countries to offer support to the United States after the horrific attacks of September 11, abiding by the words of the late Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski that “an attack on the United States is an attack on Macedonia.”

Since 2002, Macedonia has contributed greatly to the U.S. and ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Macedonia has patrolled ISAF headquarters in Kabul, was the fourth and fifth largest ISAF troop contributor per capita, contributed troops to the NATO-led ISAF mission, and engaged in combat operations side-by-side with American troops. Currently, Macedonia has been recognized as an operational partner in the new “Resolute Support” Mission in Afghanistan to train, advise, and assist our Afghan partners.

For their participation in U.S. and NATO-led missions, Macedonian soldiers have received 120 medals and military honors from the United States. Furthermore, Macedonia has been an active participant in the first state partner—with the Vermont National Guard for the past 20 years, and, since 1995, more than 3,000 Macedonians and Montenegrans have shared their expertise in more than 800 events as the partnership has developed, including a joint military embedment in Afghanistan in 2011.

I have long noted that Macedonia can protect the tent of NATO in places like Afghanistan, but it cannot sleep in the tent so long as it is not a member of the Treaty Organization. This is not right.

With what is happening in the world today, now is not the time to back down on supporting our allies. H. Res. 56 calls on the Administration, Department of State, and European allies to work with Greece and NATO allies to ensure that bilateral disputes do not impede Macedonia’s NATO accession for the sake of regional stability in light of the current situation with Ukraine and elsewhere.

Time and again, Macedonia has shown steadfast support for the efforts of the United States to restore and maintain global stability. Macedonia is one of America’s best friends in Southeast Europe.

But, Macedonia needs our support. It is long overdue that we use our diplomatic strength to reinforce our allies, and including Macedonia in the greatest military alliance in history is an important step in securing U.S. interests and maintaining this crucial partnership well into the future.

I encourage my colleagues in this House to support H. Res. 56 and affirm strong U.S. support for Macedonia joining NATO.

HONORING THE CAREER OF MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS R. MOORE
HON. EARL L. “BUDDY” CARTER
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and accomplishments of Major General Thomas R. Moore, Assistant Adjutant General of the Georgia Air National Guard. On March 7th, 2015, General Moore will celebrate his retirement after 33 years of distinguished service.

In 1981, General Moore commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of South Carolina. Throughout his career, he has commanded at the squadron, group and wing levels. General Moore also served twice as the Commander for the 416th Air Expeditionary Group in Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan. A master navigator, General Moore has earned more than 3,500 flying hours. In his current role, General Moore serves as the Assistant Adjutant General of the Georgia Air National Guard at Clay National Guard Center where he acts as a direct supervisor over the entire Georgia State Air Guard staff. His duties also include the command of 2,900 Georgia Air Guard members serving in two flying wings, seven geographically separated units and the nation’s first Air Dominance Center.

General Moore’s dedication and many contributions to our country, have been recognized with the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), the Meritorious Service Medal (with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters), the Air Force Commendation Medal (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster), and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with “V” device, 1 Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters). He received these medals do not stand alone. General Moore is an honored recipient of many awards and decorations. General Moore has earned a great deal of respect from his colleagues, and...
will always be noted for his outstanding character, commitment and allegiance.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor the many accomplishments of Major General Thomas R. Moore during his career and for his service to our country. I am pleased to join his wife, Paula, his two sons, Capt. Tyler Moore and Rhett Moore, family and friends in congratulating him in his retirement. I wish General Moore continued happiness in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING CHANCE COOPER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Chance Cooper, of the Timberland High School Wolves Wrestling team, on his win in the 126 Class 4 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing Chance Cooper for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 27, 2015, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

On roll call no. 106, YEA.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL TONKO
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 107, I was absent while attending a funeral in New York. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

CONGRATULATING COLBY SMITH

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Colby Smith, of the Holt High School Indians Wrestling team, on his win in the 126 Class 4 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing Colby Smith for a job well done.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 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 $18,155,859,840,783.67. We’ve added $7,528,976,791,870.59 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.

A TRIBUTE TO WAYNE AND GEORGIE GOODVIN IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

HON. DAVID YOUNG
OF IOWA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

My YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Wayne and Georgie Goodvin on the very special occasion of their 75th wedding anniversary. Their milestone took place Saturday, February 28, 2015. Wayne and Georgie wed on a rainy day in 1940 and have resided on a farm outside of Carbon since 1951 where they raised their two children, Max and Carolyn. They now have four grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. And every year on their anniversary, they tell their family about the day they got married. The Goodvins continue to be a visible and important part of their community, and it is an honor to represent them in the United States Congress.

Georgie and Wayne’s lifelong commitment to each other and their family truly embodies Iowa’s values. I salute this lovely couple on their 75th year of life together and I wish them many more. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

CONGRATULATING CONNOR FLYNN

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Connor Flynn, of the Francis Howell High School Vikings Wrestling team, on his win in the 160 Class 4 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home state championship to their school and community. I ask you in joining me in recognizing Connor Flynn for a job well done.

MOTION TO RECEDE AND CONCUR IN SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 240

HON. BRIAN BABIN
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleagues in urging that we reject this motion to concur in the Senate amendments. The Senate removed the House-passed provisions that would prevent the President from acting unilaterally on immigration.

The President said on twenty-two occasions that he lacked the authority to act unilaterally on amnesty, but that is exactly what he did.

I vote against this motion as a vote for the rule of law. Yes, we are a nation of immigrants but we are also a nation of laws. Any changes to our immigration laws should be done legislatively. They should not be done unilaterally by the Administration, nor should they be changed by the courts.

We have millions of Americans who are still looking for work. We have others on the lower rungs of the economic ladder that want to climb higher, to earn more money, and to support their families with a higher wage.

If the Administration’s amnesty plan is allowed to go into effect, the plight of these millions of American workers and the families they support will be harmed.

The House passed a bill to fully fund the Department of Homeland Security and also ensure that this money is not used to implement amnesty. The Administration rejected that, has refused to negotiate and has promised to veto any bill that includes provisions that upheld the rule of law.

I am committed to fighting for the rule of law and restoring the balance of power between the Executive and the Legislative branches of government.

MOTION TO RECEDE AND CONCUR IN THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 240

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 240, the Clean Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, as it provides full funding of the Department of Homeland Security, including support for important federal cybersecurity initiatives, disaster relief and recovery programs, and essential law enforcement activities that are critical for ensuring the Department can help keep our Nation safe from harm.

I encourage support of this bill as it does not contain any of the “poison pill” amendments designed to constrain the President’s authority to defer deportation of undocumented immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to highlight the pointlessness of the actions of House Republicans to use the funding of the Department of Homeland Security as a bargaining chip to extract concessions from the President.

Threatening to not fund a Department, especially one as crucial to the protection of our
homeland, just to get your way does not belong in American politics.

It is childish, Mr. Speaker, and the time that House Republicans have wasted playing politics with DHS could have been better served passing legislation that actually serves the American people.

The full and unconditional funding of the Department of Homeland Security is essential not only to the 18th district, not only to the state of Texas, it is essential to all Americans.

I want to point out, specifically, what programs were placed in danger by House Republicans had they gotten their way:

1. $39.7 billion in regular discretionary appropriations for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in fiscal year 2015;
2. $12.6 billion for Customs and Border Protection (CBP); DHS would be required to accelerate the hiring of CBP officers;
3. $5.96 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) plus an additional $345 million from the agency’s fee funded accounts, bringing the total to $6.3 billion;
4. $553.6 million in funding to manage the influx of unaccompanied alien children, or “UAC,” entering the U.S.; the funding would be used to interdict migrants, care for and transport approximately 58,000 undocumented children to the custody of Health and Human Services (HHS), and facilitate the movement of undocumented families through removal proceedings after crossing the U.S. border;
5. $1.9 billion for both domestic and international investigations, including increases to combat human trafficking, child exploitation, cyber-crime, and drug smuggling, and to expand visa vetting capabilities;
6. $4.8 billion for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA);
7. $10 billion for the U.S. Coast Guard;
8. $753.2 million for cybersecurity operations in the National Programs and Protection Directorate to fund and sustain improvements to the Federal Network Security and Network Security Deployment programs;
9. $1.7 billion for the U.S. Secret Service—an increase of $80.5 million above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level—to begin preparation and training for candidate protection for the 2016 presidential election and to address critical failures in communications and training at the White House Complex;
10. $7 billion for disaster relief—fully funding FEMA’s stated requirement; and
11. $1.1 billion for Science and Technology, $32.1 million above the President’s request.

I applaud Speaker Boehner for finally coming to his senses in allowing a vote on a clean bill, one that the Senate passed two weeks ago and one that could have already been signed into law.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in sending a clean Homeland Security funding bill that will receive the presidential signature needed to become law and provide the resources needed to keep our homeland safe.

CONGRATULATING DALTON VOYLES

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER
OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, March 3, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dalton Voyles, of the Pacific High School Indians Wrestling team, on his win in the 182 Class 3 2015 State Wrestling Championship match.

This student and his coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing Dalton Voyles for a job well done.
HIGHLIGHTS
House and Senate met in a Joint Meeting to receive His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel.

Senate

Chamber Action
Routine Proceedings, pages S1223–S1261.

Measures Introduced: Twenty-five bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 623–647, S. Res. 94–95, and S. Con. Res. 7. Pages S1246–47

Measures Passed:
Career and Technical Education Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 94, supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month. Page S1256


Measures Considered:
National Labor Relations Board—Agreement: Senate began consideration of S.J. Res. 8, 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, after agreeing to the motion to proceed. Pages S1229–44, S1257–61

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:
By 53 yeas to 45 nays (Vote No. 66), Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to consideration of the joint resolution. Page S1229

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the joint resolution at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, with two hours of debate remaining, equally divided in the usual form. Page S1257

Appointments:
Congressional Budget Office Director: The Chair made the following announcement: The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, pursuant to the provisions of Section 201(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, have appointed Dr. Homer Keith Hall as Director of the Congressional Budget Office, effective April 1, 2015, for the term expiring January 3, 2019. Page S1227

Joint Meeting Escort Committee—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the President of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join with a like committee on the part of the House of Representatives to escort His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, into the House Chamber for the joint meeting at 11 a.m., on Tuesday, March 3, 2015. Page S1223

Messages from the President: Senate received the following messages from the President of the United States:
Transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in Executive Order 13660 on March 6, 2014, as modified by the order of December 19, 2014, with respect to Ukraine; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–8) Page S1245

Transmitting, pursuant to law, the continuation of the national emergency originally declared in executive order 13288 on March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–9) Page S1245

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:
1 Army nomination in the rank of general.
Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. Page S1261

Messages from the House:
Measures Referred:
Pages S1245–46
Measures Read the First Time: Page S1246
Executive Reports of Committees: Page S1246
Additional Cosponsors: Pages S1247–48
Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S1248–55
Notices of Hearings/Meetings: Page S1255
Authorities for Committees to Meet: Pages S1255–56
Privileges of the Floor: Page S1256
Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—66) Page S1229
Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:45 a.m. and adjourned at 7:25 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 4, 2015. (For Senate’s program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today’s Record on page S1261.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Jeffery S. Hall, of Kentucky, and Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, both to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of the Treasury, after receiving testimony from Jacob J. Lew, Secretary, John A. Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, and J. Russell George, Inspector General for Tax Administration, all of the Department of the Treasury.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine a review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Ashton B. Carter, Secretary, and General Martin E. Dempsey, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, both of the Department of Defense.

FEDERAL RESERVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND REFORM

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine Federal Reserve accountability and reform, including S. 530, to require the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, after receiving testimony from John B. Taylor, Hoover Institution, and Peter Conti-Brown, Stanford Law School Rock Center for Corporate Governance, both of Stanford University, Palo Alto, California; Paul H. Kupiec, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C.; and Allan H. Meltzer, Carnegie Mellon University Tepper School of Business, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BUDGET

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Commerce and the Department of Transportation, after receiving testimony from Anthony R. Foxx, Secretary of Transportation; and Penny Pritzker, Secretary of Commerce.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:


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, Booker, Cantwell, Blumenthal, Markay, Schatz, and Peters.

Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness: Senators Cruz (Chair), Rubio, Moran, Sullivan, Gardner, Daines, Peters, Markey, Booker, Schatz, and Udall.
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.

FAIRNESS IN TAXATION
Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine fairness in taxation, after receiving testimony from Lawrence Lindsey, The Lindsey Group, Fairfax, Virginia; Deroy Murdock, Atlas Network, and Steven Rattner, Willett Advisors LLC, both of New York, New York; and Heather Boushey, Washington Center for Equitable Growth, Washington, D.C.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIS
Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee received a closed briefing on an update on the campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) from Michael P. Dempsey, Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Intelligence Integration, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; and Brett McGurk, Deputy Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, Department of State.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES
Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest concluded an oversight hearing to examine United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, focusing on ensuring agency priorities comply with the law, after receiving testimony from Joseph Moore, Senior Financial Official, Donald Neufeld, Associate Director, Service Center Operations, and Daniel Renaud, Associate Director, Field Operations, all of Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action
Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 23 public bills, H.R. 1208–1230; 1 private bill, H.R. 1231; and 6 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 21–22; and H. Res. 137, 139–41, were introduced.

Pages H1565–66

Additional Cosponsors:

Pages H1567–68

Reports Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 138, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1029) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1030) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible (H. Rept. 114–37).

Page H1565

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Newhouse to act as Speaker pro tempore for today.

Page H1527

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal by a voice vote.

Pages H1527, H1552

Recess: The House recessed at 10:05 a.m. for the purpose of receiving His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel. The House reconvened at 12:32 p.m., and agreed that the proceedings had during the Joint Meeting be printed in the Record.

Pages H1527, H1531

Joint Meeting To Receive His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel: The House and Senate met in a joint session to receive His Excellency Binyamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel. He was escorted into the Chamber by a committee comprised of Representatives McCarthy, Scalise, McMorris Rodgers, Walden, Messer, Jenkins (KS), Foxx, Royce, Ros-Lehtinen, Granger, Zeldin, Dold, Hoyer, Crowley, Israel, Engel, Lowey, Nadler, Hastings (FL), Deutch, Sherman, Hahn, and Polis; and Senators McConnell, Cornyn, Thune, Bar-rasso, Wicker, Corker, Durbin, Schumer, Menendez, and Cardin.

Pages H1528–31

Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015: The House agreed to H. Res. 134, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 749, to reauthorize Federal support for passenger rail programs, by a voice vote, after the previous question was ordered.

Pages H1531–35
Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015: House agreed to the Simpson motion to take from the Speaker’s table H.R. 240, making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, recede from the disagreement of the Senate amendment and agree to concur therein, by a yeas-and-nay vote of 257 yeas to 167 nays, Roll No. 109, after the previous question was ordered. 

Rejected the Massie motion to lay the Senate amendment on the table by a recorded vote of 140 ayes to 278 noes, Roll No. 108.

Joint Economic Committee—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker’s appointment of the following Members of the House to the Joint Economic Committee: Representatives Delaney, Adams, and Beyer.

President’s Messages: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe’s democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–13).

Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2015—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–14).

Joint Economic Committee—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker’s appointment of the following Department of Agriculture officials: Ed Avalos, Under Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Programs; Kevin Shea, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Anne Alonso, Administrator, Agriculture Marketing Service; Larry Mitchell, Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; and Michael Young, Budget Officer.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing on National Institutes of Health budget. Testimony was heard from Francis S. Collins, M.D., Director, National Institute of Health; Thomas R. Insel, M.D., Director, National Institute of Mental Health; Jon R. Lorsch, Director, National Institute of General Medical Sciences; Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse; and Gary H. Gibbons, M.D., Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

APPROPRIATIONS—UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on United States Africa Command budget. Testimony was heard from General David M. Rodriguez, Commander, United States Africa Command. This hearing was closed.

APPROPRIATIONS—FOREST SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing on U.S. Forest Service budget. Testimony was heard from Tom Tidwell, Chief, U.S. Forest Service; and Antoine "Tony" Dixon, Director of Strategic Planning, Budget and Accountability, U.S. Forest Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—INSTALLATIONS, ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND BRAC

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Installations, Environment, Energy and BRAC budget. Testimony was heard from John Conger, performing the duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense, Energy, Installations and Environment; Katherine Hammack, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations, Energy and Environment; Dennis V. McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Energy, Installations and Environment; and Miranda Ballentine, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Installations, Environment and Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Department of Agriculture Marketing and Regulatory Programs budget. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Agriculture officials: Ed Avalos, Under Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Programs; Kevin Shea, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Anne Alonso, Administrator, Agriculture Marketing Service; Larry Mitchell, Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; and Michael Young, Budget Officer.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Department of Commerce budget. Testimony was heard from Penny Pritzker, Secretary, Department of Commerce.
THE PRESIDENT’S PROPOSED AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST ISIL AND U.S. POLICY, STRATEGY, AND POSTURE IN THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The President’s Proposed Authorization for Use of Military Force Against ISIL and U.S. Policy, Strategy, and Posture in the Greater Middle East”. Testimony was heard from Christine Wormuth, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; and General Lloyd Austin, USA, Commander of U.S. CENTCOM.

ALIGNMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND RISK AND DEFENSE STRATEGIC REQUIREMENTS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness held a hearing entitled “Alignment of Infrastructure Investment and Risk and Defense Strategic Requirements”. Testimony was heard from John Conger, performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Energy, Installations, and Environment; Katherine Hammack, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations, Energy, and Environment; Dennis V. McGinn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Energy, Installations, and Environment; and Miranda A. A. Ballentine, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Installations, Environment, and Energy.

21ST CENTURY ENERGY MARKETS: HOW THE CHANGING DYNAMICS OF WORLD ENERGY MARKETS IMPACT OUR ECONOMY AND ENERGY SECURITY


UNDERSTANDING THE CYBER THREAT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ECONOMY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled “Understanding the Cyber Threat and Implications for the 21st Century Economy”. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled “The Semi-Annual Report of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection”. Testimony was heard from Richard Cordray, Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 1147, the “Legal Workforce Act”; H.R. 1149, the “Protection of Children Act of 2015”; H.R. 1153, the “Asylum Reform and Border Protection Act of 2015”; and H.R. 1148, the “Michael Davis, Jr. in Honor of State and Local Law Enforcement Act”.

CHALLENGES FACING OIRA IN ENSURING TRANSPARENCY AND EFFECTIVE RULEMAKING

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, held a joint hearing entitled “Challenges Facing OIRA in Ensuring Transparency and Effective Rulemaking”. Testimony was heard from Howard Shelanski, Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2015; SECRET SCIENCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 1029, the “EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015”; and H.R. 1030, the “Secret Science Reform Act of 2015”. The committee granted, by record vote of 7–4, a structured rule for H.R. 1029. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–10 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in part A of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part A of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. The rule also grants a structured rule for H.R. 1030. The rule provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule makes in order as original text for the purpose
of amendment an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–11 and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute. The rule makes in order only those further amendments printed in part B of the Rules Committee report. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in part B of the report. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Representatives Lucas, Clark of Massachusetts, and Polis.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION: ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY AVIATION SYSTEM

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Aviation held a hearing entitled “Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization: Enabling a 21st Century Aviation System”. Testimony was heard from Michael Huerta, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of the Interior, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Navy and Marine Corps, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, 2:30 p.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine United States nuclear weapons policy, programs, and strategy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 3:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine wasteful duplication in the Federal government, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security, to hold hearings to examine surface transportation reauthorization, focusing on oversight and reform of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Environmental Protection Agency, 9:30 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation, to hold hearings to examine Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, 2 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled, “Inspector General Empowerment Act of 2015”, S. 280, to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, H.R. 460, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to train Department of Homeland Security personnel how to effectively deter, detect, disrupt, and prevent human trafficking during the course of their primary roles and responsibilities, H.R. 615, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to take administrative action to achieve and maintain interoperable communications capabilities among the components of the Department of Homeland Security, an original bill entitled, “Federal Improper Payments Coordination Act”, an original bill entitled, “Presidential Library Donations Act”, an original bill entitled, “Federal Vehicle Repair Costs Savings Act”, S. 546, to establish the Railroad Emergency Services Preparedness, Operational Needs, and Safety Evaluation (RESPONSE) Subcommittee under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s National Advisory Council to provide recommendations on emergency responder training and resources relating to hazardous materials incidents involving railroads, S. 242, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide leave to any new Federal employee who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disability, S. 86, to amend title 44 of the United States Code, to provide for the suspension of fines under certain circumstances for first-time paperwork violations by small business concerns, and S. 156, to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligible for treatment in the civil service, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: to hold hearings to examine S. 438, to provide for the repair, replacement, and maintenance of certain Indian irrigation projects, 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine whistleblower retaliation at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, focusing on improving protections and oversight, 10 a.m., SD–226.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs budget, 9:30 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Food and Drug Administration budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on Department of Defense budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, hearing on Department of Education budget, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, hearing on National Aeronautics and Space Administration budget, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration, Weapons Activities budget, 1 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Department of Treasury budget, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.


Committee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled “Air Force Projection Forces Aviation Programs and Capabilities for Fiscal Year 2016”, 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.


Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions, hearing on H.J. Res. 29, 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, 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.


Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled “Reauthorization of the Federal Communications Commission: The FCC’s FY 2016 Budget Request”, 10:30 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Ukraine Under Siege”, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.


Committee on House Administration, Full Committee, markup on H. Res. 152, Omnibus Resolution for Committee Funding in the 114th Congress; a committee resolution on limitation on allocation of Franked Mail; H.R. 195, the “Election Assistance Commission Termination Act”; and H.R. 412, to reduce Federal spending and the deficit by terminating taxpayer financing of presidential election campaigns, 10:30 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1147, the “Legal Workforce Act”; H.R. 1149, the “Protection of Children Act of 2015”; H.R. 1153, the “Asylum Reform and Border Protection Act of 2015”; and H.R. 1148, the “Michael Davis, Jr. in Honor of State and Local Law Enforcement Act”, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled “Rebuilding the Chemical Safety Board: Finding a Solution to the CSB’s Governance and Management Challenges”, 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1119, the “Research and Development Efficiency Act”; H.R. 1156, the “International Science and Technology Cooperation Act of 2015”; H.R. 1162, the “Science Prize Competitions Act”; H.R. 1158, the “Department of Energy Laboratory Modernization and Technology Transfer Act of 2015”; and H.R. 874, the “American Super Computing Leadership Act”, 9 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.


Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President 2015, 2:30 p.m., SD–106.
Next Meeting of the SENATE
9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 4

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of S.J. Res. 8, National Labor Relations Board, with a vote on passage of the resolution at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Following disposition of S.J. Res. 8, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the veto message to accompany S. 1, Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 a.m., Wednesday, March 4

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 749—Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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